



## Kazakh President Calls for Truce in Ukraine During Meeting in Minsk



(L-R) Presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine Vladimir Putin, Nursultan Nazarbayev and Petr Poroshenko.

By Malika Orazgaliyeva and Aliya Bitimova

MINSK – The presidents of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine, as well as high representatives of the European Union met in the capital of Belarus for multi-lateral and bilateral talks on Aug. 26 seeking solutions to the ongoing months-long bloody conflict in the east of Ukraine and, more

broadly, a mutually acceptable accommodation for that country's aspirations for stronger ties with Europe balanced against its extensive trade relations with its neighbours. Talking about Kazakhstan's position on the crisis in Ukraine, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has called for all the parties involved to refrain from using force and instead to address the challenges through diplomatic channels.

President Nazarbayev supports peaceful initiatives aimed at the de-escalation of the armed conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the Kazakh foreign ministry said. Recently, the foreign ministry stated that Kazakhstan has been and is working towards normalisation of the relations between Russia, Ukraine and the West, and towards translating them into civilised internationally recognised

frameworks. That is why in order to start a dialogue on the Ukrainian crisis, Kazakhstan has worked with other countries to organise on Aug. 26 the meeting of leaders of the three countries of the Customs Union, Ukraine and the European Union in Minsk. At the meeting in Minsk, Nazarbayev called for a truce in Ukraine.

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## President Nazarbayev visits Ankara, Participates in Presidential Inauguration

By Zhanara Abdulova

ANKARA – President Nursultan Nazarbayev paid a two-day visit to Turkey's capital Aug. 27-28 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Two weeks earlier in the first-ever direct presidential elections on Aug. 10, Turkish voters chose the former prime minister and leader of the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) as their 12th president. Erdogan replaced outgoing President Abdullah Gul. Heads of state, foreign ministers, representatives of international organisations, ambassadors and media reporters from more than 90 countries of the world attended the

handover ceremony that took place at the Çankaya presidential palace. Meeting foreign leaders and guests at the entrance, Gul warmly welcomed Nazarbayev and invited him to proceed to the palace. Gul and Erdogan, co-founders of AKP, Turkey's largest political party, each delivered a speech at the ceremony. "I am honoured to hand over my post to Mr. Erdogan," Gul said, addressing Erdogan as "a comrade, dear friend and colleague of more than 40 years." After thanking the foreign guests, Gul underscored he worked in harmony with civil society and the judiciary throughout his tenure. He also thanked his family, his wife, parents and friends for supporting him during his long career.

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## Foreign Minister Visits Singapore, Seeks More Economic Cooperation

By Altair Nurbekov

SINGAPORE – Beginning his tour of Southeast Asia, Kazakhstan Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov paid a visit to Singapore on Aug. 28 to improve bilateral relations and discuss the further expansion of trade and economic and investment cooperation. The main areas of cooperation between the two countries include public services, e-government, education, budget planning and support for small and medium-sized businesses. During the visit, Idrissov met with Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong and Minister of

Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice Kasviswanathan Shanmugam. Lee Hsien Loong is also Chairman of the Board of the Government Investment Corporation, which is one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds. His wife, Ho Ching is the General Director of the investment holding Temasek, which manages the majority of the largest corporations in Singapore. Temasek's story is similar to how Kazakhstan's Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund was created. Singapore is a country that has been successful in its socio-economic development and ability to actively adapt like Kazakhstan.

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## Nuclear Disarmament a Top Priority of Kazakh Foreign Policy, Official Says

By Zhanara Abdulova

On the eve of the Aug. 29 International Day against Nuclear Tests, The Astana Times talked with ambassador-at-large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Barlybai Sadykov about the most important initiatives of the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

It is generally known that the is-

...sues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are among the top on the international agenda as they directly impact the security of all states without exception. That is why the international community attaches great importance to policies and measures taken by countries to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. In your opinion, what is the current situation in the field of nuclear disarmament and which are the most important events that took place in 2014, and

which measures undertaken by Kazakhstan to eliminate the threat of the use of nuclear weapons are most significant? 2014 saw a number of major events in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This year we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Kazakhstan's accession to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear state when Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev handed a copy of the ratification diploma of the

treaty to the President of the United States Bill Clinton in 1994 as one of the depositary countries of the treaty. Kazakhstan's policy aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons and strengthening the regime of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) has earned the recognition of the international community and strengthened the global leadership of our country in the field of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security.

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## International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Hold Conference in Astana

By Dmitry Lee

The capital of Kazakhstan, Astana is often referred to as the "Heart of the Eurasian Continent." In many respects it is, due to its central geographical location and multi-vector foreign policy that annually draws dozens of international congresses, conferences and forums. They include the Astana Economic Forum, the Eurasian Media Forum, the World Religious Forum and the UN International Day Against Nuclear Tests held every Aug. 29. On Aug. 29, 23 years ago by decree of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and the will of the Kazakh people, one of the biggest nuclear tests sites in the world was shut down and the country gave up the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. In its 40-plus-year history, the site brought tears and suffering to

more than 1.5 million people living in Kazakhstan and their families. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) has joined the Kazakh government's efforts this year in promoting peace and a nuclear-weapons-free world. From Aug. 25 through Aug. 29, more than 500 delegates from some 50 countries, including medical and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) visited Astana's Independence Palace where IPPNW held an anti-nuclear weapons conference. "From a Nuclear Test Ban to a Nuclear Weapon Free World: Disarmament, Peace and Global Health in the 21st Century," was the motto of the congress. "It is symbolic that this forum is being held in Kazakhstan, a country that has suffered from nuclear testing and is now one of the leaders in the anti-nuclear movement. The global agenda of the congress

has deep relevance and is fully in line with our initiatives on nuclear disarmament," stated the message given by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and read by Minister of Health and Social Development Tamara Duissenova, during opening remarks. Kazakhstan plays a key role in the world of non-proliferation, according to Abai Baygenzhin, president of the public association Kazakhstan Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. "This was all made possible by our head of state, Nursultan Nazarbayev. He shut down the Semipalatinsk [nuclear] test site, gave up the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world, continues to spread the message to leaders of many international organisations and has made Kazakhstan an example for all other countries in making our country free of nuclear weapons," Baygenzhin said.

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Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project Karipbek Kuyukov delivers his speech at the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Conference in Astana on Aug. 27.

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# NATION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## New Railway Lines Will Connect North-South, East-West

By Ruziyana Ospanova

President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev launched two new rail lines, Zhezkazgan-Beyneu and Arkalyk-Shubarkol, at an Aug. 22 event held on the central square of Zhezkazgan. A teleconference with the main stations in the Kostanai, Kyzylorda, Aktobe, Mangistau and Karaganda regions was also held and station management gave readiness reports.

