

Belarus offers co-operation in producing Russian MC-21 passenger aircraft



Georgy Skripnichenko became known as 'Belarusian Salvador Dali' (Continued from the previous issue)



INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times



Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 44 (762) ● THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2018 ● WWW.SB.BY



President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, and President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, during their meeting in Minsk

Acceleration on the two-way road

President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, arrives in Belarus on official visit

Political activity should be based on mutual trust

Meeting the Chairman of the House of Representatives of Egypt, Ali Abdel-Aal Sayed, during his official visit to Minsk as head of the Egyptian delegation, Alexander Lukashenko stresses that Belarus is eager to liaise with Egypt, especially in the context of international relations. "We appreciate the role that Egypt is playing in that turbulent region. We're keeping a close eye on the conflict in Palestine, and on the role that Egypt is playing in stabilising the situation and settling relations between Israel and Palestine," says the President of Belarus.



Record in honorary guests book of Great Patriotic War Museum

By Vasily Kharitonov

The Belarusian leader conveyed his best wishes to the President of Egypt, saying, "We're ready to welcome him at any convenient time. We'll learn more about our opportunities so that we can step up efforts in building our relations."

The President pointed to the importance of inter-parliamentary collaboration between Belarus and Egypt, remarking that groups of friendship are promoting bilateral co-operation between our parliaments.

This was the first visit of the Speaker of the Egyptian Parliament to Minsk in the history of Belarusian-Egyptian inter-parliamentary contacts. Our two countries are interested in expanding trade-economic and

humanitarian co-operation. Accordingly, the Egyptian delegation visited a range of famous Belarusian enterprises, as well as one of the scientific-technical centres of the National Academy of Sciences and the Belarusian State University.

At present, Belarus and Egypt are implementing a comprehensive programme to develop interaction for 2018-2019. Last year, mutual trade amounted to \$97.4 million, which was significantly higher than in 2016. From January-September 2018, bilateral trade increased to \$79 million, with Belarus demonstrating a trade surplus.

A representative office of Minsk Automobile Works (MAZ) operates in Egypt, as does the Minsk Tractor Works

(MTZ) trading house. This year, MAZ opened an assembly plant in Egypt, while Amkodor, Gomselmash, and Bobruiskagromash began selling their products on the Egyptian market. Meanwhile, Belarus hosts four enterprises with 100-percent Egyptian capital and two joint Belarusian-Egyptian ventures.

The President of Egypt intends to visit Belarus in the first quarter of 2019, noted Ali Abdel-Aal Sayed, on meeting Mr. Lukashenko. He stressed Egypt's interest in expanding contacts with Belarus, facilitated by the upcoming top-level visit. Ali Abdel Aal Sayed conveyed the kindest greetings from Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to Alexander Lukashenko, also praising the re-

sults of Mr. Lukashenko's visit to Egypt in 2017, which helped intensify bilateral relations in both the political and economic sectors.

Ali Abdel-Aal Sayed thanked Belarus for supporting Egyptian initiatives in international organisations, including within the UN. "We constantly provide support to Belarus' initiatives within international organisations, including on the Human Rights Council," said the Chairman of the House of Representatives of Egypt.

This was the first visit of the Head of the House of Representatives of Egypt to Minsk in the history of Belarusian-Egyptian relations, during which a Belarusian-Egyptian inter-parliamentary agreement on co-operation was signed.

Ankara pleased to receive guests

By Oleg Bogomazov

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, sees good prospects for the development of trade with Turkey, as he noted on meeting the Chairman of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Binali Yildirim

Mr. Lukashenko noted that Belarusian-Turkish relations are yet to be fully explored, although he believes the one billion trade turnover of this year (or maybe more than that) is a significant accomplishment. He underlined, "We know what Turkey needs. You know what Belarus needs. By exchanging goods, we can bolster overall trade growth."

The Head of State pointed out the need to address a number of issues, primarily relating to trade and economy.

Mr. Yildirim has been the country's Prime Minister for the last two years but Turkey recently eliminated this position; since July 2018, Mr. Yildirim has headed the Turkish Parliament.

The President noted that the election of Binali Yildirim to the position of Chairman of the Turkish Parliament testifies to the high level of trust of the nation and leadership of Turkey. "We've



Binali Yildirim

been closely following events in your country. All the more so because Turkey has been a centre of attraction for all forces recently, particularly due to the disquieting situation in your region. Your independent policy and your stance on global development appeals to us. You've accomplished a great deal in this regard," said the Belarusian leader.

Mr. Yildirim conveyed good wishes from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to his Belarusian counterpart, as well as an invitation from the President of Turkey to visit this country.

A visit is planned for H1 2019, Mr. Yildirim told journalists, with many agreements to be signed, to take advantage of opportunities for co-operation in logistics, trade and tourism.

The same day also hosted negotiations between the Turkish delegation and the Belarusian Parliament. The Chairman of the Council of the Republic, Mikhail Myasnikov, praised prospects for inter-parliamentary relations, characterising talks with his Turkish counterpart as constructive. On meeting the Turkish Speaker, the Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, suggested groups of friendship, established at the parliaments of both states, to develop a 'roadmap' of collaboration.

Foundations have been laid and, after negotiations in the Council of the Republic, a joint statement was agreed on co-operation between the National Assembly of Belarus and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

Wide-ranging powers

By Vladimir Velikhov

Belarusian Ambassador to Russia should have extraordinary powers, notes Alexander Lukashenko, appointing Vladimir Semashko to the post

In addition to his ambassadorial duties in Russia, Vladimir Semashko will be the concurrent plenipotentiary representative of Belarus to the CIS Economic Council and the CSTO, as well as being a special representative of Belarus for integration co-operation within the framework of the Union State, the EAEU, the CIS and CSTO.

From 2014 to August 2018, Vladimir Semashko worked as Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister and, before this, occupied the position of First Deputy Prime Minister for several years. In the Government, he supervised the spheres of industry and the fuel-energy complex.

"There's no need to explain what Russia means to us in terms of trade, economy and culture, as well as humanitarian and human contacts. We've already discussed these issues earlier. He should wield special powers; he should have access to the President anytime to discuss matters concerning our relations with the Russian Federation. He will start working and put forward proposals on what should be done to be able to exercise his powers to the full extent," noted the Head of State.

The President also noted that he had discussed Vladimir Semashko's appointment with the Russian President. "I let Putin know about it beforehand. We've discussed in detail the nomination of Vladimir Semashko. The Russian President smiled and said that Vladimir Semashko is welcome in Moscow and that they know him well. In other words, the response was very positive," Mr. Lukashenko underlined.

The Head of State outlined tasks facing the new Belarusian Ambassador to Russia. The biggest challenge is to reduce the substantial trade deficit. "If we fail to fulfil this task, what kind of relations will Belarus and Russia have? We cannot go on neglecting this deficit of about \$7 billion in bilateral trade."

Mr. Semashko believes that this issue should be approached from two perspectives. Firstly, it's necessary to minimise the cost of energy as part of agreements with integration associations. Secondly, Belarus should boost the export of various products to the Russian market.

