

Economic and public-political development of the country discussed at the President's session

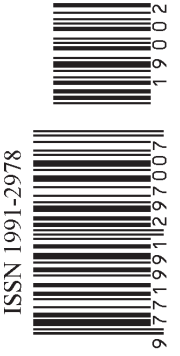


Pictures show the history of the country in faces



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Laureate of the President's special prize — Nesvizhskie Lozhkari folk instrumental ensemble — on the Palace of the Republic stage

Eternal spiritual values should unite the nation

The President of Belarus bestows 'For Spiritual Revival' awards and special prizes to figures of culture, arts and sport → **2-3**

Eternal spiritual values should unite the nation

The President of Belarus bestows 'For Spiritual Revival' awards and special prizes to figures of culture, arts and sport

By Yevgeny Kononovich

On Christmas days, the halls of the Palace of the Republic are always filled with a special aura of kindness and mercy. It's impossible to express in words, but you feel it almost physically. This happens when the New Year holidays are held for children and you are surrounded by happy faces and children's laughter. It's also felt a little later, when laureates of the 'For Spiritual Revival' Award and special awards to figures of culture and arts and the 'Belarusian Sport Olympus' awards are honoured. For more than twenty years, the country has been celebrating the merits of those whose life and work are imbued with ideas of humanism. Every year, the President presents the awards personally. This is seen as special symbolism. After all, many countries are strong in their traditions and spiritual values. This is what creates the moral foundation of the nation and without which peace and tranquillity in society are impossible.

During its long history, the Belarusian people have managed to preserve their best qualities, reverent attitude to their origins, respect for their past, faith in the present and the future. It's symbolic that Alexander Lukashenko delivered his address to the winners and guests of the ceremony in Belarusian and Russian. This reflects the spirit and essence of a peaceful and tolerant Belarusian character.

Opening the ceremony, the President noted that this gala evening occupies a special place among the New Year holidays. Its heroes are united by a noble desire to make the world kinder and more beautiful. According to the President, the art that was born in Belarus, has always had a creative nature. "With this in mind, the rich heritage of our ancestors still honours Belarus. The names of many enlighteners, figures of culture, politics and science have occupied their glorious place in the world's legacy. We are proud of our history and land — the homeland of famous people, our countrymen. We know our roots and cherish traditions. We are open to new ideas if they meet our regulations and values. Under the circumstances — when the world is losing spiritual focus — we are striving to preserve our internal pureness," he said, adding, "We are inspired by the personal example and active work



President awards diploma to People's Artist Victor Manaev

DIRECT SPEECH
The main value of the state is you, our people: through talent, creativity and hard work you multiply the state's glory, inspire compatriots to good deeds and are true patriots of our homeland

of wonderful people with great ideas and noble aspirations — who are sincere and selfless in their affairs."

On the results of 2018, four 'For Spiritual Revival' prizes have been awarded. Among the recipients is the author's band of Yulia Bykova and Yevgeny Oleinik for the embodiment of the theme of the native land in modern art. The prize was awarded to the collectives of the Orthodox and Catholic churches of our country for the translation of The New Testament books into the Belarusian language. The staff of the Belarusian Children's Hospice has been recognised for their work in the humanitarian sphere, approval of the ideas of humanity and mercy and a significant contribution to the creation of the national system of children's palliative care. The award also went to the team of Vesnovo

boarding school for children with psychophysical deficiencies. In addition, Mr. Lukashenko presented nine special awards to figures of culture and arts, including the Song and Dance Ensemble of the Armed Forces which is currently celebrating its 80th anniversary.

Presenting diplomas and badges of distinction, the President noted, "We are now honouring people with great hearts who give their love, attention and warmth to children with difficult fates. We award the ministers of the Church who gave the New Testament a new voice in the Belarusian language. We thank the teams that preserve our original culture, authors and performers who are representing our favourite region in their artistry. We recognise all talented figures of culture whose projects were acknowledged as the best."

On the eve of the celebration, the names of those who achieved the 'Belarusian Sport Olympus' were announced. According to Mr. Lukashenko, this award goes to strong-willed people who devote their lives to the high achievements of national sports. Belarusian women, their beauty and spirituality, which have received worldwide recognition, also deserve admiration.

"We will always take care of our cultural heritage," the President stressed. "However, the main value of the state is you, our people: through talent, creativity and hard work you multiply the state's glory, inspire compatriots to good deeds and are true patriots of our homeland."

The President awarded diplomas to the best of the best, the orchestra was playing, and the audience applauded. At one point, I thought that the people who came to the stage at the Palace of the Republic that evening are unique. They are all different but at the same time like each other. They all are fulfilling a special mission. By their work, they are making the world better and brighter. They perform a real spiritual feat, showing a vivid example of true patriotism and national identity. This deserves high praise.

The festive concert programme — *Christmas. Motherland. Revival* — was a common present for the awardees and guests of the ceremony. Among its performers was a winner of the 'For Spiritual Revival' Award — Yulia Bykova. She was accompanied by Nikolai Lukashenko and his teacher, Yelena Ostashkina-Myslivchek.



Inspiration to reach new heights

Laureates of the President's awards are true heroes of our time and this is no sentimental exaggeration. People who have achieved public recognition and high regard from the state for their good works for the benefit of other people deserve the highest and warmest praise. Nevertheless, they remain modest and eagerly share their good fortune with their colleagues and teammates who have offered a helping hand and a sympathetic shoulder. The most important thing is that they speak about their readiness to continue their self-sacrificing activities, as is seen in this quick interview with some of the laureates.

'FOR SPIRITUAL REVIVAL' AWARD

Yevgeny OLEINIK, composer, producer:

The topic of eternal values, sung in the album 'Kutochak Belarusi' (Corner of Belarus), is really very close to me and Yulia Bykova. Personally, the theme of the Motherland, our native land has not left me since the release of the song 'I Love Belarus', with which Anastasia Vinnikova represented our country in Düsseldorf at the Eurovision Song Contest in 2011. All our compositions, written in collaboration with Yulia Bykova, are about sincere feelings for the places where we were born and raised, where our children live and grow. They are about native Belarus. I'm grateful to the President, as well as to all the artistes and musicians who worked to ensure that these songs could reach the hearts of listeners. The topic of the small homeland turned out to be very close to many, as the musicians say, 'it went out to the people'. We would not be able to write so many compositions if there were no such demand among artists and the public. This award is an indicator of great trust from the state and at the same time an advance for the future. We are already working on the second part of the project with the working title 'Kutochak Belarusi'. It will be a kind of continuation, but at the same time a completely new album, which will include not only our songs with Yulia, but also compositions written by other Belarusian writers.

Sergey GORDUN, Archpriest, a member of the Biblical Commission of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, Professor of Minsk Theological Academy and Seminary, Candidate of Theology:

My generation remembers the time when the Holy Gospel was practically banned. Therefore, today I'm glad, first, not for myself or for my colleagues — I'm glad for the country in which we live. Today there's an opportunity to read and preach the Gospel. The translation of the Biblical New Testament into the modern literary Belarusian language is without doubt a real scientific work. I don't know if there is a similar award anywhere, but the fact that such a prize has existed in Belarus for many years is evidence that our society has a powerful programme of spiritual revival and development. We must be worthy heirs and followers of the spiritual feats of St. Kirill Turovsky, St. Yefyrosiniya Polotskaya and the first printer, Francysk Skaryna.