Congratulating all people of Kazakhstan, the President called the opening of the railways one of the most important events of the year. Nazarbayev thanked the railroad and construction workers for their hard work and service.

"Today, we are opening two new railway lines. This is a first for us. The Zhezkazgan-Beyneu and Arkalyk-Shubarkol lines will affect the fate and future of several of Kazakhstan's regions for decades to come. Since independence, we have not stopped building new railroads and have stepped up our efforts," the President said.

According to him, the new railways will breathe new life into several regions in the years ahead. "These lines are drastically changing the face of Kazakhstan. Zhezkazgan and Arkalyk are no longer dead-end stations. They are located along the path from Asia to Europe. Kazakhstan benefits from



President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the ceremony launching two new railway lines.

its ability to reduce distances and delivery times. We have created a world-class railway network right here in Kazakhstan," Nazarbayev said.

Nazarbayev also noted that construction involved 10,000 people and that another 3,000 will gain permanent employment. He expressed his gratitude to all who took part in building the railroad.

Zhezkazgan-Beyneu and Arkalyk-Shubarkol will facilitate growth in neighbouring areas. Immediate benefits will be felt by the residents and businesses of the Karaganda, Mangistau, Aktobe, Kyzylorda and Kostanai regions, he noted.

In addition, the President of Kazakhstan emphasised that the new railroads will have a positive im-

pact on Zhezkazgan, as it is now a strategic stop along important international and national transit lines.

Live broadcasts from construction starting points in Beyneu in the Mangistau region, Shalkar in the Aktobe region, Saksaulskaya in the Kyzylorda region, Arkalyk in the Kustanai region and Zhezkazgan captured the dispatch of

the first cargo trains onto the new railways.

During construction, which lasted from June 2012 to August 2014, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, Kazakhstan's state-owned railroad monopoly, built more than 1,200 kilometres of railroad; housing facilities were built for workers and staff as well.

The location and configuration of new railways can significantly reduce the distance goods must travel between east and west and from north to south, both in Kazakhstan and over its borders. Askar Mamin, president of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy informed Nazarbayev.

He also added that the railways will contribute to the development of central and western Kazakhstan, stimulating economic activity and accelerating the development of business and industry in the regions.

According to Mamin, the launch of new railways greatly increases the potential of the trans-Kazakhstan transport corridors from China towards Russia and Europe.

The total length of Zhezkazgan-Beyneu and Arkalyk-Shubarkol is more than 1,200 kilometres. The Zhezkazgan-Beyneu line is the shortest rail route from central Kazakhstan to the Port of Aktau and the border with Turkmenistan and the Gulf states. Arkalyk-Shubarkol is a route from the centre of Kazakhstan to Russia and eventually Western Europe.

### NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

There is a need to strengthen measures in Kazakhstan aimed at the observance of legislation in the religious sphere, Deputy Prime Minister Gulshara Abdykalikova said at an Aug. 27 meeting. Abdykalikova charged the Ministry of Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Education and Science to accelerate measures in preparation for the 28th World Winter Universiade 2017. She also noted the need to develop a network of children and youth sports schools and student leagues and to promote healthy lifestyles and sports. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed the importance of continuing to work towards the prevention of religious radicalism and extremism in the religious sphere in compliance with legislation. "The fifth Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions is planned for 2015. For the further strengthening of interfaith harmony it is important to work out new mechanisms for the relationships between religious communities," she concluded.

At an Aug. 27 meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Gulshara Abdykalikova urged the Ministry of Culture and Sport to develop an action plan for implementation of the new Cultural Policy Concept. "For the development of this concept we need to adopt a special action plan, carry out specific events and work according to this plan," she said. In addition, the Deputy Prime Minister noted the need to enhance international cooperation and promote cultural heritage. "The government discussion of the document included a proposal to conduct a season of Kazakh culture abroad," she said.

Plans have begun to open a sports camp in Shchuchinsk, Akmola region in autumn 2014 for the development of winter sports, Minister of Culture and Sport Arystanbek Mukhamediyev told an Aug. 27 enlarged board meeting of his ministry. Kazakhstan is a perfect place for the development of winter sports. We will open a sports camp in Shchuchinsk in October-November this year, Mukhamediyev said. He urged focusing on completing construction of unfinished buildings.

The issues of adaptation of houses and public facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities were addressed by Deputy Minister of Healthcare and Social Development Svetlana Zhakupova at an Aug. 26 media briefing in the Central Communications Service (CCS). Addressing the media representatives, Zhakupova said that about 22,000 facilities underwent certification in 2014 and at the expense of the local executive bodies, about 127 facilities will be adapted for the needs of people with disabilities within the Employment Road Map 2020. The deputy minister also emphasised that adaptation of houses and facilities is not limited to the construction of wheelchair ramps. "It also includes adaptation of the surrounding areas and entry elements - the doorways must be of a particular width, etc. Multi-storey buildings must have specialised elevators. As we can see, a set of measures should be undertaken. Currently, 127 facilities are undergoing adaptation. We closely cooperate with NGOs in this sphere," she added.

In 2014, drip irrigation will be used in a 1,000-hectare area in Kazakhstan, Chairman of the Board of the Fund for Financial Support of Agriculture Narmukhan Sarybayev said at an Aug. 21 media briefing. "The issues of increasing the labour productivity in the agricultural sector and crop husbandry are of special importance. One of the ways to increase productivity is application of advanced irrigation technologies, including drip irrigation systems. The President set the task to increase the areas under crop where advanced systems of irrigation are applied to 15 percent of the total area," he said. The fund is one of the KazAgro operators, which finances small farms that introduce drip irrigation systems. "Vegetable farms and melon and gourd farms are interested in the introduction of this technology. They have small areas and this is exactly the category of manufacturers that we are working with. This year, we plan to introduce drip irrigation in an area of 1,000 hectares. By 2020, we will finance the introduction of this technology at the area of about 10,000 hectares," Sarybayev said.

## Officials Clarify Questions about New Property Rights Legalisation

By Alimzhan Mussabayev

New legalisation regarding property in Kazakhstan will take effect on Sept. 1 and expire on Dec. 31, 2015. A law titled "On Amnesty for Citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Oralman and Persons with Kazakhstan Residence Permits, regarding the Legal Status of their Property" has been adopted.

In the bill, the government tried to identify all critical aspects of the forthcoming process of legalisation, considering the inevitable emergence of an immense number of questions from the country's population.

All citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Oralman (ethnic Kazakhs who have returned to Kazakhstan since independence in 1991) and persons with Kazakhstan residence permits have the right to legalise and normalise the status of property. Persons who are affected by Article 222 of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan and have had their sentence come into force are not eligible to participate.

Property, including money belonging to residents, or money received by them before Sept. 1, will be legalised. Legally contested property cannot be legalised.

It is possible to legalise real estate outside of Kazakhstan. For this to happen, Kazakhstan residents need to submit all necessary documents to tax authorities in respective jurisdictions for legalisation. Also, potential participants have to keep in mind that recognised property is property identical to the property determined by real estate according to Kazakhstan law.

Starting Sept. 1 and ending on Nov. 30, 2015, the populace of the country may submit the documents necessary for real estate legalisation to local akimats (regional government administrations). It will take 30 calendar days for the commission and tax authorities to consider requests from the date of their submission. In case documents are returned for corrections, the applicant is allowed to resubmit their application, except for cases involving money. All expenses connected with the registration of legalised property go directly towards legalisation procedures.

As for fees, they constitute 10 percent of the cost of acquisition or estimated cost of the property outside of the country. Tax payments on legalised money are made only in cases where a resident wants to remove the funds from a special account in a second-tier bank before planned (before five years), without investing in the economy and if his property is outside of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan residents may be tax exempt if their legalised money in savings accounts has been held no less than 60 calendar months since the date of transfer to the account for legalisation or if they want to make an investment with that legalised money.

The date of the commission's or tax authority's decision on legalisation is considered to be the official date of Kazakhstan residents' property legalisation. In regards to money, it is considered legalised from the moment of its transfer into a savings account. Thus, its security is assured by legislation regarding the obligatory guarantee of deposits. Consequently, Kazakhstan residents will get all their money returned within 60 calendar months of it being deposited in a savings account.

Credit is not eligible for legalisation. Moreover, income tax will not be imposed upon it.

In case of dissatisfaction with the commission's or tax authority's decision, action or inaction, applicants may appeal their case in court. There is one interesting detail that needs to be mentioned for Kazakhstan civil servants who have legalised their money and "forgot" to specify such in declarations from previous years. According to the initiative, in legalising income, these people are exempted from disciplinary liability for non-presentation or submission of incomplete or doubtful declarations as provided by Article 9 of the law "On the Fight Against Corruption," during the period preceding the law coming into force.

However, it is necessary to consider that legalisation doesn't extend to property acquired through corruption and crime.

Strict procedures for the legalisation of buildings is also being planned. If a Kazakhstan resident has an apartment which isn't taken out of housing stock in prop-

erty, the land plot or garage – the property is not eligible for legalisation.

One of the conditions for legalisation of property located

in Kazakhstan is that the property must belong to the real owner.

Kazakhstan's government will formulate procedures for document submission and property legalisation.

All information submitted as part of the programme will be held under strict confidentiality.

**KAZAKHSTAN**  
UNITED FOR GLOBAL SECURITY

The Republic of Kazakhstan is seeking a seat on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member for 2017-2018. Our priorities within the United Nations reflect four primary issues facing the world today: Food Security, Water Security, Energy Security and Nuclear Security.

In the 22 years since our independence, Kazakhstan has worked tirelessly to address these issues in our own country and beyond. Among many other initiatives and achievements, Kazakhstan is currently:

- ▶ ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRAIN PRODUCERS AND WHEAT EXPORTERS. WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED WHEAT AND FOOD TO NATIONS IN NEED.
- ▶ A CONSTRUCTIVE INNOVATOR IN WATER SECURITY COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGIES. WE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THE RESTORATION OF THE ARAL SEA.
- ▶ AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF DEVELOPING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES THROUGH OUR GREEN BRIDGE INITIATIVE AND AS HOSTS OF EXPO 2017, THEME OF WHICH IS "FUTURE ENERGY".
- ▶ A GLOBAL LEADER IN NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY. AN INITIATOR OF ADOPTING A UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD AND A SPONSOR OF THE ATOM PROJECT, A WORLDWIDE PETITION CAMPAIGN TO PERMANENTLY END NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING.

These issues are complex and interdependent. They require global cooperation and relationship building. Kazakhstan has come a long way in a short time because we know that cooperation is the key to success. We are dedicated to knowledge and resource sharing in order to help make the world a better, more secure place for its citizens.

The achievement and maintenance of international peace and global security are paramount to the success of the planet and its people. In Kazakhstan, we are ready to do our part to ensure that success as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakh Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Kairat Lama Sharif met on Aug. 25 with Chairman of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdullah bin Sultan Al Owais. At the meeting, Sultan Al Owais was briefed on the activities of the Kazakh National Chamber of Entrepreneurs, its development and government support of small and medium-sized businesses. According to Lama Sharif the main aspects of investment policy are aimed at improving the investment climate in the country. The ambassador also highlighted the importance of increasing investment cooperation between the two countries and participation of the Sharjah business community in the development of key sectors of Kazakhstan's economy. In this context, the chairman reaffirmed SCCI's commitment to strengthening investment cooperation between the two countries. He also noted positive growth in the number of small and medium-sized Kazakh companies registered in recent years within SCCI, which now exceeds 100 companies.

Pursuant to the decision of the 21st session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK), the opening ceremony of the Kazakhstan Centre of Peace and Accord was held Aug. 26 in London. Deputy Chairman of APK and head of the Secretariat of the Assembly Yeraly Tugzhanov, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kazakhstan Kagazy and member of the British House of Commons Sir Tony Baldry, British investors, scientists and representatives of companies in the two countries cooperating within the framework of the agreements on bilateral cooperation took part in the ceremony. At the event, Tugzhanov presented Kazakhstan's model of interethnic tolerance and social harmony and spoke about the Assembly's role, mission and international cooperation. The deputy chairman also said that representatives of such countries as France, Germany, Great Britain, the United States, Israel, Sweden, Turkey, China, Russia, Spain, Holland and others sent more than 60 requests to APK to study its experience. The model was presented in the UN and in various OSCE countries. Tugzhanov emphasised that the opening of the centre would serve as an impetus for strengthening cooperation and expansion of bilateral relations in the priority sectors of political, trade, economic, educational and cultural cooperation. Baldry said greater efforts should be taken to strengthen cooperation when controversy mounts between nations and cultures in the world. One of the goals of the centre is to share Kazakhstan's experience in building a united state and promoting the development of scientific initiatives. At the end of the ceremony, the participants agreed that the opening of the centre would make an essential contribution to strengthening the policy of peace and accord in the international community.