Belarus' Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei, noted that everything is in place to increase exports to Russia, including supplies of much-needed agricultural goods and machinery often imported by Russia from distant countries. "There is something to discuss here," he said.

Acceleration on the two-way road

By Vladimir Mikhailov

At first, some statistical data: from 2006-2016, the President of Belarus paid four official visits to Baku, while the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, travelled to Minsk on four official visits. In 2015, the Belarusian Head of State participated in the opening ceremony of the 1st European Games in the Azerbaijani capital.

The programme of the official visit by the Azerbaijani leader began with laying flowers at the Pobedy (Victory) Monument. President Aliyev then visited the Trading House of Azerbaijan, which opened in Minsk last May. He viewed the items on display and heard that the trading house currently acts only as an exhibition centre, to which he ventured that it would be a good idea to also make the goods available for direct sale.

From January-September 2018, our bilateral trade totalled \$331.5 million. Belarusian exports comprised \$321.9 million, while imports reached \$9.6 million. This year, the Belarusian export supplies to Azerbaijan primarily rely on tractors and tractor units, motor rail and tram carriages, food products, wood-processing items, grain-harvesting machinery and medicines.

Meanwhile, Belarus and Azerbaijan plan to jointly advance the markets of third countries. This fact was stressed by Alexander Lukashenko during his negotiations with Ilham Aliyev in Minsk.

The Belarusian Head of State noted that the countries have a good basis for wide production co-operation. “Flagships of Belarusian machine building —

MTZ and MAZ, as well as Ganja Automobile Plant — have demonstrated a worthy example of such work. More than 10,000 tractors have been already assembled in Ganja, alongside 3,500 units of automobile technique. Today we’re prepared to begin a new stage of co-operation — joint advancement to the markers of third countries,” asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

According to the President, there’re also prospects on such areas as the supply and assembly of electric buses, lifts, grain harvesters and other agricultural machinery



During negotiations in expanded format

in Azerbaijan. “We expect that sooner or later you will stop using American and German harvesters. We know how it goes: when a harvester is broken you need to pay as much for spare parts and other

An opportunity of investments of State Oil Company of Azerbaijan to the modernisation of Grodno Azot JSC was also high on the agenda. “Recently you’ve built an oil-processing facility in Tur-

President of Belarus.

The Head of State paid attention that over twenty-five years since the moment of establishing diplomatic relations the dialogue between the two states has acquired a

words, we see good dynamics, great prospects and tangible results across all areas of our interaction.”

The Azerbaijani Head of State admitted that he was very pleased to arrive in Be-

The presidents of Belarus and Azerbaijan, Alexander Lukashenko and Ilham Aliyev, adopted a joint statement after their talks in Minsk

components. Therefore, some time ago, we decided to manufacture our own harvesters, and the decision was right. I think that we will win in this sector. So we’re ready to set up a joint venture to produce this equipment in Azerbaijan and even focus on third countries,” noted Mr. Lukashenko.

The Belarusian Head of State also deemed it necessary to expand contacts in the agrarian sector and to raise

key. We’ll be glad at the arrival of Azerbaijani investors in Belarus and are ready for serious interaction in strategic branches,” said Mr. Lukashenko.

Moreover, the President of Belarus believes that the transport and logistics sphere also boasts a considerable reserve, for example, in the railway transportation, including as part of the creating the International North-South Transport Corridor and the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative.

It’s evident that Azerbaijan was and remains a reliable strategic partner for Belarus. “We highly appreciate your friendship and are ready to sincerely and openly facilitate the promotion of Azerbaijani interests in the centre of

strategic character. “High level of inter-state trust is not accidental. It’s based on ancient traditions of friendship of Belarusian and Azerbaijani peoples. This enables us to discuss even most complex issues in a constructive atmosphere,” noted Mr. Lukashenko.

The legal framework of Belarusian-Azerbaijani co-operation includes 110 agreements, with Belarus and Azerbaijan providing mutual support in the international arena on key issues and also in nominations to UN elective bodies.

Ilham Aliyev also confirmed that there’re concrete results across all areas of Belarusian-Azerbaijani interaction. “The distinguishing feature of our relations is that we fulfil everything we agree on. We support each other at all international organisations, and our trade-economic relations are on the rise. Collaboration in the manufacturing industry has been gaining momentum. We have a history of co-operation in the defence industry, culture and education. In other

larus again. According to him, regular exchange of visits at the top level testifies to close and friendly ties between Belarus and Azerbaijan — the countries which share a common history.

The presidents of Belarus and Azerbaijan, Alexander Lukashenko and Ilham Aliyev, adopted a joint statement after their talks in Minsk. The document points to the transition to a qualitatively level of the relations of friendship and co-operation which meet the realities of the 21st century. The heads of state are convinced that further strengthening of friendly relations and mutually beneficial collaboration between Belarus and Azerbaijan correspond to fundamental of the peoples of the both states’ nations.

FACTS
From January-September 2018, our bilateral trade totalled \$331.5 million. Belarusian exports comprised \$321.9 million, while imports reached \$9.6 million. This year, Belarusian exports to Azerbaijan centre on tractors and tractor units, motor rail and tram carriages, food products, wood-processing items, grain-harvesting machinery and medicines.

mutual food supplies. “Our dairy, meat and fish products, as well as confectionery, sell well in Azerbaijan. International trade is a two-way road. Therefore, we would like to see more Azerbaijani products on the Belarusian market,” the President said.

Europe,” stressed the Belarusian leader. Mr. Lukashenko especially noted that there’re no closed topics in the bilateral relations. “We haven’t ever co-operated against some other countries. We’re doing everything for the prosperity of our nations,” asserted the

FACTS
The legal framework of Belarusian-Azerbaijani co-operation includes 110 agreements, with Belarus and Azerbaijan providing mutual support in the international arena on key issues and also in nominations to UN elective bodies

FOCUS

The Minsk Times
Thursday
November 22
2018

3

Partners have their own competitive advantages

Belarus offers co-operation in producing Russian MC-21 passenger aircraft

By Alexey Fedosov

On meeting the Governor of the Irkutsk Region, Sergey Levchenko, Alexander Lukashenko said, "Irkutsk Aviation Plant is a flagship of the Russian mechanical engineering industry, intending to start making MC-21 aircraft in 2019. We have our sights on this aircraft, as our aviators have suggested buying planes like these."

The President stressed that Belarus has ambitious plans concerning potential collaboration. In particular, Mr. Lukashenko has suggested joint manufacturing with relevant Belarusian companies and the Aircraft Repair Plant, whose new production facilities are located near Minsk National Airport. "Since we have experience of maintaining aircraft from Soviet days, we'd like to repurpose our enterprises and our [aircraft repair] plant. We can expand the enterprise if there's work for the team, and we're very much interested in establishing manufacturing co-

operation with your company," said the Belarusian leader.

After his meeting with the Belarusian Head of State, Mr. Levchenko told journalists that the first MC-21 aircraft has already been manufactured and will be the first in serial production. He also noted that Mr. Lukashenko has expressed interest in these aircraft and servicing the planes in Belarus.