Jan KREMIS, a Roman Catholic priest, Chairman of the Section for Translation of Liturgical Texts and Official Documents of the Catholic Church of the Commission for the Cult of God and the Discipline of Sacraments at the Conference of Catholic Bishops in Belarus, Doctor of Theology:

The whole large collective, priests from all Belarusian Catholic dioceses, theologians, philologists, publishers and numerous assistants, feel great joy. The work lasted for 15 long years, but the work was thorough and global in its scope. We're very grateful that our work was so highly appreciated by the state and society. The contribution of the Catholic Church in Belarus to the common cause of spiritual rebirth is noted. Our work does not stop, we are moving

forward. The Old Testament is being translated into the modern Belarusian language as well as liturgical books, some with thousands of pages. The bestowing of this award even more inspires for this.

Anna GORCHAKOVA, Director of the Belarusian Children's Hospice:

It's not true when people say they don't need gratitude. Yes, we don't work for the sake of thanks, but if a person does not get a return on what he does, if he does not see grateful faces, he will quickly burn out. And I'm proud that the work of our team was noted. We're very pleased and very motivated. Such high recognition is another confirmation that we're doing everything right and are not working in vain.



'For Spiritual Revival' Award bestowed upon writers of music and lyrics, Yevgeny Oleinik and Yulia Bykova, for the embodiment of the topic of our native land in modern pop art

SPECIAL PRIZES

Vladimir VOROPAEV, Head, Artistic Leader and Chief Conductor of the Honoured Band Academic Song and Dance Ensemble of the Armed Forces of Belarus, Honoured Artiste of Belarus, Colonel:

We're happy to receive such a prestigious reward. Of course, we're grateful to all those who appreciated our work. For us, this is an impetus for new projects, because recognition for creative teams and creative people is an incentive to create. The next significant year is the anniversary of the Great Victory, for which we need to prepare a programme, especially since there is already an invitation to perform it in Moscow. We always try to reach every heart and the spectators who sing along with our artistes at concerts are very different: from veterans to schoolchildren. Our band performs old works, as well as creates new pieces. We hope that in future, our songs, which reflect the period of the late 20th — early 21st century, will be included in the country's musical foundation and will become part of the repertoire of our musical successors.

Maria VASILEVICH, holder of Miss Belarus-2018 and Miss World Europe titles:

It's very pleasing and exciting to receive the award for the contribution to the development of international cultural co-operation and charitable activities. Great attention is paid to these areas both in our country and around the world. As an example, I can cite the 'Miss World' contest, the organisers of which in recent years have focused not so much on the looks as on the charity events worked on by the candidates. The project that I presented at the competition is associated with creative projects for people with disabilities. The souvenirs that were taken to China by me for other participants in the competition were made by the pupils of the Kamensk auxiliary boarding school. I continue to engage in charitable activities and help people. Many think that charity is what the finalists of beauty contests are obliged to do under their contract. But it is not just that, these things should come from the heart.

'BELARUSIAN SPORT OLYMPUS' AWARD

Irina BARANOVSKAYA, trampolene coach of Grodno's specialised children and youth sports school of the Olympic Reserve #3:

In our school this is the second such award. In 2015, the 'Belarusian Sport Olympus' was received by the rhythmic gymnastics coach, Marina Protasova. But for me, the choice came as a complete surprise. Of course, I have always tried to do my job as well as possible, but I didn't think that I had already managed to achieve such impressive results as to become the holder of such an award. I'm very pleased that they have noticed me and appreciated our results. For me, the current award is an incentive for even more serious work. And my example proves that with due diligence and a responsible attitude, anyone can get well-deserved recognition!

Boris GERSTEN, Deputy Head of the Department of Sports Broadcasting at Second National TV Channel JSC:

To be honest, such a prestigious award was unexpected for me. I consider it as an assessment not only of my own work, but also of all those people who I was lucky to work with. Apparently, we've managed to do a lot in sports journalism. I sincerely thank the President of Belarus for the appreciation. Of course, it's important to remember that this is the result of not only me but of all those who helped me develop sporting television in the 1970-1990s and with whom we're working nowadays. I believe we've managed to do a great deal. Moreover, the award of the 'Belarusian Sport Olympus' is likely to add motivation to younger journalists. They will see that hard work is appreciated and that it's important and noticeable. In recent times, colossal changes have occurred in sporting journalism and it's vital each makes their own part in this mechanism as professional as possible.

Olga MAZURENOK, European track-and-field champion:

For me, the presentation of the award was a complete surprise. Probably, the well-known situation of me with my nose bleeding during the European Championships marathon played a role [then Olga ran for more than half the distance trying to stop the blood gushing from her nose]. Yes, I won, but this year there was also the Olympiad, where we also won. Of course, I'm very pleased. The fact that this award was given to me says that people are noticing and appreciating my work. However, I set a goal for myself — an Olympic medal! When I have it, I can say that I fully deserve recognition.

If a partnership is on equal terms, then it will be beneficial

By Vasily Kharitonov

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, conducted a session on socio-economic development in 2019 and approaches towards the further development of integration areas. Issues dealing with the prospects of Belarusian-Russian relations were tackled, in addition to interaction of the countries within the EAEU and CSTO. Mr. Lukashenko also discussed the results of the negotiations with the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, which took place in late December, considering issues of compensation to the Belarusians because of Russia's tax policies in the oil sector.

"There wasn't a definite rejection regarding the issue of compensation. Russia didn't say that it won't compensate for our losses. Furthermore, the President of Russia suggested continuing talks in the new year in order to work out an acceptable solution, both one-to-one and as part of working groups," noted the Head of State.

He agreed that the issue should have been settled by January 1st, but there is no problem in it still not being resolved. "Total losses from tax in Belarus this year will be less: around \$400m, if a barrel costs \$70. It's not a catastrophe. However, we can't allow it, because, since 2015, when this tax manoeuvre was introduced, we've already lost \$3.6bn. By 2025, to the end of the period, we will have lost \$10.6bn," explained the President.

The Head of State noted that the actions of the Russian side contradict the spirit and letter of all agreements, including as part of the Eurasian Economic Union. "Some say in Russia that they don't have any obligation to compensate us, as this is not stipulated in the Union State agreements. He remarked, "So, when signing these documents (on the Union State and the EAEU) did we expect a constant worsening of the situation because of the internal actions of the Russian

Economic and public-political development of the country discussed at the President's session



Sovereignty of Belarus is an established phenomenon in Belarusian society

DIRECT SPEECH There's no union without equality as its foundation

Federation? No. We were hoping for the best."

Negotiations regarding compensation of losses to Belarus have been conducted previously and corresponding mechanisms have been determined. Russian representatives have publicly announced the solution of this issue in a way that is positive for Belarus. However, Mr. Lukashenko reminded us that the Russian side abruptly ended the talks, not refusing compensation but at the same time asserting the necessity of deepening integration processes, without outlining what these are, or what they require from Belarus. At the suggestion of the Russian Federation, we've agreed that the issues should be settled by

the work of joint groups, said the Head of State.