Kazakh Ambassador to Jordan Bulat Sarsenbayev said his country has developed a roadmap to boost cooperation between the two nations. In an interview with the Petra news agency, Sarsenbayev said that the two-year plan aims to boost agricultural, industrial, civil, defence and energy relations. The ambassador added that the new directives came as a result of His Majesty King Abdullah II's latest visit to Kazakhstan and to cap the productivity of the country's 21-year diplomatic relationship with the Kingdom. The roadmap includes hosting joint meetings in Astana before the end of this year, including meetings of the Higher Kazakh-Jordanian Committee and foreign affairs officials, as well as of the Kazakhstan-Jordan Business Council, he explained. The new cooperation in the agricultural sector will benefit from the quality of Kazakh wheat in Jordan and the region as well as establish partnerships in the area of wheat farming that take advantage of the vast swathe of wheat-producing land in Kazakhstan. The directives also include cooperation in the field of energy, especially exploration of uranium in the central parts of the Kingdom, the ambassador added.

## In Indonesia, FM Idrissov Promotes Dialogue of Civilisations, Bilateral Ties

By Malika Orazgaliyeva and Altair Nurbekov

BALI, INDONESIA – Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov travelled to Indonesia from Aug. 29-30 to promote bilateral ties through high-level talks and to take part in the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations 6th Global Forum.

On Aug. 29, the Kazakh minister participated in the Sixth Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilisations in Bali along with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova, ministers and high-level delegations from more than 100 countries and international organisations.

Kazakhstan has fully supported the idea of the Alliance aimed at reducing tensions between the Western and Islamic worlds, the minister said, and joined in the creation of the Group of Friends of the Alliance.

"We note the enduring importance of the theme of the Forum which has brought us all together - 'Unity in Diversity: Celebrating Diversity for Common and Shared Values.' Kazakhstan highly appreciates the role of the Alliance as an important instrument of political and intercultural dialogue around the world. We believe that the initiative of Spain and Turkey measures up to the expectations of the international community to counter the 'plague' of the 21st century, extremism and terrorism, including through the involvement of youth in creating inter-civilisational interaction," the minister said.

"The world today is, once again, plunged into a phase of escalating tensions and increasing military capabilities. Several old controversies have become seriously aggravated and newly provoked. We observe that international law does not work as it is supposed to and the principle of permissiveness triumphs. We pay too high a price for the conflicts that do not solve problems, only exacerbate them," Idrissov told the gathering.

The minister went on to list specific contributions Kazakhstan has been making in promoting better understanding and dialogue internationally, including the triennial Congresses of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, the establishment of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and, last but not least, the functioning of a unique model of social and ethnic inclusion, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK).

"At the initiative of our country, the International Year of the Rapprochement of Cultures was held in 2010, and the period of 2013-2022 has been declared by UNESCO as the International Decade of Rapprochement of Cultures," he said.

According to the minister, Ka-



A family photo of participants of the Sixth Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilisations in Bali.

zakhstan is committed to ensuring, and will continue to strive to ensure, the effectiveness and efficiency of the global platform for interreligious and interfaith dialogue, the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions held every three years in Astana. The fifth Congress will take place in 2015. The Congress has brought together representatives of various religions from more than 80 countries around the world. The Council of Religious Leaders has now been established, and includes representatives from all major religions.

"We are confident that the Congress will continue to contribute to the preservation of peace and trust between people of different nationalities and religions. It is very important for us that the United Nations, represented by the Alliance of Civilisations, appreciates and fully supports the dialogue of religions on this platform," he said. "We consider it important to strengthen sustainable partnerships between the Alliance, the UN member states and international organisations, including the CICA and the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions."

"Our peaceful foreign policy aims at strengthening our sovereignty and statehood through maintaining good neighbourly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation. If elected to be a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Kazakhstan will strongly promote the interests of the United

Nations Alliance of Civilisations member states in consideration of all items on the agenda of the Security Council," Idrissov said in his speech.

The minister expressed hope that the forum will contribute to the practical solution of problems that mankind is facing and create new ideas, forms of dialogue and cooperation in order to achieve the main goal of the Alliance of Civilisations, building a world based on mutual respect.

"As the Kazakh poet Fariza Ongarsynova once said, 'to create means to be able to add to something, already known to all, a grain of your soul and personal experience.' The culture of peace, spirituality and harmony is a living creation of all of us. We all are different and yet equal. We all have one goal, which is the prosperity of our countries," the Kazakh minister concluded.

During his visit, Idrissov met with President of Indonesia Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The future of comprehensive and mutually beneficial cooperation between Astana and Jakarta was discussed. "Indonesia has an important place in Kazakhstan's foreign policy and is considered a leader in South East Asia that possesses significant political and economic potential," Idrissov said.

The Kazakh minister invited Indonesia to participate in the Fifth Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in June 2015 in Astana.

Idrissov discussed issues on the bilateral and international agendas in more detail with his counterpart, Foreign Minister of Indonesia Dr. Marty Natalegawa.

"We welcome Indonesian businesses in Kazakhstan and invite you to actively participate in projects in various sectors of the economy, such as oil and gas, agro-processing, manufacturing, telecommunication, engineering, tourism and hospitality, financial and banking," Idrissov said at the meeting.

The two ministers stressed the importance of further promotion of the nuclear disarmament process globally including through the full legal establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ) under the Semipalatinsk Treaty of 2006 and the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in South-East Asia according to the 1995 Bangkok Treaty.

At a joint press briefing following their meeting, Natalegawa stressed that there were two government-to-government agreements and 14 business-to-business ones providing a solid foundation for the bilateral ties. Yet, he noted, the potential of such cooperation is far from being fully explored.

The bilateral meeting resulted in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia on bilateral consultations.

Diplomatic relations between Kazakhstan and Indonesia were established on June 2, 1993. The key areas of cooperation between the two countries include political, interparliamentary, economic, cultural and humanitarian affairs, as well as collaboration in international organisations.

One of the priorities of Jakarta's foreign policy is the development of relations with ASEAN partners. Indonesia has launched a number of regional security and anti-counter terrorism initiatives, including a proposal for the establishment of the ASEAN Security Community, which entails the formation of a single operational and legal framework for Southeast Asia. The main point of the initiative was the idea of creating an ASEAN peace-keeping mechanism to ensure security and stability in the region.

ASEAN member states decided to establish a single ASEAN Economic Community by Dec. 2015, which means the elimination of customs and immigration barriers between members. In addition, at the 21st meeting of the ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh on Nov. 2012, the participants agreed on the need for a new agreement on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) between the member states and six ASEAN trading partners, with which it already has a free trade zone agreement (Australia, New Zealand, China, India, South Korea and Japan).