According to TASS, the MC-21 (a mainline 21st century aircraft)

is a Russian project for short and medium-haul passenger carriage. The narrow-bodied aircraft is the second (after the Sukhoi Superjet 100) in Russian civil aviation to not rely on the Soviet legacy. On May 28th, 2017, a trial MC-21-300 made its first flight from Irkutsk. Unlike the Sukhoi Superjet, which can fly up to 3,000km only, the MC-

21 can travel about 6,000km, making it a good substitute for Tu-154 and Tu-204/214 aircraft, as well as Airbus A320 and Boeing 737.

Belarus is ready for further development of mutually beneficial trade-economic relations with the Irkutsk Region, as well as implementation of new joint projects in other areas.

The Irkutsk Region is industrially developed, being home to enterprises within the extracting industry. Traditionally, BELAZ Belarusian machinery has been in demand there, as have Belarusian buses. Belarus is keen to offer other modern technologies, including eco-goods and the latest agricultural machinery: tractors, forage and grain harvesters. These easily rival foreign analogues in their technical characteristics and quality, while boasting a more competitive price.



Strategy based on modern reality

By Vladimir Khromov

Alexander Lukashenko notes efficiency of domestic military-industrial complex but sets task of doubling profits as soon as possible

On hearing the report of the Chairman of the State Military-Industrial Committee, Roman Golovchenko, the President stated that the performance of the Belarusian defence industry is satisfactory on the whole, including its profitability and average salaries. However, he stressed, "These financial figures represent only half of what needs to be achieved by the end of next year. We want to double not only physical volumes but cash earnings."

Mr. Lukashenko noted that the world has changed and that demand for smart high-precision weapons and weapons to defend against them is strong. "We make defensive systems. They represent what many countries



Focus on modernisation

need. We don't intend to launch an offensive against anyone but we need to build local expertise to satisfy domestic demand for highly effective defensive weapons and to offer some to other countries."

The Head of State accentuated that he wants all Belarusian defence companies to do better, regardless of whether they are run by the state or are private owned. "There's no difference, although, of course, we need

strict oversight and administration over these enterprises," he said. Mr. Lukashenko asked Mr. Golovchenko about the state of affairs in the State Military-Industrial Committee of Belarus and plans for achieving strategic goals. In 2018, Belarusian exports of weapons and military technologies will exceed \$1 billion, explained the Chairman of the State Military-Industrial Committee, Roman Golovchenko, speaking to Belarus 1 TV

Channel after his meeting with the President. "As of November 1st, we're approaching \$1 billion of exports. If everything goes according to plan, we'll exceed \$1 billion this year," he asserted.

Belarus currently liaises with more than sixty nations in this sphere. "There are countries which are 'getting used to' Belarusian weaponry and are satisfied with our co-operation because we offer an acceptable scheme for our foreign partners. We're flexible and our weapons and military technologies rival (or outperform) all others worldwide," noted Mr. Golovchenko.

The Chairman of the State Military-Industrial Committee demonstrated the latest Belarusian developments in radio-electronics (including those for use in combat conditions). "Those using them say that they do exactly as they're meant to. The price also plays a role. Our technologies aren't cheap but they represent good value for money."



Degree of trust can't be underestimated

By Olga Korneeva

Belarus and the International Monetary Fund preserve a high level of trust, asserted Belarus' Prime Minister, Sergei Rumas, as he met the IMF Senior Resident Representative for Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, Nadeem Ilahi

Belarus and the International Monetary Fund maintain a high level of trust. Prime Minister of Belarus Sergei Rumas made the statement as he met with the IMF Senior Resident Representative for Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe, Nadeem Ilahi.

Mr. Rumas noted that the IMF had always been viewed as an important and reliable partner. "A high level of trust has evolved between the Belarusian Government and the IMF in the last few years. Our views on key things have become considerably closer. I sincerely hope that we will continue our dialogue at the current level," he said.

According to Mr. Rumas, the new policy of the Belarusian Government will be aimed at raising the competitive ability of the economy, bolstering the market and private property institutions, and pursuing a balanced macroeconomic policy. Structural changes will also be at the centre of the government's attention. The main spheres of reform fully coincide with the IMF views; however, the country will remain committed to a moderate reform pace, the PM believes.

Article IV consultations with the IMF, scheduled for November 2018, will offer a good opportunity to discuss economic policy in Belarus. "We expect that the constructive attitude of the IMF team, attention to the nuances and peculiarities of the geopolitical and economic situation of Belarus, will allow a balanced Article IV report. We hope that the forthcoming meetings will be a good reason to refresh the agenda of our dialogue with the IMF, to consider aspects of the new action programme of the Belarusian Government," concluded the PM.

In turn, Nadeem Ilahi noted that the IMF team is preparing for the forthcoming Article IV meetings and hopes that the consultations will proceed in a constructive manner.



By Vasily Kharitonov

Belarus' power system is among the most complex and vital to the national economy. "Its stability is a vital element of state security and independence," Mr. Lukashenko asserts.

Great funds have been invested into the branch: more than \$1 billion over the last five years alone. Over this period, Belarus has reached an advanced position among CIS states, reducing annual consumption of imported fuel by 3 billion cubic metres (around \$600 million of savings) by increasing its own manufacture of electricity by 2.1 billion kW. 2018 was the first year in which Belarus had no need to import any electricity.

Belarus' power system is not only one of the most reliable and efficient within the post-Soviet space but rivals several European countries. "Despite these successes, our power engineers could do better," comments Mr. Lukashenko. "We need to determine how best to eliminate weaknesses and enhance the efficiency of the whole power system."

The industry has sufficient economic, technological and managerial reserves to devise an action plan, although the Head of State emphasised that no 'experiments' will be undertaken, stating that set-

Time to reform energy system

Government should forecast country's fuel and energy balance, aiming for 100 percent energy independence and security, underlines President Alexander Lukashenko, discussing ways to improve Belarusian power engineering



backs would be unacceptable. "We need to take into consideration international energy

trends and to adopt best practices and learn from mistakes, such as from our neighbours,"

asserts the President.

Mr. Lukashenko stresses that the ultimate goal is

streamlining the power system and cutting unnecessary costs, as well as ensuring fair, transparent and competitive rate setting. Other areas of focus include raising investment and implementing cutting-edge technologies.

Speaking at a governmental session to discuss these matters, the President asked for reports on a number of questions. Firstly, what are the drawbacks of Belarus' power system today? Secondly, what does the government suggest doing in order to streamline this sector and how much time will it take? Are there any associated risks and how will they be minimised? Meanwhile, what will be the effect of improvements on the power system, on the domestic economy and on our people?

The President notes that the Belarusian nuclear power station will soon be launched, producing electricity to meet domestic needs (the latter being the main priority in improving this sector).

The government is considering subsidy and, according to the Deputy Prime Minister, Igor Lyashenko, an inter-departmental group is currently working on proposals for wider use of electricity across Belarus (at enterprises and in homes). In pursuit of this path, businesses could be offered a reduced tariff rate.

Remembering meetings of previous years

By Alexander Pimenov

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, meets former president of Latvia, Guntis Ulmanis, at Independence Palace

Alexander Lukashenko and Guntis Ulmanis had a warm conversation, remembering previous meetings. "It was a pleasure for me to meet with you today because you're close to me. I recall our previous meetings," noted the former president of Latvia. "No one will ruin those cordial relations that we had and still have."