Mr. Lukashenko said that conversations about Belarus' unification with Russia are far-fetched. He emphasised that unification of the two states is out of the question. "I and the President of Russia have decided in no uncertain terms that there is no such item — unification — on the agenda today," he added.

Mr. Lukashenko reminded us that Belarus and Russia signed the Union State Foundation Treaty and have been advancing their relations in strict compliance with this document. "We intended to pass a Constitutional Act in due course, that is the Constitution of the Union State. The document would have regulated a wide range of

administrative powers, executive powers and a single currency. Russia has refused to follow this path. I reminded the President of Russia about it and he agreed it had happened. The question is, what are we going to do with the Union State Treaty now? We should start negotiations and see what we can embark upon without any pressure," noted the President.

He stressed that the union of Belarus and Russia can grow only based on equality. "Not because Mr. Lukashenko wants it this way but because we are talking about the fundamental principles of building any union. There is no union without equality as its foundation," said the Belarusian leader. "Everything must happen on equal

terms. The people of the Russian Federation and Belarus must want it."

Mr. Lukashenko believes Russia would not be open to the idea. The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, confirmed this in a conversation with the Belarusian Head of State. "Russia is unable to go ahead with it considering all the consequences. Therefore, people should calm down and stop talking about anyone bending the other to their will," he noted.

Speaking about economic co-operation with Russia, the President stated that virtually all problems in relations between the countries had been resolved in acceptable ways. However, Mr. Lukashenko insisted we find mutually beneficial variants of interaction with other partners. In particular, he has entrusted the Government to work on the issue of alternative oil supplies to the country, with corresponding measures set by the President directly during the session. He said that this year, our country plans to finish the modernisation of two Belarusian oil refineries, after which we will be able to buy oil for processing not only from Russia. "I've long wanted to solve this problem of opening an alternative supply of oil via the Baltic ports. If the Lithuanians don't agree, let's talk to the Latvians and purchase oil, process it at the Novopolotsk Oil Refinery and provide it to the Baltic States."

According to the President, it will be cheaper for the Baltic States than it's now when they buy oil products at world prices. He called on people not to overstate the problems connected with losses to the Belarusian budget because of the Russian tax policy, but to search for other reliable sources that would compensate for these negative issues. The Belarusian Head of State believes that it's not a problem for Belarus to earn an additional \$400m. "The GDP of Belarus in terms of purchasing-power parity, as is now generally accepted, is about \$80bn. There is no problem," Mr. Lukashenko believes.

Undoubtedly, the answer will be worthwhile

By Vladimir Mikhailov

The traditional reception held on behalf of the President to celebrate the Old New Year took place in Minsk, with public officials, representatives of the humanitarian sphere and athletes being invited to this festive event

In his brief opening speech, Alexander Lukashenko suggested we don't criticise the past year but look to the future, "Yes, sometimes, it's necessary to look back and to analyse one's own

mistakes in order not to repeat them in future. However, even when looking back, we still need to look to the future as well. 2019, as well as 2020, will be difficult years for our country and our nation. Over these two years we'll be strongly 'tested' on whether we deserve the independence of which we speak. We should be ready to answer this question. I'm convinced that we'll find a worthwhile response."

According to the President, the current year will be difficult but very interesting primarily due to the efforts of those who made



Order of Fatherland 3rd Class awarded to Foreign Minister of Belarus, Vladimir Makei

a name for themselves in various spheres of the state and public life of the country. Addressing those in attendance, Mr. Lukashenko outlined the major quality which unites them all, "Personal involvement! You share a common goal, put your soul into it and generously share your accumulated experience and talents. I'm doubly pleased that there are many young people among you, those who will have to build, preserve and present our Motherland in the international arena tomorrow. By your labour and example, you inspire millions of your fellow

countrymen — who are not indifferent and who sincerely love Belarus — to new achievements."

The President wished that everyone should have a secure foothold in the face of their dear and close people, "Let them understand your hard but honorary labour, since by giving your time and efforts to the state, you're doing everything for them, for the sake of their happy lives in a prosperous, beautiful and peaceful country." At the reception, Alexander Lukashenko also bestowed state awards on a number of those present.

Dive into the future

Shaft sinking system launched at Nezhinsky Mining and Processing Plant is a symbol of renewed Lyuban: a town ever growing and developing

By Dmitry Ampilov

The country's 'mining capital' has turned a new page in history with its new shaft sinking process, which is unique throughout Europe. The German technologies use a 52m 'combine' cutting mechanism, fixed at the mouth of the shaft, to raise rock to the surface faster and in a more environmentally-friendly manner.

The manufacturer notes that it's safer, stressing that everyone wants to see workers return home at the end of their shift. Drilling is a dangerous activity, so the more automation that can be employed, the better. With the latest devices, a single operator can manage all processes, sitting comfortably in a cabin, using a monitor.

The German team is already training local specialists on the 'Olga' drill (the name having been chosen by students at Lyuban orphanage). Minsk's metro is being tunnelled by 'Alesya', while 'Ulyana' is working on the first mine near Lyuban. The 'ladies' have three years of work ahead, drilling at a speed of three metres per day (750 metres total).

The new Nezhinsky mine is set to become the second largest potash fertiliser source in the country, yielding over two million tonnes of potassium chloride per year.

"We've already covered fifty metres and are ahead



Martin Herrenknecht, Chairman of the Board of Management of Herrenknecht AG, Sergey Popov, Director of Slavkaliy, and Jochen Greinacher, CEO at Deilmann-Haniel GmbH

of schedule by about three weeks," explains CEO of Deilmann-Haniel, the contracting company, Jochen Greinacher.

The development of a potash deposit near Lyuban is now being discussed in the context of developing the region's infrastructure. It's expected that the city will double in size, as noted by Slavkaliy's Director, Sergey Popov. He tells us, "A large amount of investment is aimed at the construction of the railway, the development of the road network, and gasification. All this, of course, helps not only the plant but the wider region. We're starting construction of a concentrator and will need staff [at least 2,000 people] to work at the future enterprise."



REFERENCE

Slavkaliy JSC began constructing the Nezhinsky Mining and Processing Plant in 2016, drilling the Starobinsky potassium salt deposit. The project involves the construction of a mining complex, a concentrator, and a self-sufficient gas turbine power plant, as well as railway, road, housing and other infrastructure.

Even more ambitious plans

Belarus annually produces 80 million Euros of goods for IKEA

By Oleg Bogomazov

Furniture, textiles and accessories, made to order in Belarus, are sold in IKEA shops countrywide. According to the Purchasing and Logistics Area Manager for Central Europe at Inter IKEA Group, Katarzyna Warchał, one of IKEA's major policies is long-term co-operation. "We have more than a million suppliers of goods, with an average length of co-operation of around eleven years," she notes. "The Concern has long been interacting with Belarusian companies, while our IKEA representational office launched in Minsk about twenty years ago."

The Purchasing Development Manager at IKEA, Henrik Gunnerling, notes that Belarus annually manufactures 80 million Euros of produce for IKEA, using local raw materials to fulfil designs supplied by IKEA.