## Kazakh President Calls for Truce in Ukraine During Meeting in Minsk

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"We are urging to immediately resolve the humanitarian catastrophe in the east of Ukraine. The task now is to ensure a large-scale humanitarian aid campaign to assist Ukraine's people. The efforts should be supported by international organisations, including the Customs Union and the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]," he told other participants.

"Kazakhstan is ready to render all possible aid, including via the country's Red Cross and Red Crescent. Among other things, the organisation could act as a neutral middleman when escorting humanitarian freights sent by other nations. There should be an unbiased international control system to ensure timely supplies of humanitarian aid to Ukraine. I would call the sides to declare a truce to facilitate

the humanitarian aid campaign," said the leader of Kazakhstan.

When speaking on the necessity of a peaceful settlement, Kazakhstan's President urged the parties to give up on military solutions. "There should be a peaceful respite to save the lives of innocent women and children who have become hostages of the military conflict. We are calling on the sides to cease fire," Nazarbayev said.

Among other things, President Nazarbayev stated it was important to stop reciprocal sanctions that have an adverse effect on common citizens and may trigger a new wave of the global financial crisis. Nazarbayev urged a return to constructive interaction and a gradual lifting of the sanctions.

"Not only Southeast Ukraine, but the entire Ukraine needs large-scale aid efforts from all of the international community. Not only West-

ern countries, but also countries of the East should contribute to the effort. Such intensive efforts have a great importance to preventing an economic collapse in Ukraine. We should come up with an idea for an international fund to bolster Ukraine's catastrophe, he said.

On Aug. 26, Poroshenko held bilateral meetings with Putin and Nazarbayev. His meeting with Putin reportedly lasted for two hours well into the late evening.

Poroshenko at the meeting with Nazarbayev expressed his belief that Ukrainian-Kazakh relations have great potential in many areas and thanked Nazarbayev for his support of Ukraine.

"I know your strong principled position. Thank you for your support and decisive action in the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," Poroshenko said.

Kazakh political analyst Erlan Karin in an interview with one of the Kazakh information agencies, Tengrinews.kz, commented on the role of Minsk and Astana in the recent talks: "Astana and Minsk are trying to play the role of mediator. But here it must be said that Minsk has perhaps more intense contacts with Kiev. [Belarus President Alexander] Lukashenko was at the inauguration of Poroshenko recently and congratulated him on the occasion. ... But Minsk is somewhat limited in its maneuvers, in the sense that Minsk cannot support this process already with their European counterparts because of their already damaged personal relationships. In this respect, Astana has greater room for maneuver because it is a reliable partner for Moscow, has contacts with Kiev and plus Astana can in-

teract with their European counterparts. Astana has a wider range of tools in this regard. So, I think that the roles and tasks between Astana and Minsk are distributed correctly."

Commenting on the results of meeting in an interview with Singapore's Channel News Asia, Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov praised the very fact that it took place and stressed the importance of continuing dialogue among all parties concerned even as signs were showing of growing tensions and continued fighting in the east of Ukraine.

According to President Nazarbayev, similar meetings will continue, including the possibility of a meeting in Kazakhstan at the request of the EU.

"In any case, any talks are better than the war," he said after the Minsk meetings.

# ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## KazTransOil Director Discusses Company's Future, EEU

By Dana Saudegerova

The state-owned operator of Kazakhstan's main oil pipeline and the largest oil transportation company in the country, KazTransOil, is gaining a reputation for its financial stability. Moreover, by the end of the first half of this year, the company had taken in 36.8 billion tenge in net profit, which is 10 percent more compared to the same period in 2013.

The company has actively participated in the drafting of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) Treaty which was useful for Kazakhstan in preserving and consolidating its positions and interests in the field of energy within the EEU.

General Director of KazTransOil Kaigeldy Kabyldin spoke about the company's future and potential in light of the EEU and its ongoing investment projects.

**What changes have taken place in the company in connection with accession to the EEU?**

The signing of the EEU treaty by the leaders of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan was a historic event for our country that marked the beginning of a new round of integration. I'd like to note that KazTransOil, along with other Kazakh enterprises, contributed a lot to drafting the document. In the energy sector, the EEU treaty is largely focused on the organisation, management, operations and development of common markets for crude oil and petroleum products. Member states must guarantee long-term assurance of the transportation of crude oil and petroleum products on existing transport systems under their jurisdiction, including trunk pipelines. Tariffs for transportation services of oil and oil products are set for economic entities of member states at a level not exceeding the rates established for businesses from the transit country.

Also, EEU countries streamline



Kaigeldy Kabyldin

the rules and standards for oil and petroleum products. In particular, the treaty will allow the energy sector of the member states to establish uniform requirements for the transportation and quality of oil and petroleum products.

**What are the company's plans in light of the trilateral economic union? What investment projects are currently underway and what is expected from them?**

The EEU, of course, will have a powerful impact on all sectors of the domestic economy, including KazTransOil. As for cooperation with oil-transport companies, I'd like to note the following.

In order to ensure the transportation of Kazakhstan oil through Russia and Belarus, KazTransOil signed contracts on the provision of transportation services through Russian and Belarusian pipeline systems with the relevant transportation and forwarding companies. Similar contracts were signed with freight forwarding services regarding exports of Kazakhstan oil from offshore production sites. These companies include AK Transneft, Gomelttransneft Friendship, Transneft-Service, Neva Pipeline Company and Primorsk Trade Port.

For example, the volume of exports through the Atyrau-Samara system has already been set for the long term. This gives our oil

companies confidence in planning because each market, such as the Black Sea, Eastern Europe, the Baltic countries and others has a specific price.

Kazakhstan oil is transported through Russia via the Atyrau-Samara route at about 15 million tonnes per year; up to 3,000,000 tons is moved by the Makhachkala-Tikhoretsk-Novorossiysk pipeline annually. The agreement between the governments of Kazakhstan and Russia on oil transit was recently extended until 2027.

In the short term, we expect growth in oil production, which will mainly be fueled by the Kashagan Field and increased production at the Tengiz field.

Regarding this, two major projects are now underway: increasing production in Kazakhstan's section of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) to 52.5 million tonnes per year by 2015 and increasing the capacity of the Kazakhstan-China (Atyrau-Kenkiyak-Kumkol-Atasu-Alashankou) pipeline system to 20 million tonnes per year by sometime between 2017-2019 as resources become available. As of today, the NPS-8 and NPS-10 oil pumping stations have already been put into operation. They will increase the capacity of the main pipeline, Atasu-Alashankou, to 20 million tonnes per year. Also, the reconstruction of the Kassymov Pumping Station (Atyrau) was completed. Investments in the second stage of construction of the Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline totaled 24.3 billion tenge (US\$133.5 million), excluding VAT, as of June 30.