"It's good to recall those meetings," agreed the Belarusian President. Guntis Ulmanis underlined that Riga awaits a visit by the Belarusian Head of State. "My counterpart [the current president of Latvia]

has made this proposal. During a conversation with the Foreign Minister of Belarus it was mentioned that you should definitely visit Riga."

"I should," said the Belarusian Head of State. Alexander Lukashenko and Guntis Ulmanis discussed various topics, including close contacts between citizens of our two countries.

Guntis Ulmanis arrived in Belarus to take part in events dedicated to 100 years since the declaration of Latvia's independence. He was the first president of Latvia after the country regained independence in the 1990s, and is the great-nephew of Karlis Ulmanis, the Chairman of the Interim Government involved in establishing the Latvian Republic in November 1918.



The former president characterised relations between Belarus and Latvia, saying, "A good neighbour is half of what brings success to the development of each state."

Symbolically, Guntis Ulmanis began by saying, "Good evening, my dear Belarusians!" He called Latvia and Belarus very close countries which have experienced both difficult and happy times over the years. The former president of Latvia noted that he always has a wonderful time when visiting the city of Minsk. "I always say in Europe that people should come to Minsk and see what a nation can do despite many tragic years,"

Close countries and good neighbours

Belarus has always been an initiator and author of good relations with other states, notes former president of Latvia, Guntis Ulmanis, while visiting Minsk

underlined Mr. Ulmanis. He added that the people of Belarus and Latvia have never had conflicts and once lived side by side under the Rzecz Pospolita, the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union.

Mr. Ulmanis mentioned some landmarks in the history of Latvia, noting his country's choice to join the European Union and NATO. "The fact that we are members of these organisations doesn't prevent us from talking to other countries on vital issues. Economic issues are particularly pertinent," underlined the former president of Latvia.

As far as relations with Belarus are concerned, he noted

that contacts at various levels have remained strong these twenty-five years, since establishing diplomatic relations in our 'new' history. Moreover, we're connected by close human and cultural contacts, with Latvia being home to several dozen thousand ethnic Belarusians.

The former president of Latvia took part in the opening of an exhibition at the National Art Museum of Belarus, entitled *Latvia is 100. History, Art, Traditions*. More than two hundred pictorial and decorative-and-applied artworks are on show, demonstrating the rich history and diversity of the Latvian nation.



Screen entertainment on the underground

Passengers of Minsk metro are now able to take exciting tour of country while waiting for their train

By Olga Pasiak

Bird's eye view shots of such cities as Pinsk, Mogilev and Soligorsk are being shown not only on the www.sb.by website but on plasma screens at all stations of the Minsk subway, in celebration of our Year of Native Land. The project is the initiative of Belarus Segodnya Publishing House, being part of SB-TV Internet tel-

evision's updated format. Other interesting projects include aerovideos which show protected areas, or cranberry harvesting from the sky. TV studio editor Sergey Duzh comments, "One of the first such videos about Khoyniki was watched by over 100,000 people! We now want even more people to see the beauty of our country from a bird's-eye view. The subway is a great platform,

since you can watch videos without sound, just reading the subtitles. It's important on the noisy subway."

Igor Baikov, the General Director of Metro-TV, says that, after watching the videos, he was pleasantly surprised by how perfect they are for the Minsk underground. "Videos run for two or two and a half minutes, with subtitles to explain key moments,

enabling passengers to learn something useful while waiting for the train. The programme is being rotated, so that a different video is shown at a certain time each day, to avoid passengers seeing the same over and again."

The Metro-TV network screens are located in the middle of each platform, reaching a daily audience of about 800,000 people.

A single front against terrorism

By Svetlana Savelieva

Belarus supports the establishment of a single counterterrorism front and consolidation of efforts of the UN, OSCE, CSTO, CIS and other high-profile organisations, noted Belarus' Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei at the international conference *Preventing and Counteracting Terrorism in the Digital Age*

"We advocate a comprehensive approach based on observing the principles of international law without double standards. Fragmentation of counterterrorism efforts into coalitions that pursue their own political ends, involvement of non-state subjects, and support for some terrorist organisations in their fight against other terrorist groups will only exacerbate the threat of terrorism and extremism," asserted Mr. Makei. "Therefore, we support the establishment of a single counterterrorism front and consolidation of efforts of the UN, OSCE, CSTO, CIS and other organisations dealing with this matter."

Belarus also welcomes the signing of the Code of Conduct for the Achievement of a Terrorism-Free World in New York in September this year.

Motivated conversation of nations

By Mikhail Overyanov

The role of the United Nations Organisation in ensuring world order, as well as humanitarian, cultural and educating activities cannot be underestimated. However, its ability to provide security on the planet in recent years has aroused questions among many analysts.



Alexey Belyaev, Associate Professor of the Political Studies Chair at the Belarusian State Economic University, explains that from time to time reforms also affect the UN, "In 1963, the UN Security Council was expanded from 11 to 15 non-permanent members to include the appearance of new participants in the structure, which are elected for two years."

From 1997, reform started and continues to the present day with the reform of the most important body of the UN — its Secretariat. During the transfor-



mations a new position appeared, that of the First Deputy Secretary General, and opportunities are being studied to expand the powers of the Secretary General. Considerable changes in the last twenty years have occurred in the structure and form of UN activity dealing with issues of disarmament and peaceful activity, human rights and gender equality.

However, as most members of the international community believe, all these reforms are of a certain type and don't tackle the essence and major core of the UN — the problem of maintaining

peace and security on the planet and the activity of the Security Council. Mr. Belyaev continued, "In the past few years, the slogan 'The world is bigger than five' began to acquire popularity; it envisages the necessity to restrict the rights of the UN Security Council permanent members. If we look at the statistical data, it turns out that from the start of UN activity up to last year, the veto right was used 240 times. However, the 'obstacle' is that, according to the UN Charter, it's possible to abolish the veto only by changing the Charter, which

can be done only by a unanimous decision of the Security Council permanent members. It's unlikely that today — during a new round of conflict between Russia and the collective West — will serious progress be made."

One more widely spread proposal is the expansion of the number of both non-permanent and permanent members of the UN Security Council. Over the years since the foundation of the organisation, the number of members has almost quadrupled from 51 states to 193. Moreover, the representation of the

continents, for example, in the Security Council, isn't equal: for instance, Europe (including Russia) has 3 permanent places while Africa has none though it's a home to 25 percent of all UN member states and 1.2bn people.

According to Mr. Belyaev, there is much disagreement around financial issues, "In 2017-2018, it's planned to collect around \$5.4bn for UN maintenance. The payers are UN member states, but their contributions significantly differ. The largest 'sponsor' was the USA, which contributed 22 percent of the whole budget. However, in recent times, the White House has threatened to reduce its financial participation in UN projects while a range of middle and small countries are debtors. In summer 2018, the gap in the UN's budget exceeded \$800m while more than 80 states were non-payers. How to make the UN cheaper or to enhance the efficiency of its activity is one of the most urgent issues and reasons for reform."