A recent two-day event at the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park brought together representatives of thirty companies worldwide. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Sweden, Dmitry Mironchik, notes that foreign companies working in the Republic presented their assessment of the country's investment potential, underlining that Belarus has many attractive opportunities, while being stable, open to investment and possessing highly professional personnel. Discussion at the event included Belarusian opportunities to expand work with IKEA.

Comfortable working conditions in the Park

In 2018, the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park received at least \$180 million of investment

By Vladimir Velikhov

Belarus' Finance Minister, Maxim Yermolovich, tells us that accumulated investments since the Park's establishment have reached about half a billion Dollars, with \$225 million directed into residents' businesses and the remainder injected into infrastructure.



By 2020, the Great Stone Park will have more than a hundred residents, and investments of at least \$2 billion (with at least \$1 billion of goods having been manufactured). Moreover, it will be responsible for at least 6,500 highly-productive jobs.

Mr. Yermolovich states that the Great Stone continues to boast the best tax privileges for businesses in Belarus, with residents being exempt from paying profit tax for the first

decade following their first tax period. Thereafter, they pay at half rate (a condition which is set to endure until June 14th, 2062). Participants will also be exempt from paying property and land taxes until 2062 and, until January 1st, 2027, will only pay personal income tax at a rate of 9 percent. All goods imported for exclusive use within the Park, for construction and equipment of Park facilities, are exempt from customs duties and VAT.

Oil extraction is expanding

By Olga Korneeva

Belorusneft specialists drill sixth oil well in Ecuador

Belorusneft Production Association has drilled another high-rate well in Armadillo field (block 55) in Ecuador. The well is 3,496m deep and, once fully operational, is expected to produce sixty-four tonnes of oil daily. Work is now underway to prepare the well for commercial operation.

Armadillo oil field is being developed in line with a contract signed by the Ecuadorian Petroamazonas state oil extraction company, in liaison with Belorusneft's daughter enterprise — Service Oil Ecuador Ecuaservoil. The project aims to optimise business processes, developing infrastructure and providing geological exploration services, as well as drilling

and repairing wells in Armadillo field.

The Belarusian company is overseeing the entire process, with Belarusian specialists assisting in drilling and well operation. Belorusneft press service has announced that Belarusian oil industry experts from the BelNIPIneft Research Institute are handling various geological tasks — from data processing and analysis to model compilation and evaluation of Armadillo oil field reserves. The institute has also given a few hints on the optimal locations for drilling wells. Six existing wells within Armadillo oil field are already producing a daily output in excess of 300 tonnes, amounting to over 100,000 tonnes for the past twelve months. In total, eleven wells are planned as part of the contract signed with Petroamazonas.

Rocketing to the stars — all in a day's work

Oleg Novitsky, born in the Minsk Region's Cherven, in the past a commander of squadron of legendary 'rooks' Su-25, both times flew at ISS as crew commander



By Boris Orekhov

Usually, fighter pilots are chosen to train as cosmonauts. You're the second (after Georgy Beregovoy) strike pilot to have been in orbit. Did you have difficulties during selection?

I wouldn't say that I faced difficulties. Selection for the Air Force is much stricter than for any other branch of the Armed Forces, and especially for pilots. You need to be in perfect health, with good co-ordination and eye-ear apparatus, for balance. Without these, you'll never get into space.

You're the third Belarusian cosmonaut, and Piotr Klimuk and Vladimir Kovalenok also both flew as crew commanders.

I don't think our nationality is relevant. A team of psychologists assess our ability to manage people, to control the spacecraft and to adopt decisions while under stress. All of us — Klimuk, Kovalenok, and I — are military and

I think being an officer-pilot has played a role. We aren't afraid of taking responsibility.

How is your working day in orbit organised? Everything is clear on Earth: waking up, taking breakfast, going to work... How is it in the space?

Actually, the same. On the eve of departure, we receive a radiogram from Earth with a list

of work tasks for the next day. If necessary, we clarify something with the Flight Control Centre. The following day, as soon as we wake up, we start work. Of course, first, we use the bathroom, have breakfast and take our morning exercise; then, everyone works according to his plan.

When do you wake up at the station?

At 6am, strictly, and bed time is 10pm.

Do you immediately fall asleep?

It's quite relative. We can't order ourselves to sleep, as if pressing a button. Bed time is bed time but it's another question how we rest. Anyway, I do everything strictly according to the schedule.

Which are the most difficult experiments you've performed in orbit?

They were interesting rather than difficult, e.g., an experiment dealing with the movement of fluid in the human body in a state of zero-gravity. With the help of special equipment, we monitored ophthalmic and intracranial pressure and saw rather curious results.

Did you push your pain limit?

One experiment was conducted in three stages: on Earth, just before launch; during the flight itself; and after landing. We pressed a special piston and measured the action force, as well as the time we could continue pressing the piston. Another experiment involved pressing a heating element against our underarm, as a high temperature test.

Where is pain more difficult to withstand: in orbit or on Earth?

It depends on the person. I showed almost equal responses each time.

Just fifty-seven years have passed since Yuri Gagarin went into space, but such launches have almost become ordinary...

I wouldn't say 'ordinary'. Each flight is a test. On October 11th, we saw an accident with the rocket carrier. Was that ordinari-ness?

When do you think the 'cosmic future' will arrive, such as mining on the Moon?

Are mineral resources present on the Moon?

They say so...

We'll learn this when we fly there.

DIRECT SPEECH



Vladimir Semashko,
Belarusian
Ambassador to the
Russian Federation

I was at Baikonur when our Belarusian satellite was launched and felt how powerful it was. Now, after reading this book, I understand the feelings of the cosmonaut's family and relatives.

We, Belarusians, can be proud of the fact that our small country has three cosmonauts: Piotr Klimuk, Vladimir Kovalenok and Oleg Novitsky. This testifies to us being a strong and healthy nation.

Belarus is deservedly named a space country, as we have direct relations with the development of technologies and exploration of space. Our satellite for remote sensing is completely domestically produced, using the world's best resolution of optic devices. Only four or five countries produce anything similar.

Award for cultural collaboration

By Yevgenia Zabolotskikh

Tretyakov Gallery Director Zelfira Tregulova awarded Belarusian Francysk Skaryna Order

For 'special merits and significant successes in strengthening and developing Belarusian-Russian cultural ties', Zelfira Tregulova has received the honorary award, bestowed by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Russia, Vladimir Semashko.

The diplomat underlines that the National Art Museum of Belarus is keen to support joint projects and events with the Tretyakov Gallery, building on a long history of co-operation.

Zelfira Tregulova first visited the National Art Museum of Belarus back in 1990 as part of the Goodwill Games. She prepared a major programme for the exhibition in Seattle and Washington and asked her Minsk colleagues to loan several important works.

"Since then, we've realised various important projects together," notes Ms. Tregulova. "Almost all have been phenomenally successful large exhibitions of Russian art held with the participation of the National Art Museum of Belarus. We began with Serov's sensational exhibition, which was attended by around half a million visitors in 2015 and

2016. Arkhip Kuindzhi's exhibition is currently a great success at the Tretyakov Gallery. One of its most important exhibits is his brilliant *Birch Grove* (a paraphrase of the famous picture that is kept in our gallery)."