I would like to mention that along with the development of export potential, a no less important task is the development of our internal network of pipelines. We are investing to maintain our current assets, the integrity of the pipelines and the efficiency of pumping stations.

**KazTransOil is the first participant of the People's IPO pro-**

**gramme. Since the first initial public offering of the company's shares on the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange, more than a year has passed. During this time, their market value increased by 60 percent. What provides a stable level of stock quotation?**

The dynamics of passed in KazTransOil shares confirms that admitting the company to the People's IPO programme as a pioneer firm was a wise decision. Indeed, its share price since the initial public offering in December 2012 has increased by approximately 60 percent from 725 tenge (US\$3.98) to between 1,130 (US\$6.20) and 1,140 tenge (US\$6.26).

We are proud of the fact that the company created additional market financial instruments to benefit ordinary people and their assets. In 2012, shareholders received dividends of 10.34 percent of the initial price and by the end of 2013 – more than 15 percent of the initial price. In total, between the final 2012 and 2013 numbers, more than 70.77 billion tenge had been paid in dividends.

The growth in share price is based largely on our excellent performance in 2013. The consolidated volume of oil transportation reached 67.2 million tonnes, which is 2 percent higher than in 2012. The consolidated turnover of oil was 45.5 billion kilometre tonnes, which is 8 percent higher than the year prior. The volume of water supplied grew by 3 percent to 23.4 million cubic metres. We successfully implemented a cost management programme. Secondly, during 2013, a number of important projects to modernise and expand the system of trunk pipelines and oil transportation infrastructure were implemented. Last year, disbursement of capital investments amongst the group of companies amounted to 34.1 billion tenge (US\$187.3 million), including a separate 28.8 billion tenge (US\$158.22 million) for the company. Third, the credit ratings of the company are at investment

level and corporate governance ratings indicate continuous improvement of the relevant system. In 2013, the corporate governance rating was 63.7 percent, which is 3.1 percent higher than the previous estimate. KazTransOil continues to grow. This year, 70.9 billion tenge (US\$389.5 million) was allocated to the group of companies for an expenditure programme, as well as a separate 69 billion tenge (US\$379 million) for the company.

**What is the personnel policy of the company?**

KazTransOil is known for its highly professional staff. The high quality of KazTransOil employees is known throughout the country's hydrocarbons sector. KazTransOil has been the dominant brand in its field since its establishment in 1997. We hold annual professional skills contests among our cadre of specialists. Winners take part in international competitions and compete with workers of large oil transport companies from Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Management personnel periodically undergo re-certification. In 2013, 6,567 employees and 2,976 specialists in the first half of 2014 took part in specialty training. If they produce good results, their salaries and careers will grow. There is also a knowledge test because of the technical, environmental and other risks associated with the company's field.

We have a talent pool and a system of vocational training and retraining. In January of this year, Verna Capital and the consulting company Reputation Capital Group presented their research on the corporate reputations of companies operating in Kazakhstan. KazTransOil took fourth place in this public trust ranking. After retailers and among real sector companies, we are first. This, I believe, is the result of the openness of our company.

### ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

Chairman of the Board of the Development Bank of Kazakhstan (DBK) Bolat Zhamishev and Chairman of China Development Bank (CDB) Zheng Zhijie discussed the most promising areas of cooperation between the two financial institutions at Aug. 27 talks in Astana. Zhamishev and Zhijie expressed mutual interest in the speedy implementation of the general agreement to open a \$500 million credit line, which was concluded between the two banks in May. DBK said that loans totaling \$300 million on the previously signed three loan agreements with CDB were fully utilised, namely to finance the implementation of projects in the areas of electric power, metallurgy, transport and textiles. In addition, during the meeting, Zhamishev informed his Chinese counterpart about funding opportunities in Kazakh projects in non-oil sectors of the economy and infrastructure. The current portfolio of potential projects of DBK exceeds 1 trillion tenge (US\$5.5 billion).

"Samruk Kazyna intends to privatise its assets in conditions of maximum transparency," Deputy Chairman of the Board Yelena Bakhmutova said at an Aug. 29 public meeting for potential investors centering on the participation in the privatisation programme for 2014-2016. "In accordance with the request of the head of state Samruk Kazyna will wholly or partially sell 106 assets in a competitive environment in 2014-2020. Of those, 64 companies are planned for sale in 2014, one of which will enter the people's IPO; the other companies should be sold through a bidding process," she said. As Bakhmutova said, the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund is committed to the privatisation of its assets in conditions of maximum transparency and based on this reasoning, the sale of assets is being held through the web portal gosreestr.kz, the electronic trading platform of state property. "Only a part of the fund's assets will be sold through a two-stage tender and only if it somehow poses a threat to national security. Notification of the auction with all necessary information about the assets will be published on the web portal of the state property," she added. According to her, Samruk Kazyna began to systematically inform the public about the programme since its inception and will continue this campaign until the last asset is sold. Currently, the group of companies within the Samruk Kazyna privatisation sold three objects for the sum of 835.8 million tenge (US\$4.6 million). At the same time, the companies were sold at a price that exceeds the total estimated costs by 1.8 times.

The national railway company Kazakhstan Temir Zholy realised assets within the second privatisation wave. At an Aug. 29 meeting with the heads of the Samruk Kazyna group of companies, three railway enterprises were presented to potential investors, the company's press service reported. Kazakhstan Temir Zholy started implementation of a comprehensive plan of privatisation for 2014-2016, developed in accordance with the assignment of the head of state. Kazakhstan Temir Zholy vice president for economy and finance Almas Lepesbayev provided information on the activity of Yertys Service LLP in Pavlodar, Kazykurt-South LLP in Shymkent and Bas Balkhash 2004 LLP in Balkhash. Yertys Service LLP and Kazykurt-South LLP are noted to be operating on the market in preparation of a rolling stock for loading oil freights. The enterprises have all the necessary capacities for steaming, washing, preparing cars for loading oil and oil products, carrying out the current uncoupling repair of freight cars and preparing tanks for repair. Maintenance of locomotives is a primary activity of Bas Balkhash 2004 LLP. Hundreds of locomotive units are annually brought to the enterprise for service and repair, with more than 250 delivered in 2013. Lepesbayev assured potential investors of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy of its readiness for mutually beneficial cooperation and hoped for success in the privatisation campaign implementation.

## Atyrau Region Developing with Global Economic Trends

By Rinat Kulmagambetov

ATYRAU – Baktykozha Izmukhambetov, Akim (Governor) of the Atyrau region, spoke in an interview about the development of the region as well as the investment attractiveness and the need for new facilities due to the growth in population.