Despite all these difficulties, today the UN is the only operating international venue that represents the interests and allows the expression of opinions of all countries and nations. It would be inexcusable to lose it.



Smorgon today

By Tatiana Kondratieva

WWI saw four empires clash, and the re-division of Europe. One of the largest military conflicts in the history of humanity involved Belarus, where the Western Front was sited: Russia's major shield. From autumn 1915 to winter 1918, the Germans and Austrians struggled to reach Minsk.

Smorgon is currently marking the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War, as it was called at that time (not knowing that humanity would face even more bloody conflict during WWII). The town is a beautiful and comfortable settlement, but was once almost wiped from the map, due to bombing and gas attacks.

Ghostly settlement

During WWI, mortal battles took place near Smorgon, it being the only town on the front, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. On September 15th, 1915, after an eight-hour-long battle, the Germans took the town following Russian retreat. However, soon afterwards, the Russians returned and fought fiercely for 810 days.

The Local History Museum details these and many other interesting events. Director Dina Shchurovskaya and curator Olga Samarskaya are currently preparing the *Frozen Moments of the War* exhibition, featuring shots by photographer Vladimir Bogdanov.

"On these unique photos, we can see villages of the Smorgon District from 1915-1917," says Ms. Shchurovskaya, showing me original photos from the personal album of Fritz Hoffmann, a lieutenant of the Prussian Landwehr infantry regiment #3. "Due to the pedantry of German officers, we have the opportunity to learn about the way of life of militarymen and peasants, and the destiny of historical sites. This is, for example, a women's 'battalion of death' commanded

Smorgon, risen from the ashes

Ruins of Krevo Castle, Ogiński estate and Zolotaya Gorka memorial complex: Smorgon recollects the First World War



by Bochkareva, while this is the famous Ilya Muromets aircraft, and this is an ordinary wedding."

On the eve of commemorative events marking the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI, Smorgon faced crowds of tourists. Since 2014, when a memorial complex was unveiled, increasing numbers of people have been making the trip.

"These primarily include Russians," notes the museum director. "Many are interested in



where the famous women's 'battalion of death' saw action. Of course, there's no exact site but we can point to a section from Smorgon to Krevo which hosted attacks in July 1917." In the late 19th-early 20th century, Smorgon was flourishing, being a centre of leather production (home to a third of all leather workers on the western frontier of the Russian Empire). After military actions, only 130 people returned, of an original 16,000.

Tranquil Zalesie

By some miracle, Michal Kleofas Ogiński's Zalesie estate

survived, remaining almost untouched, despite being located just 11km from Smorgon. What saved it from destruction?

Museum director Lyudmila Groditskaya tells us, "Many places connected with military operations are located on Zalesie territory. The estate survived because it housed a headquarters and a hospital."

Zalesie was a pre-front line. General Major Dzhunkovsky, the Commander of the 8th Siberian rifle division, wrote in his diary: "The headquarters is located in the manor — a very neglected place but with a wonderful park.

There was enough space, so I had a separate room'.

Dzhunkovsky ordered that soldiers be buried, which led to the appearance of crosses near local churches, as seen in black-and-white photos from that time.

Several hospitals existed in Zalesie, with one located directly on the estate. Another, housing four hundred patients, was situated at the local railway station, headed by Leo Tolstoy's daughter, Alexandra. She wrote: "Many years have passed but I remember everything as if it was yesterday... Some dirty, brown small stream of smoke would appear and we'd... begin putting on masks, by command. We used them to save ourselves and our horses. I remember how a friend of our Ryabchik, which had recently littered, saved her numerous puppies by taking them by the scruff of their neck: the whole, large family to an island on one of the bogs near the river. The moisture there, from the water, didn't allow gases to collect. Understanding this by some gut feeling, the mother saved her puppies'. Germans launched gas attacks from October 1915 and within one such attack, up to 300 soldiers and officers died. Muddy clouds of poison caused people to drop to their knees.

Zolotaya Gorka and unfinished memorial

On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War, Smorgon hosted various events, as Anna Dzhumkova, the Head of Ideological Work and Youth Affairs at Smorgon District Executive Committee, tells us. "Jointly with the History Institute of the NAS, we conducted the second part of the international conference, dedicated to WWI events in Smorgon. We decided to organise a contest of drawings on the WWI theme, and chose nine winners across three nominations, to receive Academy of Sciences diplomas. We screened a film, and presented Vladimir Liguta's book, *Anyone Who Wasn't in Smorgon Didn't See the War.*"





Migrant caravan ignites ‘xenophobia’

Hundreds of residents of Tijuana gathered to demonstrate against the migrant caravan, shouting ‘no to invasion’ and ‘Mexico for Mexicans’, while others condemned the protest, calling it racist and xenophobic

At least 3,000 migrants are in Tijuana, a Mexican city close to the border with California, to seek asylum in the United States, or even in Canada.

They are part of a larger caravan of migrants who left Central America a month ago, fleeing poverty and violence in their home countries.

The so-called ‘Citizen

Movement against the chaos of the migrant caravan’ in Tijuana has accused the migrants of causing insecurity.

“Mexico has always been a nation that has opened its doors to all those in need, but there are ways in which I can come to your house requesting support and asking for help,” said one resident.

A few yards away from the protesters, some Tijuana residents, including LGBT groups, stood in support of the migrants defending them against what they consider an expression of racism and xenophobia.

“They are some, they are not all (the migrants that cause problems). We can not label everyone, because that’s where

very good people come from. There are women, children,” says Yolanda Rocha, founder of the Mariposas, an LGBT shelter. During a talk at a hostel, the Archbishop of Canada, Leonardo Marin Saavedra, raised the possibility of the migrants being accepted in Canada if the conditions demanded by the Canadian government are met.

Close to 1,000 still missing after deadliest California wildfire

Emergency services sifted through the charred wreckage of California’s deadliest ever wildfire, searching for signs of nearly 1,000 people believed still missing as crews made progress in bringing the blaze under control

The remains of 77 people have been recovered, the Butte County Sheriff’s Office said, as it cut the number of missing to 993 from 1,276. It gave no other details.

The Camp Fire broke out in Northern California on November 8th and last week all but obliterated Paradise, a mountain town of nearly 27,000 people around 145km north of state capital Sacramento.

Officials said it had consumed about 150,000 acres and was 65 percent contained late last Sunday, up from 60 percent earlier in the day, as prospects of a heavy rainstorm raised hopes that that percentage will rise as the week progresses.

They said full containment was not expected until November 30th, however.



The rain would also make it harder for forensic teams sifting through ash and dirt looking for the bones of the dead. “The rain will easily disturb the soil where remains might be found,” Burke said.

Pathologists from the University of Nevada, Reno, worked through the weekend as firefighters peeled back debris, collecting bits of burned bones and photographing everything that might help identify the victims.

The storm, which is expected to carry moderate winds of 15-20 mph could also cause problems for evacuees, hundreds of whom are sheltering in tents and cars.

It isn’t clear how many people are in need of shelter but as many as 52,000 people had been ordered to evacuate.