Ms. Tregulova notes that exhibitions held in Belarus with the participation of the Tretyakov Gallery include last autumn's displays in Mogilev and Minsk dedicated to famous Belarusian painter Vitold Byalynitsky-Birulya. The Tretyakov Gallery also presented a large-sized sketch by Isaac Levitan, *Above the Eternal Peace*.

The Tretyakov Gallery Director offered her thanks for the

honorary award and commented that she has recently signed a treaty with the National Art Museum of Belarus. As a result, on March 15th, 2019, a retrospective will open at the Tretyakov Gallery for the great artist Ilya Repin, dedicated to the anniversary of his birth, featuring three works brought from Minsk.



REFERENCE

Belarus' first printer, Francysk Skaryna (in whose honour the award is named) entered history as the founder of Eastern European printing. The order was established in 1995 and painter Mikhail Savitsky was the first to receive it, in 1997.



The dawns here are quiet... Yaselda River and the neighbouring lakes is a paradise for those keen on relaxation and fishing

Wonderful, unique corner in the heart of Western Polesie, or five reasons to visit Motol

The pride of this town is the riches of the Museum of Folk Crafts, numbering many thousands of exhibits, collected by local historians and folklore specialists. The picturesque banks of the Yaselda River will please those keen on the tranquil pleasures of the countryside, while those who have long dreamt of immersing themselves in true rural life should stay at the agro-estates of Motol at least for a couple of days. Traditional amusements and unforgettable memories are guaranteed.

Haute couture style

Who want stylish and trendy items before the autumn-winter collection? You will be dressed and provided with boots in Motol, in addition to being presented with a fashionable wicker basket. Your friends from the capital will surely be envious. Whatever house you visit you will doubtless meet a 'Jack of all trades'. Some weave, while others embroider — a centuries-old tradition. In 1970-1980, this settlement was the 'Soviet Union workshop' producing sheepskin coats. Products by Motol designers were sold throughout the USSR: from Poland to the Far East. Even the top party officials wore them. Furthermore, this sheepskin coat business was viewed as 'protected' and backyard production was forbidden. During the day, Motol residents worked in kolkhozes and at night, at their own risk, took to

their sewing machines. It's possible to buy sheepskin coats in Motol now, which have an original design and custom tailoring — unlike Dolce & Gabbana from the Chinese factory.

Following the Struve quest

Famous Russian astronomer Vasily Struve barely visited Motol but left his trace in its history. This refers to the well-known Struve Geodetic Arc that helped calculate the length of the meridian. The points of the unique geodesic site — stone cubes — were used to measure the distance of almost three thousand kilometres, from the Norwegian to the Black Sea. Three such points of the Struve Arc have been preserved

Not a decoration but a true work of art! Accessories from Motol masters are top-selling items at trade fairs.



in the neighbourhood: near the villages of Shchekotsk, Lyaskovichi and Os-ovnitsa. Isn't it the perfect quest to find the sights and a take a selfie?

Dropping in on Israel's first president's birthplace

Before the start of the Great Patriotic War, Motol had a strong Jewish community. The indigenous population became so hooked on their neighbours that they adopted their business

acumen and way of life. They had enough people to learn from, as this area gave the world the famous theologian and scientist Saul Lieberman, biologist Étienne Wasserzug, pianist Gita Dunie-Weizman, Tel Aviv Mayor David Bloch-Blumenfeld and the founder of the famous sound recording company Chess Records, Leonard Chess.

The most famous Motol-born person is Israeli President Chaim Weizmann, who was born here in 1874. Old-timers recollect that the family of Weizmann was large and friendly. Their huge house in the centre was made from Belovezhskaya Pushcha logs. Probably, this is why it has been preserved.

There's no museum there but the locals will eagerly take you inside and tell you

about the early years in the life of the Israeli leader. For example, until he was eleven years old, the would-be president attended 'Cheder' (a Jewish school), went fishing in the lake nearby and played tag with the boys.

Tasting legendary 'kovbaska'

If Tula is known for its gingerbread, then Motol is famous for its tastiest sausages. 'If you taste them once, their taste and aroma will come to you at night for your whole life' say the lo-



Culinary miracle is baked only by married women, enabling the young couple to live a long live and to give birth to babies

cal. There are three sausage workshops in the town. The history of the product began thanks to Stepan Minyuk. In the 1930s, he was the first to start making 'kovbaski' for sale. Currently, his descendants are working at the business. Delicacies are cooked using old recipes from the early 20th century and they aren't revealed to anyone. It's no surprise that Motol sausages are sold in the stores within a few hours, so it's better to go here, to the homeland of this tradition to buy the sausages.

The international culinary festival, entitled *Motol Delicacies*, has long featured in the town. Once every two years,

INFORMATION FOR TOURISTS

270 km, or three hours of driving, separate Minsk from Motol, while it's possible to get there by train from the Belarusian station to Yanov-Polesky station in 6.5 hours and then use a suburban bus.

thousands of tourists from dozens of countries come here for a 'meal' and sing together the local anthem — 'I suffer without fat'.

Entertaining at a Polesie wedding

What can be more cheerful than a rural wedding? While in Motol you won't even have to wait. The Museum of Folk Crafts organises an ancient custom specially for tourists. However, it is not the bride and groom who are the centre of attention but... a karavai [a round loaf]. From the dawn of history, the hosts have been baking an aromatic round loaf for the festivity. As is traditional, the process takes the whole day: each stage of preparation is accompanied with songs and special rituals. Even hands are washed while saying special words — true Polesie theatre! A Motol wedding karavai can't be mistaken with any other. It's decorated with 'cones' — pear branches with bouquets made from green barley and hand-made paper flowers.



Flying cars are on show at CES

While CES attendees are still quite a few years away from being able to hop in a flying car and travel to the annual technology show, several concepts displayed at the 2019 event provided a glimpse of what the future could look like

That starts with hailing an Uber copter — possibly as soon as the mid 2020s. At CES, Textron's Bell division, a partner in the Uber Elevate flying car initiative, showed off its new air taxi concept called the Nexus.

While it may fly, make no mistake, the Nexus looks more like a car than an airplane. The concept uses six tilted fans to aid in takeoffs and landings,

which are powered by a hybrid-electric propulsion system. Inside the vehicle, four passengers and a pilot can see their flight path projected onto a screen.

Uber has said it's planning to roll out its air vehicles by 2023 in certain cities, targeting the Dallas-Fort Worth area and Los Angeles as its first domestic markets.

"This technology is intriguing, and it seems it's finally go-

ing to arrive in our lifetime," said Karl Brauer, Executive Publisher of Cox Automotive.

Future flying car passengers were able to get a glimpse of what travel will be like by trying a VR simulator that allows them to pilot the Pal-V Liberty concept, which looks like a hybrid of a sports car and a helicopter.

Electrafly also showed off its flying car concept, which

resembles a flying motorcycle with wings. The concept shown at CES can carry one rider, which the company said is 'ideal for first responders or military special forces. Other versions will be scaled for air taxi or search and rescue, and smaller versions will be ideal for shipping and package delivery'.

While the idea of flying cars has long been regarded as a science fiction dream, the new prototypes show that it's even closer to becoming a reality. However, the adoption of flying cars still faces major regulatory roadblocks.