**Two years ago, you were appointed the Akim (Governor) of the region with an oil-bearing role – to give the country hydrocarbons and at the same time to expand other areas and develop industries with high added value. Have you managed to achieve tangible results?**

Oil provides a great opportunity to contribute to the national budget and to meet the challenges of diversification of the regional economy. The gross regional product, based on the results of 2014, can reach more than 4 trillion tenge (US\$22 billion). Based on statistical data, it should be noted that the Atyrau region is an undisputable leader among other regions of the country on many indicators of socio-economic development. Many parameters improved that directly affect the social well-being of citizens. Thus, the gross regional product grew from 3,292.5 billion tenge (US\$18.1 billion) in 2012 to 4,021 billion tenge (US\$23.1 billion) in 2014.

At that, GRP per capita in the region made up 6.6 million tenge (US\$36,263). The regional share in the country's GDP increased from 10.8 percent to 13.2 percent. In the last six months, an average



Baktykozha Izmukhambetov

salary rose from 180,400 tenge (US\$991) to 214,400 tenge (US\$1,178). For the first six months of 2014, the execution of the budget was 99.9 percent (in 2012 – 98.7 percent). This is one of the best indices in the country and inflation was 4.5 percent, which is also a good result compared to the national average level of 0.3 percent.

**The Russians are interested in the investment opportunities of the region with the creation of a Common Economic Space (CES). The region, as it is known, is a leader in investments. What are the most demanded projects?**

Investment attractiveness of the region is very high and it is recognised by our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and far abroad. Due to the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID), investors

have the opportunity to put funds in industries and products that are in demand not only in Kazakhstan, but also abroad. Thus, the number of projects implemented within SPAIID over the past two years has increased twofold, from 22 to 44. The volume of investments increased 24-fold, from 63.7 billion (US\$350 million) to 1,553.6 billion tenge (US\$8.5 billion). Currently, 28 of 44 projects have been launched, production volume reached 26.2 billion tenge (US\$144 million) and 4.1 billion tenge (US\$22.5 million) in taxes was transferred to the national budget. These projects will create 5,000 jobs. By year end, we will launch seven projects worth 8.3 billion tenge (US\$45.6 million) and in 2015 another five projects worth 12.9 billion tenge (US\$70.9 million) will be set up. One of the most important for the region's enterprises is a house-building factory, which manufactures 150,000 cubic metres of concrete products and builds 50,000 square metres of housing per year. In addition, three projects are being implemented in the private industrial area.

**Residents of border areas were the first to feel the effect of integration processes. But together with positive results and such advantages as freedom of movement and open market, they are facing increasing competition...**

From the first day of assumption of office, I announced support for the regional AIC (Agro-Industrial Complex). The state goal is the development of the agricultural and livestock sector,

because its objective is to ensure food security. Investments in this sphere over the past two years increased fourfold, from 2.7 billion (US\$14.8 million) to 11.3 billion tenge (US\$62.1 million). Among the completed projects is Pervomaiski, a dairy farming partnership built and equipped with modern, Western technologies. The number of Holstein-Friesian cows will be increased from 500 to 1,000 and production will grow to 7,200 tonnes of milk and dairy products per year. Alga, the agricultural complex, manufactures 400 tonnes of dairy products in addition to the goat farm, which produces 320 tonnes of dairy products per year. Among the most promising projects is the construction of a poultry factory, broiler complex, goose farm and unique for Kazakhstan, a plant for processing 100 tonnes of camel and 350 tonnes of sheep wool per year and production of finished products. We have also intensified production of sturgeon and caviar. The majority of these projects are implemented at the expense of private capital. Over the past two years the crop area for potatoes grew 22-fold, vegetables, 8 times. Of course, special attention is paid to farmers who introduce advanced technologies. For example, the area under drip irrigation has increased 3 times and in the future will reach 1,500 hectares. Part of the harvest is delivered to the market and the rest of the harvest to the stabilisation fund. The creation of a food belt and sufficient stocks is especially important in light of recent events relating to the sanctions of Europe

and Russia, which may affect the cost of food in our country. By the way, in the next year we are going to launch a plant for processing and canning vegetables with the capacity of 25,000 cans. In the fall, it is planned to sow 200 hectares of winter rye and next year, 200 hectares of millet, which showed good productivity in our region.

**The region's population is growing, which means that it needs new kindergartens and schools, hospitals and sports complexes...**

Over the past two years, 67 pre-schools for 5,115 students, including in mini-centres, were put into operation under the Balapan programme. Before the end of the year, it is planned to complete construction of 12 kindergartens for 2,910 children. This year, we also launched construction of the Palace of Youth, which is a gift of the Chevron company for the 20th anniversary of its cooperation with Kazakhstan.

Over the past two years, nine healthcare facilities were commissioned in the region and by the end of the year another 14 objects will be put into operation. For the last six months, the birth rate per 1,000 people has been 13.6, the mortality rate decreased by 14.3 percent and natural population growth was 5 percent.

In general, the region is developing in line with the instructions of the President and in line with the global economic trends, focusing on innovations and best practices, which are applied in many areas.

# BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

“Kazakhstan will expand its network of liquefied gas filling stations,” said First Vice Minister of Energy Uzakbay Karabalin at an Aug. 27 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing. “This year, a memorandum was signed with big networks of gas stations in order to expand the coverage of fuel gas (propane),” Karabalin noted. According to him, the mechanism of sales of liquefied gas is as follows: gas suppliers in each region give orders for the supply of certain volumes of gas and then receive fuel at the plants. He added that the final price of gas is set at the local level and is under the control of anti-monopoly organisations and local government offices. According to the Deputy Minister, the transition to natural gas will significantly save the cost of gasoline.