“While it isn’t an exceptionally strong storm, the recent burns make mud slides on hills and slopes a real danger,” Burke said.

South of Sacramento near Malibu, at least two inches of rain are expected to fall on a second fire, the Woolsey, known to have killed three people.

The cause of both fires is under investigation, but electric utilities reported localised equipment problems around the time they broke out.

PG&E Corp has said it could face liability that exceeds its insurance coverage if its equipment were found to have caused the Camp Fire.

Apple cuts production orders for all three new iPhone models

iPhone maker Apple Inc has cut production orders in recent weeks for all three iPhone models launched in September

A lower-than-expected demand for the new iPhones and Apple’s decision to offer more models has made it more difficult to anticipate the number of components and handsets the company needs. Apple shocked investors a few weeks ago with a lower-than-expected sales forecast for the Christmas quarter, prompting certain suppliers to issue warnings that pointed to weakness in new iPhone sales.

The company started selling its latest phone generation, the iPhone XS and XS Max, in September and the XR model in October.

Japan, South Korea plan to resume Iran oil imports from January

Refiners in Japan and South Korea are looking to resume Iranian oil imports from January after receiving waivers from US sanctions on Tehran

The unexpected resurgence in Iranian oil imports due to the waivers has helped push spot prices for Middle East crude and condensate to their lowest in more than a year.

The United States in November granted exemptions to eight countries, allowing them to import some Iranian crude for another 180 days. Japan and South Korea were among the top five buyers of Iranian crude and condensate before they stopped imports in the third quarter ahead of the sanctions.

South Korean refiners are set to hold their Iranian oil imports at zero until the end of the year, and they may resume shipments in late January or early February as buyers are in talks with Iran to sign new contracts.

“They are seeking to get the best price and are in talks with Iran,” said a source with direct knowledge of the matter.

Most tankers are booked until December, so South Korea may load Iran oil shipments in January at the earliest, he said.

It takes about 25 days for oil shipments from Iran to arrive at South Korea. Iran also has the option of selling oil from storage in Dalian, China, which would shorten delivery time.



Georgy Skripnichenko's exhibitions always arouse audience interest

By Veniamin Mikheev

(Continued from the previous issue)

Mr. Skripnichenko considers himself to be a realist but his formal paintings don't always confirm this, since his style can be so various — even when creating landscapes and still-life works. His figures and objects may be realistic but they are only details in his larger plot. He likes to interpret space and time, exploring them sometimes in a way only he fully understands. He uses irony, creating juxtaposition between the serious and comedic. Accordingly, he gives complicated names to his paintings, with some sense of fantasy, combining elements which are not natural companions. However, he always strives to ensure a certain logic, for those with time to ponder.

From conversations with Georgy Skripnichenko:

My philosophy is simple. I transfer to the canvas my emotions, feelings and visions of the world. However, I do this via expressive forms available to me.

What inspired you to become an artist?

Apparently, my genes; my father tried to enter art school before the war and was unsuccessful, despite his great desire and passion for painting. My grandfather also liked painting. I lived in Slutsk, which has a strong creative environment and an art studio run by Vladimir Sadin — a great enthusiast. Nikolay Korsov also had huge influence over me, with his real passion for painting. We became friends and he managed to direct me in this path. Art school saw me painting from morning until evening, to the point of exhaustion.

Do you think that time has helped you to develop as an artist?

Art is my life; I know nothing else. During my youth, when I felt everything to the max, my only goal was to be like Leonardo da Vinci.

Undoubtedly, all Mr. Skripnichenko's works are recognisable. His great life experience from over 70 years, dating from his post-war childhood, includes difficult times when there was little to celebrate. He worked on a building site and attended night school, painting in his free time and sometimes making up to 300 sketches a week...

Wonderful sides of one style

It won't be an exaggeration to say that painter Georgy Skripnichenko became known as an author of various types of mystifications and paradoxes. When it refers to surrealism in the Belarusian pictorial art they primarily say about his creativity.



and Velazquez inspires me to make most of my images appear real. However, I also change them from reality, as is the fashion. My creativity starts with a clean sheet and I have no idea where each day will lead me, relying on my intuition. Sometimes, it's enough to touch a stretched canvas and inspiration comes. At other times, I already know what I want to achieve. I usually start as a realist, making lots of sketches, but I can also be inspired to mix realistic images with elements of surrealism.

He left many incomplete works, some begun over a decade ago, which he liked to return to, sometimes finding an unexpected artistic solution. However, he could also suddenly lose interest in a work. So, canvases were left incomplete until he felt inspired again. New discoveries were applied to old themes, further developing plots.

Perhaps, this is a feature of Mr. Skripnichenko as a creative person. He was always pushing his borders and found new limits through life experience. When his impressions were united, an idea was formed, which could be expressed.

From conversations with the painter:

How would you describe your style of painting and do you reflect that which resides in your soul?

I can't give a simple answer. Each artist works according to their talent. I was very surprised when Finnish gallery owners were interested in my early works, as I thought they were irrelevant.

Nevertheless, how would you define your creative credo?

I'm a realist, so I can't create abstract works. Probably, my love of Rembrandt, El Greco

His original views began early in his days at art school; even then, he was confident in his style. Without the support of his teachers, among whom was People's Artist of Belarus Leonid Shchemelev, he might have been asked to leave. Mr. Shchemelev emphasised to the director of the school that, if they excluded Skripnichenko, whom could they ask to stay? It may have been the most authoritative assessment of his talent.

In the studio, some works from those days remain — simple in composition. However, his still-life works show a desire for something beyond reality. His paintings are even more detached from the everyday, influenced by Picasso's Cubism. They lack detail, rather using symbolism.

From conversations with the painter:

Are your works based on life?

Certainly, what else can inspire them? Everything comes from reality and all that is associated with my own life, my home town of Slutsk, and the city of Minsk. Regardless of my travels abroad, I've always wanted to return home. We have a great

national school for graphics, painting and sculpture. We rival anything happening abroad and may even have higher skills.

What is this Belarusian art school?

We have a very good graphical school, with high professionalism. At the Academy of Arts, youngsters receive a serious education from great teachers.

Do you consider yourself to be a Belarusian artist or an international artist?



Of course, I'm a Belarusian artist — a real one. However, I don't like the distinction between Belarusian and international. If I'm a high level Belarusian artist, it means I am international. I won't deny the influence of Picasso, Dalí or Van Gogh, or that of world contemporary art. All impresses and inspires me. We are each individual, yet are inspired by what's around us. It would be impossible for me to move to another planet, since this is my world. I perceive everything in it and make it my own. The more able you are as an artist, the more international you become.

How many works have you created?

Thousands: drawings, paintings, watercolours, graphics, lithographs, etchings and sketches.

You combine reality, asso-

ciations and thoughts. Is this essential to the creative process?

I had a period when I used to illustrate books, drawing futuristic cities with flying cars from my imagination. Where did those images come from? Nothing comes from nothing. A person needs to be open minded. Probably, my knowledge is intuitive, as no one directed me. I read Pushkin and was interested in avant-garde art, but it's hard to say for sure where ideas come from.

Is it important for you to be recognised as an artist?