"The legal hurdles related to small flying machines are arguably a bigger challenge than mastering the technology. These issues will make it hard for personal or compact commercial aircraft to take flight, and even harder for a substantial number to offset ground traffic," said Brauer.

Air France looking to scrap low-cost airline Joon

Air France is to look at ways of closing down its low-cost airline Joon and integrating Joon employees and aircraft into Air France

The airline, aimed at younger clients, launched in late 2017, but Air France said the brand had been 'difficult to understand from the outset'.

Air France said integrating Joon would lead to 'many benefits'. It said Joon, and then Air France, would honour all flights that had been sold or were on sale.

The airline said in a statement, "After much discussion with employees and customers alike, and in consultation with the unions, Air France has decided to launch a project studying the future of the Joon brand and the integration of Joon employees and aircraft into Air France. Despite the many positive impacts of Joon... the brand was difficult to understand from the outset for customers, for employees, for markets and for investors."

It added that Air France would see many benefits from integration of the two businesses 'thanks to fleet, brand, and product harmonisation'.

Joon flies to short-haul destinations in Europe, including Bergen, Madrid and Manchester, as well as further afield to places like South Africa, Brazil, and India.

Ford company is shedding thousands of jobs in Europe



Ford is cutting thousands of jobs, ending production of some models and closing a plant in Europe ahead of a possible alliance with market leader Volkswagen

The US carmaker announced the changes, framing the restructuring as part of a global overhaul that the company has said will cost \$11bn.

Ford said it would end production of some unprofitable models and shift its strategy in

difficult regional markets, including Russia. The carmaker said it would proceed with plans to close a transmissions plant in France, and it has started negotiations with unions about halting production of the C-Max compact car at a factory in Germany.

"We are taking decisive action to transform the Ford business in Europe," Steven Armstrong, Ford's President for Europe, Middle East and Africa, said in a statement.

The carmaker said in July

that it would spend \$11bn over the next three to five years to reshape its business around the world.

Ford's sales and profitability are strong in the United States, but the company is trailing competitors badly in China and continuing to struggle in Europe and Latin America.

In the first nine months of 2018, Ford reported European losses of \$199m, compared to a profit of \$278m in the same period of 2017. It has projected a loss for the region for 2018.

Analysts have speculated that Ford and Volkswagen (VLKAF), the world's largest automaker and a dominant force in Europe, could team up as they seek to develop autonomous cars and other technology.

Rival US automaker General Motors (GM) got out of Europe in 2017, when it sold its struggling European operations to PSA (PUGOY), the French maker of Peugeot and Citroen cars.

Giant gold coin trial opens in Berlin

The trial has begun in Berlin of four men accused of stealing a huge, commemorative gold coin worth an estimated 4.31m in an old-school heist

'Big Maple Leaf', which has a diameter of 21 inches, is thought to be the second-largest gold coin in the world.

The coin, which features a portrait of the UK's Queen Elizabeth II, was minted in 2007 by the Royal Canadian Mint.

At the time of the theft on March 27th, 2017, the coin was part of an exhibition at the Berlin Bode Museum. The defendants broke in through a window, press spokeswoman Lisa Jani of the Berlin Regional Court, where the trial is taking place, said.

Three co-defendants are accused of breaking in using information passed on by another defendant — a former security guard at the museum, said Jani.

The thieves escaped with the 100-kilo coin through the broken



window, then hauled it over some nearby railway tracks, according to court documents.

Three of the defendants are part of the Remmo clan, one of a number of well-known crime families in Germany that experts say formed there following the arrival of Lebanese and Palestinian migrants from the late 1970s onwards.

Last summer, German authorities seized 77 properties worth \$11.5m owned by the Remmo clan, said Ralph Ghadban, author of the book Arabic Clans and an expert on the subject.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Pictures show the history of the country in faces

National Art Museum hosts *Contemporaries of the 20th Century. Centenary of the Belarusian Portrait* exhibition



By Veniamin Mikheev

Over a hundred paintings, drawings and sculptures are on show at the exhibition. These have been created by Belarusian painters primarily of the last century and include masterpieces by Yudel Pen, Yankel Kruger, Yazep Drozdovich, Mikhail Stanyuta, Vladimir Stelmashonok, Alexander Kishchenko, Gavriil Vashchenko, Mai Dantsig, Vladimir Tovstik, Vitaly Chernobrisov and many others. The pictures depict the authors' contemporaries: ordinary workers — teachers, medical nurses, builders and soldiers, as well as outstanding personalities such as writers, artistes, sculptors and figures of the arts. There are also self-portraits of the painters. The rich diversity of the genre is truly impressive: there are ceremonial and formal portraits, group and intimate portraits, as well as typical portraits and portrait sketches.

The exposition is arranged in chronological order and includes five sections. Each of them gives a panoramic view of the spirit of the time, reflects important historical events, while also allowing the viewer to trace the evolution of stylistic interpretations of the portrait genre in the 20th century. For instance, the *Provincial Portrait* represents the creativity of major Belarusian portrait painters from the early 20th century: Yudel Pen, Yankel Kruger and others. *In Search of the National.*



Wonderful diversity of portraits displayed at the exhibition

1920s-1930s Portraits shows a period of Belarusian revival via the pictures of such artists as Mikhail Filippovich, Mikhail Stanyuta and Yazep Drozdovich who tried to decipher the traditions of folk art as part of professional artistic culture.

Meanwhile, the *Portrait of the Frontier Country* reflects the military period in graphical works. At that time, conditions for painters were hard, therefore graphical art became the most common type of art. New types of portraits began to appear, such as battlefield portrait sketches made on the frontline.

“A portrait is a genre which always goes beyond the borders of art, uniting various functions,” notes the curator of the exhibition, Yekaterina Izofatova, who heads the Modern Belarusian Art

Department at the National Art Museum of Belarus.

The *New Heroes. Late 1950s-1970s Portrait* section demonstrates a wide palette of various portrait types where the images of leading ballerinas rub shoulders with life-affirming images of Belarusian workers, scientists and artistes, created by Ivan Akhremchik, Yevgeny Kharitonenko, Natan Voronov, Isaak Borovsky and others.

The final section of the exhibition is entitled *Time of Change. 1980s-1990s Portraits*. The period saw deviation from the usual images towards individuality, and many portraits are characterised by penetration into the inner life of those portrayed. At that time, such ideas as the Belarusian avant-garde of the 1980s appeared in the

20th century, the traditions of late Itinerant painters and academism reigned, while in the 1920-1930s, painters tried to decipher national traditions, with new motifs and colours appearing. The true revelation of the exhibition is a self-portrait of Belarusian Nikolay Kazak. He is a representative of geometrical abstraction and object art.

“*Contemporaries of the 20th Century. Centenary of the Belarusian Portrait* shows what we're like as a nation. Each portrait is an artistic image. Thanks to it, I looked at many authors from a new angle and found real masterpieces. It's a reason for us to feel pride in our art and our nation,” noted Grigory Sitnitsa, the Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Artists.

A rich event programme has been prepared for the exhibition, including the curator's tour of the exhibition, a lecture course, 15-minute 'Stories about one of the portraits of the exhibition'. The show is also supplemented with texts and auditory content for individual visitors, in particular, an interactive brochure *Observe, Think, Create* in Russian, English and French, is the guide to the world of the Belarusian portrait of the 20th century. People of different ages and professions from ten countries of the world participated in its development. The project was implemented with the support of the Presidential grant in science, education, health care and culture for 2018.