I'm satisfied that my works reside in the National Art Museum and the Museum of Modern Fine Art. It's great. Of course, they're also found in private collections around the world and have been seen at dozens of international exhibitions. Once, I received a magazine from the USA by mail, in which there was an article about Georgy Skripnichenko of Belarus; they printed one of my works, which was pleasing.

What is the idea behind your paintings?

They reveal my inner world. We can assume that every artist strives for harmony, regardless of declarations to the contrary. Georgy Skripnichenko approaches



harmony via life's conflicts, as we see from his *Along Life's Path*, created during twenty years. He liked texture in painting, alongside loud, colourful bursts and elements of collage. He loved painting with precise detail as well as using complex associative, imaginative structures, which are fantastically diverse and attractive.

All are sides of one style. Perhaps, this helped him keep his integrity and a panoramic view of the world. In this respect his pictures belong to the works which form new scales not only in the Belarusian pictorial art.



Hats off to the builders!

Reconstruction of wooden household outbuilding — built without a single nail — completed in Grodno

By Tatiana Kondratieva

The third stage of reconstruction is almost complete. The object is of great value: it's the oldest monument made of wooden architecture in Belarus. The two previous stages cleaned the building from modern layers of dirt. Moreover, workers reinforced the foundation and replaced rotten logs. They are now changing the roof of the building. What will the architectural monument look like in the future and who will live there?

The wooden household outbuilding (also known as *lyamus*) was built over 200 years ago and is now located almost in the centre of the city. Despite this, the construction is not obvious: it's securely hidden from the eyes of passers-by by the thick walls of the former St. Brigitte Monastery.

The reconstruction works began in October 2016. The project was developed in Poland and then agreed at the Ministry of Culture of Belarus. Funding is provided by Poland and some money is provided by the Grodno Roman Catholic Diocese. Belarusians are at work on the site.

Such wooden structures were common in Western Belarus, Poland and Lithuania. However, only a few of them have been preserved, since wood is subject to decay more than other material. Grodno's *lyamus* is a two-storey building with a loggia on the second floor and arched galleries on

the main facade. It's built in the traditions of folk architecture, lined with massive timber, without the use of staples and nails. Under part of the building there is a basement and wooden steps leading to the second floor. The four-pitched roof is covered with wooden shingles.

At this stage of restoration, the roof will be replaced first. To date, it is already half-covered with wooden aspen bars, made using special technology. After that, joiners will begin work repairing the external staircase and replacing the whole balustrade. The main task of the builders is to preserve the building in its original form. Of course, the construction is completed without nails and metal fasteners, and old technologies have been replaced by new developments — including of Belarusian specialists. The next stage of work is planned to be completed by the end of 2018.

"Workers are now recovering the roof," says the scientific director, the architect of Grodnograzhdanproekt Institute — Yelena Schastnaya. "Before that, the roof supports were strengthened, the rafters were protected from pests and mould. It is difficult to say how much more time it will take to finish. The plan has already been drawn up but has not yet been approved. It is necessary to replace windows, doors, floor. New details will be as close as possible to the original."

Restoration of the historical and cultural building in Grodno



Reconstruction is underway

is gaining momentum. After it is fully complete, the area near the *lyamus* will be open to all. In addition, an entrance for tourist buses will be created. The church museum will exhibit many artefacts from the Catholic Diocese — includ-

ing rare copies of books and ancient documents. Soon this beautiful example of wooden architecture with magnificent details will have the chance of a new life and will be another interesting attraction for citizens and visitors.

Winning while dancing

By Olga Korneeva

The national team of Belarus stepped onto the medal podium seven times at the IDO World Discodance and Disco Freestyle Championships, held in the Swedish town of Örebro

Our country hasn't seen such tremendous success before. Belarusians competed with athletes from 17 countries, including leaders in disco style such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany and others. As a result, our athletes — ten youngsters from the modern dance school Black Fox — were winners of prizes in practically all categories. 14-year-old Diana Kuznetsova performed especially successfully.

She managed to outstrip 103 rivals in the disco solo and 24 opponents in disco freestyle, which enabled her to become a two-time world champion among the juniors. Her coach, Uliana Oleinikova, explains the success of her pupil, "Diana came to dance at our school in 2003 and at first she didn't show great promise. It wasn't obvious that she was a young champion, although one could already see her champion character. Her hard-working nature, diligence and readiness to listen (rather than just work on her physical traits) helped Diana become a successful athlete. After two years of training, she began to take part in international competitions and to bring trophies back to the country. Diana claimed her first big victory in 2015 at the European Championships, which was also held in Örebro. She performed in the children's category and took first place."

Diana herself admits that she wanted to practice something that she had enjoyed from childhood. She tried many things, but it was only after finding herself at disco lessons and seeing the expressive and energetic dances come to life, that she understood that it was what she had always wanted to do.

"At first, dancing was just my hobby, but gradually it became a sport and a way of life for me. I learnt many new and interesting things while travelling to various countries. The most important thing is that dancing, as with any sport, makes a person stronger, more purposeful and forms their character," says Diana.

The athlete doesn't deny that sometimes it's difficult for her. She has two hours of training each day, while before the competitions the lessons are even more intensive, "I enjoy it all very much. When there's big ambition, a person can overcome everything."



A moment of victorious match between Belarus and San Marino

Obviously, there's no shame for such a game

Belarus' national football team defeats squads of Luxembourg and San Marino in Nations League

By Mikhail Averianov

The national squad of Belarus began well, beating Luxembourg, and raising their position within the group. Stanislav Dragun was the hero of the match, scoring two victorious goals. It's possible to follow a coach's instructions and to systematically threaten the rival's net, but still being left with zero point if failing to send the ball into the net. Such a bold scenario was performed by the footballers from Luxembourg in the first round of the group tournament when they accepted Moldova. The guests looked rather well but then missed once, then again, and finally finished with frustrating 0:4.

Stanislav's first goal was perfect, sending the team into halftime in an elevated mood, and intent on further triumphs. Dragun's second goal was perhaps even more important. During the first ten minutes of the second half Luxembourg had seized the initiative, attacking aggressively, but Dragun's second goal, sent just under the crossbar, put the rival squad firmly in its place, no doubt to coach Igor Kriushenko's delight.

Some may be reluctant to loudly celebrate our success, saying that Belarusian football has fallen far since its victories of a few years ago. Our defeat of 'dwarf countries' may have less kudos, but all triumphs

should be celebrated, helping take us a step closer to a place in EURO-2022.

Last Sunday, our national team beat San Marino away and reached the Nations League play-offs. It was again Dragun who opened the score, in the 8th minute, with a kick from the penalty area. We had several more opportunities to score, but it wasn't until the 54th minute that a quick attack on the right flank saw Dragun pass to the centre of the goalkeeper's area, allowing Anton Saroka to bring the score to 2:0.

In the first round of the Nations League (League D) our Belarusian footballers have beaten San Marino at Minsk's Dynamo Stadium — 5:0, and

have defeated Luxembourg twice — 1:0 (at home) and 2:0 (away). They've had two draws with Moldova (each 0:0) and are the only squad out of 55 Nations League participants to have conceded not a single goal during the group stage.