Ride me, iron turtle

Tank based on Leonardo da Vinci's sketches assembled in Belarus

By Kristina Khilko

The fantastic tank — based on the drawings of the Renaissance genius — has been built by Belarusfilm, to feature in a film. Invented by the great artist five hundred years ago, it truly resembles a turtle, while weighing over 4 tonnes. It has guns around its circumference, with four powerful wheels under its armour (da Vinci failed to invent tracks).

“We tried to follow Leonardo da Vinci's sketches as closely as possible and I hope we've succeeded,” says Director Alex-

ander Anisimov, noting that they made the tank from wood and metal. “According to da Vinci, the act of sitting inside would set in motion the wheels, and a lookout tower is installed above.”

This ‘great-grandfather’ of modern tanks is to appear in the film *Adventures of Prantish Vyrvich* — a fantasy adventure by famous Belarusian writer Lyudmila Rublevskaya. According to its plot, a runaway pupil from the Jesuit College of Minsk, Prantish, joins Dr. Bel-tromey in exploring the mysterious underground tunnels of Minsk, Slutsk and Polotsk,

riding on the tank, finding the spear of St. Mauritius and navigating various adventures.

“We decided to make this ‘miracle’ machine even before the script was



Combat characteristics

Height — 3.5 metres

Weight — 4 tonnes

Diameter — 4.5 metres

Number of guns — 16



No one knows how efficient Leonardo da Vinci's machine would have been in action in medieval Italy but, undoubtedly, his idea was ahead of its time

ready,” notes the director. “The process was time-consuming and laborious, taking over two months. It was so huge that we had to alter the script to add extra scenes featuring this wonderful tank.”

According to the script, the tank explodes at the end. In fact, fireworks are being used and the real tank will remain in one piece, taking pride of place at Belarusfilm's museum as soon as filming ends.

Genius' mistake

Da Vinci's tank is viewed by modern designers as the main prototype of modern armoured vehicles. At that time,

the vehicle — something similar to a flying saucer — seemed like a ship from another galaxy. In a letter to the Duke of Milan, the genius wrote: ‘I'll make secure and impregnable carts which — after piercing the ranks of the enemy with their artillery fire — will destroy it, no matter how huge the number of soldiers. Then, the infantry may follow, without incurring major losses or encountering resistance’.

In Renaissance times, the project remained on paper; although a model was made, it was only designed to intimidate the enemy. According to drawings, it could navigate flat roads

and weighed as much as eight men, so could hardly travel far.

Initially, the inventor planned to use horses as the driving force, located inside the armour, but Leonardo quickly set aside the idea, realising that animals would panic in a confined space, and surrounded by rattling guns.

In 2003, the BBC tried to recreate the tank for the *Leonardo: the Man who Wanted to Know Everything* programme. However, the plan that they followed saw the wheels spin in different directions. It appears that Leonardo purposefully entered a mistake into his drawings, so that the ‘secret’ of making his tank work would stay secure.

Six degrees of separation, from famous Keanu Reeves

Prominent Hollywood actor, director and producer Keanu Reeves sends thanks to Brest artist who painted his portrait

By Victoria Ivanova

Alexandra Klavdieva's phone is always ringing and receiving messages. She painted a portrait of handsome Reeves in March and posted it, in black and white, on her Instagram page with the caption: ‘There's no need for explanation. This is simply a great man and actor’.

She received six hundred likes and several comments, but then moving on to other things and forgot about it. However, a few weeks ago, she almost fell from her chair, as she saw the actor online, featuring her work! “I was so happy,” she says, unable to hide her emotions. “I wanted to jump for joy but I was at work: I was smiling the whole day.”

Keanu Reeves isn't very active on social media and has no Instagram page but tens of thousands of fans post about him. In fact, a friend of one of Alexandra's friends showed Keanu the portrait and he took a photo with the picture, to show how amazing the likeness is, sending it with words of thanks to the Belarusian.



Keanu enjoyed the portrait so much that he even took a photo with it

“In spring, I mastered a new technique of drawing with coal. The first portrait of Keanu Reeves I created didn't turn out well but friends persuaded me to try again. Imagine my surprise when my friend, who works in Europe but has friends worldwide, told me that her friend who works on

Hollywood projects showed Keanu the portrait. It's the theory of six degrees of separation in action!”

Keanu not only praised the work but also wished Alexandra success. “For a simple girl from Brest, it's so exciting! Everyone is warmly congratulating me. We all like to have our work acknowledged and Keanu's a great guy — so open and honest. He often does lovely things for his fans,” says Alexandra, who painted Keanu in his role for *John Wick 2*, which is scheduled to release in May.

Our talented Belarusian is actually an architect and portrait painting is her hobby, having captured Robert De Niro, Vladimir Vysotsky, the cast of *Harry Potter*, Che Guevara, and Robert Downey Jr. among others. Among her latest is Eddie Redmayne — who won a ‘Best Actor’ Oscar for portraying Stephen Hawking and for his role in *Fantastic Beasts*. Who knows, perhaps Eddie will also notice her work one day.

There's truly only six degrees of separation between us.

Preparing the festival in winter

International Slavianski Bazaar Festival of Arts in Vitebsk is a Belarusian calling card for culture and tourism, requiring meticulous organisation and preparation

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

In 2019, the festival will be held under the leadership of the new director, Gleb Lapitsky. Residents and guests of the city will see some innovations, explains Mr. Lapitsky. “We're working to create an ice show at the *Slavianski Bazaar*, as well as featuring cover bands and youth groups, focusing on Belarusian culture.”

Speaking of the festival's self-sufficiency, he notes, “The puzzle needs to come together. We always tell everyone that we're open to suggestions. Each social network comment on our website is analysed by our team. This year, there will be artists that we didn't even consider previously but they'll come at the request of our viewers and subscribers.”

Under development is a competition for young performers. He adds, “We've already started negotiations to bring the qualifying rounds to a new level. We're approaching the Baltic region and the American region.”

This year, many people will be surprised by the second part of the competition: a show of world hits. The programme is being prepared and personalities are being selected. “We'll do our best so that, in January and February, we'll announce the programme and people can buy tickets.”

Game brings results

Belarus' national volleyball team to play at 2019 European Championships

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Belarusian volleyball players have defeated their rivals from Norway in the final qualifying match for the European Championships — 3:0 (25:19, 25:18, 25:23), entering the final part of the continental forum. The game in Group E took place in Oslo, with the Belarusian team confirming their place as the favourites of the match. Victor Beksha's trainees confidently managed the ball and strengthened their game in the second half. Vladislav Davyskiba (14 points), Rodion Miskevich (16) and Maxim Morozov (8) were named the most efficient players in the Belarusian team.

It's the third time in history that Belarus' national men's volleyball squad has qualified for the final stage of the Eu-



Being pleased with one's own success

ropean Championships. Previously, our national team took part in the continental event in 2013 and 2015. The European Volleyball Championships will take place from September 12th-29th in four countries: the Netherlands, Belgium, Slovenia and France. Twenty-four teams will be competing for the chance to play in the finals to be hosted by France on September 29th.

The final position in Group E:

Belarus — 14 points (across 6 matches)
Spain — 14 (6)
Norway — 8 (6)
Georgia — 0 (6)

Winter is no barrier to football

The current football inter-season in Belarus will be fairly short thanks to BATE. On February 14th, Borisov-Arena will host the first match of the Europa League 1/16 finals, where our champion will face London Arsenal team at home, while the return match will take place on February 21st, at London's Emirates Stadium. Then it will soon be March, and the start of the new season. It's no surprise that life in the BATE team hasn't frozen over the winter; it continues to be in full swing, with just a short break for the New Year holiday.



By Sergey Kanashits

BATE Borisov is experiencing a re-adjustment. It could be seen as the usual reorganisation which takes place each winter, if it were not for a significant circumstance: the club now has a new head. After Anatoly Kapsky's death, fans of the squad were worried what would happen to the

club. This year, the answer should be given by Anatoly Kapsky's successor — his son Andrey, who has recently been presented to staff as their new boss.

There has been little recent news connected with BATE players. Some may see this as a worry at first, especially as at present, more footballers have left BATE than have arrived.

However, are these losses so significant? In the new season we won't see defenders Nemanja Milunović, Maxim Volodko and Denis Polyakov, as well as forwards Mikhail Gordeichuk and Nikolay Signevich. All these are quite remarkable figures. Milunović is moving to the Crvena Zvezda club, while Volodko and Polyakov have chosen the

BATE Borisov will lack Nikolay Signevich (L)

Russian path to continue their career, yet Signevich focused on the Hungarian team Ferencvárosi. These footballers went for promotion, challenging themselves. Gordeichuk is slightly outside of this list. Firstly, this season was unlucky for him, primarily because of injury, while the Kazakh Tobol, where he decided to move, can't be called a 'promotion'; only if we think exclusively about the salary enhancement. We can definitely say that neither Gordeichuk, nor the other four players are irreplaceable for BATE. Yes, Signevich did a lot of work and scored several very important goals. However, more often he failed to score even though there were opportunities. Signevich leaving seems the most significant for BATE, as good forwards are rare and the Borisov squad will have to make efforts to find a worthy replacement for him.

Everything ends in the semi-finals

Alexandra Sasnovich, ranked 33rd in the world rankings, failed to make the finals of the tournament in the Australian city of Sydney. World number eight, Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic, confidently won 6:1, 6:2 — becoming an insurmountable obstacle in Sasnovich's way.

The match lasted 1 hour 6 minutes. During the game, Sasnovich didn't manage a single break, served two aces and made five double faults while Kvitova had four breaks, two aces and no double faults. The number of meetings between these two rivals is now equal at one win each. Their first meeting, held in the first round of last year's Wimbledon, finished with the Belarusian athlete's victory.

In the first round of the competition in Sydney, Kvitova also defeated another Belarusian tennis player — Arina Sobolenko (ranked 11th).

In turn, Alexandra Sasnovich beat Russian Darya Kasatkina (10th), Australian Priscilla Hon (161st) and Swiss Timea Bacsinszky (192nd).

Victor Goncharenko shares his experience

2018's best football coach of Belarus shares his experience of working in the Russian Premier League with coaches of Belarusian clubs



Victor Goncharenko and one of his assistant coaching staff in Moscow CSKA, Alexander Yermakovich, told their colleagues about the peculiarities and nuances of the team's preparation for matches of the Russian championships and Champions League. Last season, Moscow CSKA footballers, under the guidance of the Belarusian specialist, took second place in the Russian Championships and played in the Champions' League Group Stage.

During the second part of the seminar, Technical Director of the Football Union of Russia, Andrey Leksakov, described the most important theoretical and practical aspects of the coaching profession.

Listeners at the seminar included head coaches and assistants of Belarusian football clubs from various divisions, alongside coaching staff of the Belarusian national squad, headed by Igor Kriushenko.



Ball of the week

National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus hosts Big New Year's Ball for tenth time

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS
20 Lenin Street
Until 27th January. *Chronicle of Life. Annals of the Country*
Until 3rd February. *Contemporaries of the 20th Century. Centenary of the Belarusian Portrait*
Until 1st March. Collection of Singer Lidia Ruslanova

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM
12 Karl Marx Street
Until 20th January. *China Yesterday and Today: Historical and Modern Chinese Architecture*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS
116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 20th January. *ESTAMP*
Until 31st January. *Maly Trostenets: exhibition-chronicles of large-scale massacre*
Until 1st February. *Shop with Cites*
Until 15th March. *Manifest of Republic*
Until 7th April. *Fantasy Land*

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY
15 Svobody Square
Until 3rd February. *Iza Zaslouva and Leonid Galperin*

TROITSKY SUBURB
7A Bogdanovich Street
Until 3rd March. *Birds in Winter*
Until 7th April. *Insects and More*

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM
8 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 19th January. *Celebrating Jubilees: Pages of the Past*
Until 27th January. *We Are Coming To You, Belarus*

LIBRA
37 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st January. *Somewhere to the West of Minsk: Daily Life of Western Belarus*
Until 18th February. *Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso*

MAXIM BOGDANOVICH LITERARY MUSEUM
7A Bogdanovich Street
Until 15th February. *Adam Bogdanovich, Yevgeny Chirikov, Maxim Gorky: at Crossroads of Fates*

VILNIUS GALLERY
55 Kalinovsky Street
Until 20th January. *Travel Sketches*
Until 10th August. *Yakub Kolas and Vilno*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE
1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
17.01. La Bohème
19.01. Magic Flute
20.01. Chopiniana, Boléro, Carmen Suite
22.01. Turandot
23.01. Romeo and Juliet
The Blizzard literary-musical composition. Pushkin-Sviridov
24.01. Don Pasquale

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE
5 Volodarsky Street
17.01. Lady for a Day
18.01. Pane Kokhanku
19.01. Bridegrooms
20.01. Oedipus; How to Become Rich
22.01. Dangerous Liaisons
23.01. Fourth Planet
24.01. OblomOFF

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS
13 Pobediteley Avenue
17 and 18.01 Evening of A.P. Chekhov's Miniatures
19 and 20.01. The Mechanical Man
21.01. Master and Margarita
22.01. ...Forgetting Herostratos!
23.01. Abduction of Yelena
24.01. The Battlefield

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE
7 Engels Street
17 and 23.01. The Government Inspector
18.01. Pinsk Gentry
19 and 20.01. The Black Lady of Nesvizh
20.01. Two Souls
22.01. Tolerance (Le Dieu du carnage)
24.01. Harvest; School of Taxpayers

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE
44 Kropotkin Street
17.01. Mudromer
19.01. Tatiana's Day
20.01. Dzed
21.01. Dora or Sexual Neuroses of Our Parents
22.01. Lift
23.01. Woe from Wit
24.01. This Is All She

MUSICAL THEATRE
44 Myasnikov Street
17.01. Golden Placer of Operetta concert
18.01. Jane Eyre
19.01. Mister X
20.01. My Fair Lady
21.01. Casanova
22.01. Retro Style Wedding
23.01. Blue Cameo
24.01. Sofia Golshanskaya

BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE
3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street
17.01. Sparrow Night