The final position is as follows: Belarus has 14 points (6 matches, ball difference — 10-0). Luxembourg has 10 points (6), Moldova — 9 (6) and San Marino — 0 (6). First place in the group has enabled our Belarusian team to enter League C of the Nations League, and to have the opportunity to fight for a place in UEFA EURO-2020, with three other group winners.

Golden duo

Belarusian Vladislav Goncharov and Oleg Ryabtsev earn gold in synchronised jumps at FIG Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in St. Petersburg

The duo received 52,510 points from the judges. During the programme, Oleg Ryabtsev made several mistakes but still surpassed his rivals. Second place went to France's Sébastien Martiny and Allan Morante (51,850 points) while Ty Swadling and Dominic Clarke from Australia (51,270 points) claimed bronze. Unfortunately, our athletes failed to earn medals in the individual events.

Javier Zanetti hopes for result

Branch of Italian Inter Milan football academy opened in Minsk

A branch of the Inter Milan football academy was opened in Minsk by the club's legendary captain and now Vice-President of the team, Javier Zanetti. It's planned to involve Italian specialists to work in Belarus.



Javier Zanetti

Zanetti announced big expectations for the new project. "Football is rapidly developing all over the world. We'll be attracting Italian coaches for the work with your specialists and I'm confident that this will generate a result," he stressed.

Zanetti conducted a training session in Minsk with young pupils of the academy and with four more amateur squads from various regions of the country, chatted to journalists and fans and took part in the autograph signing session.

The agreement on the establishment of the Inter Academy in Minsk was signed in March 2018. Alongside Belarus, the Academy's branches are also operating in Argentina, Brazil and China.

Javier Zanetti is a symbol of devotion to his native club: he spent nineteen years as a member of that same club. In total, he has played 858 matches for Inter, earning 16 trophies.

Inter is one of the most titled Italian football clubs. This is the only Italian team which hasn't left the country's highest division since its establishment. Inter first won the Italian Championship only two years after its creation, in the 1909/1910 season (before this, only Milan had managed to do the same in the 1900/1901 season).

Confirming reputation among the strongest sambo wrestlers

By Oleg Svetlov

Tatiana Matsko and Svetlana Timoshenko of Belarus defend titles of world sambo champion in Bucharest

In the under 64kg weight category, Grodno's Tatiana Matsko again demonstrated her supremacy, defeating her opponent, Elena Saiko of Ukraine, within less than a minute in the finals, using a painful hold.

The medal is the third World Championship gold for Tatiana in recent years, following her victories in Sophia (2016) and Sochi (2017). She also took gold at the 1st European Games in Baku.

The second gold medal for the national team at the World Championships in Bucharest was earned by Svetlana Timoshenko (80kg) who took gold one year before in Sochi. In



Strongest athletes — on medals podium

the decisive match, she defeated Maria Oryashkova of Bulgaria.

Our Belarusian sambo athletes claimed three silver medals: Marina Zharvskaya (52kg) lost in the finals to Dina Ryabova of Russia, while Vladislav Burdz (57kg) lost by a hair's breadth to Vakhtang Chidrashvili. Experi-

enced Andrey Kazusenok (under 100kg) also claimed silver.

In total, the Belarusian team earned twelve medals at the World Sambo Championships in Bucharest. On the final day alone, the squad took four medals, enabling the Belarusian national women's team to occupy

second place in the team classification, behind Russia. The next World Sambo Championships will take place in Seoul in 2019. Sambo is part of the 2nd European Games programme and, next June, athletes will be competing at Minsk's Sports Palace for eighteen sets of medals.

Festival of the week



A contest in Vitebsk brings together forty choreographic groups

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 8th December. *Deafart* Until 30th December. *Universe of Yazep Drozdovich*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street
Until 30th November. *Signs of Independence: Polish Money from 1915-1939* Until 2nd December. *1918: Birth of New World* Until 8th January. *Art of Chocolate*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Belarus in Great War of 1914-1918 Until 15th January. *Pencil and Brush* Until 31st January. *Maly Trostenets: exhibition-chronicles of large-scale massacre* Until 1st February. *Shop with Cites* Until 7th April. *Fantasy Land*

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

11 Sovetskaya Street
Until 30th November. *Belarusian Lawyers of 19th Century*

OUTLETO TRADING CENTRE

44 Zhukov Avenue
Until 1st January. *Tropics* exhibition of exotic animals

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square
Until 16th December. *Strusto, Dauble, Richi, Savonar* Until 16th December. *Gunars Binde. Retrospective*

LIBRA

37 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st January. *Somewhere to the West of Minsk: Daily Life of Western Belarus* Until 4th December. *20th Century Avant-Garde*

CAT MUSEUM

23 Internatsionalnaya Street
Until 30th November. *Cat and Autumn*

MAGIC MUSEUM

23 Internatsionalnaya Street
Until 15th December. *Tournament of Three Magicians*

GALLERIA MINSK

9 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 13th January. *Museum of Fir-Tree Toys*

YANKA KUPALA LITERARY MUSEUM

4 Yanka Kupala Street
Until 12th December. *Small Belarus: Personality and Artistry of Yanka Kupala in Country's History*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
22.11. *The Tsar's Bride* 23.11. *Bolero*. *Small Death. Six Dances* 24.11. *Aida* 25.11. *Orr and Ora* 27.11. *Carmen* 28.11. *Don Quixote* 29.11. *Rigoletto*

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
22.11. *Taming of the Shrew* 23.11. *Husband Leaves His Wife* 24.11. *Circle of Love* 25.11. *Divers* 27.11. *Lady for a Day* 28.11. *Fourth Planet* 29.11. *The Visit*

BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE

3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street
22.11. *Soldiers* 24.11. *Three Sisters*

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street
22.11. *Skaryna / Pinsk Gentry* 23.11. *Inspector* 24.11. *Evening* 27 and 28.11. *Kupala Night Dream* 29.11. *Waltmaster-Accordion*

MODERN ART THEATRE

5 Oktyabrskaya Street
24.11. *House Upside Down 2* 26.11. *House Upside Down* 28.11. *Romeo and Juliet*

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street
22.11. *If There Is No Tomorrow* 23.11. *New Land* 24.11. *Concrete* 25.11. *People's Love* 27.11. *Ticket to Brest Train* 28.11. *Hunting for Self* 29.11. *Three Giselles*

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
22.11. *Tectonics of Feelings* 23.11. *Rich Brides* 24.11. *Chekhov: Comedy: Seagull* 25.11. *Leaving Nature* 28.11. *Invented Not By Us* 29.11. *Goats' Island*

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
22.11. *Battlefield* 23 and 24.11. *Mechanical Man* 25.11. *Abduction of Yelena* 26.11. *Master and Margarita* 27.11. *Pygmalion*

NEW DRAMA THEATRE

16 Liza Chaikina Street
22.11. *I Would Live!* 23.11. *I'm So Tired...* 24.11. *Bonus Session of Psychoanalysis* 25.11. *Christmas* 27.11. *Tribunal*

PUPPET THEATRE

20 Engels Street
22.11. *Belvedere*