“Before the end of the year the first 12 kilometres of the Astana-Temirtau four-lane highway, which is currently under construction, are scheduled to be put into operation,” Kazakh Minister of Investment and Development Asset Issekeshov said on Aug. 25 after a visiting session was held with executives of the contractors on the issues of the roadway reconstruction. Overall, the project is scheduled for completion in 2016. In September, contractors are expected to be selected for two more sections and the road construction work will be completely launched. Following the meeting, Issekeshov gave instructions to increase the pace of work and tighten quality control, as well as ensure the safe passage throughout the section of the road. The length of the Astana-Temirtau highway is 171 kilometres. As a result of the reconstruction it will pass to the first category as a four-lane highway with a concrete surface. According to the ministry, construction work on the highway began in 2013 on two sections with a total length of 22 kilometres. At present, the work is underway on five sections with total length of 109 kilometres. The work involves five contractors, 640 units of road-building equipment, five laydown machines and five concrete plants. The construction of the road attracted more than 1,000 people.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev paid a visit Aug. 22 to Yutariya Ltd., an industrial innovation company. During his visit the President saw the production technologies applied at the enterprise and examined samples of the products exhibited in the presentation room. Nazarbayev also saw the presentation of projects for enterprise development, including an industrial services plant in Satpayev and KazTexExpo, an automated production complex created in the territory of Astana – New City, a special economic zone (SEZ), and focused on participation in the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017. In addition, the akim (governor) of the Karaganda region Nurmukhambet Abdibekov reported to the President on the implementation of the comprehensive plan of the socio-economic development of the Zhezkazgan region. Chairman of the Board of Kazakhmys Eduard Ogai informed the head of state on the activities and prospects of the company’s development. He noted that, thanks to the support of the state, the corporation got an opportunity to expand the mineral resource base and thereby extend the life of the field in the Zhezkazgan region. Upon completion of the meeting the President spoke with the company’s employees, wishing them success. Yutariya Ltd. was created within the Business Road Map 2020 programme and specializes in the manufacture of special clothing for workers in different industries by using computer technology and graphics. The workshops of the factory have automated, computer-controlled sewing, cutting and embroidery equipment. The enterprise has introduced innovative design processes of light industry products, the use of nanotechnologies and scientific and application developments.

## Human Capital Drives Growth, Says Samruk Kazyna HR Chief

By Violetta Shterk

The Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund has launched a revolutionary business transformation programme among its group of companies. On the road to success, modernisation is not possible without the best human capital. Samruk Kazyna Chief Human Resources Officer Daniel Cruysberghs recently discussed the candidate selection rules.

**You have worked for more than 25 years in all areas of HR, including 16 years at Philip Morris International. Your last position at Philip Morris International was Vice President of Organisation Development, for which you covered 80,000 employees in 180 markets around the world. So far, you have lived and worked in eight countries around the world. You have enough experience to compare the work of the fund. Does the fund’s personnel policy differ from the leading companies?**

In fact, there are no differences. SamrukKazyna, as all successful international companies, is aimed at finding the best professionals. We hire the best and develop them, for the simple reason that human capital is the main driver of growth. We are not only looking for the brightest ones with the best academic degrees, but for potentials who additionally have leadership skills, who understand that self-development, an open mind, continuous learning, integrity, passion, courage, strategic agility, teamwork and social responsibility



Daniel Cruysberghs

are key ingredients for personal, company and societal success. Hence, we look for intellect combined with leadership behaviours and the motivation to positively contribute to the company and Kazakh society.

**What is the catch of Samruk Kazyna in the race for brains?**

I can say without false modesty that we manage to find high qualified professionals. The total number of our employees who trained abroad is 44 percent, 14 percent of whom are Bolashak scholarship holders.

Thirty-three percent of the professionals have masters degrees in different branches, where 78 percent have degrees from foreign universities. Eighty-four percent of our staff is fluent in English. For us, it is an important indicator. Knowledge of English is not only conducive to mutual understanding and cooperation in dealing

with a global economy but also gives access to a wider range of modern information ideal for personal and professional growth.

**How many people are working in the fund?**

To date, the holding company employs only 137 people. You have to admit that for guiding nearly 600 daughter companies and employing 320,000 people, this figure is very small, certainly bearing in mind the governmental reporting requirements given that the Kazakh government and nation are our only shareholder. For example, the world-famous Malaysian analogue of our fund, Khazanah Holding, has 419 employees, whilst it guides only 50 companies.

**What is the average age of employees in the fund?**

Thirty-seven years old. We are blending experienced professionals with young potentials to generate the required climate, dynamics and environment for success.

**As you said, the fund tightens candidate selection rules. How does this happen?**

The entire process takes place under the sign of openness. When we have a vacancy, we do not hide it from view. The announcements are posted on our website sk.kz. We accept resumes of applicants within 10 days and then we select those who meet the qualifications. The applicants pass through three-stage testing and then they are short-listed. The first step allows us to check the depth of professional knowledge. In the second, they are tested for their level of proficiency in the English and Ka-

zakh languages. The final stage includes ability tests. If a person is not at the required level on one of the stages, he or she is not permitted to the next test round.

Then the short-listed candidates will be interviewed with the department of human resources management and supervisor in charge based on a competency-based interview. The decision on employment is adopted from the results of the collective interview of candidates with the commission, which consists of the Chief of Staff, Chief for Human Resources Management, Deputy Chief for Human Resources Management, the head of the structural unit and director in charge. As you can see, the whole process aims towards maximum objectivity and avoidance of external influence.

Following the contest, we inform the public who is chosen with a short academic and career history of the new colleague to give full transparency.

**Why are there so many candidates who want to work in the fund?**

The flow of resumes shows not just the desire, but the strong desire to become a part of our team. For example, this year we had 16 vacancies. Do you know how many resumes we have received: 1,550 applications. As you can see, this is a considerable amount. After processing resumes, only 98 candidates met the qualification requirements and they were invited for testing. Fifty-seven people passed the first stage. Only 42 candidates were able to confirm their language knowledge. As a result, 35 applicants successfully

completed the third stage of testing. Finally, 16 candidates were selected who met all the requirements of the company. All of them have good experience. In particular, many of them worked with the Big Four. Almost all graduated from leading universities around the world, such as the London School of Economics and Political Science, The Freeman School of Business (USA), and others.

**Samruk Kazyna is your first experience in Kazakhstan. How do you assess the level of corporate culture development?**

I found a nice, smart group of people; hard working, committed (mainly) technocrats and experts with high loyalty to the Kazakhstan nation building. I saw people with tremendous unlocked potential at all levels. But I also saw too much of a reactive order/task culture, a power/status-based decision making process, too much bureaucracy and limited inter-departmental and intercompany collaboration or sharing of best practices.

The platform for transformation is there, the people potential exists, but we have to unlock the entrepreneurial spirit by working more as a commercial organisation. We have to develop our people into strategic change agents, team players, people developers and inspirational leaders who empower their people to make sure everyone can become the best they can possibly be. We need to make our processes and structures leaner, more effective, efficient and fast. We need everyone to understand that active learning, self-development and developing the right behaviours are key in making sure we realise the vision of President Nursultan Nazarbayev for Kazakhstan to become one of the top 30 developed countries in the world. It will be a long journey, but all ingredients exist to make it happen.

## Quail Farm Helped by Business Road Map

By Asset Kalymov

ALMATY REGION – Zharkent resident Dinmukhamed Zhappar has launched a quail breeding business with the support of a grant from the Business Road Map 2020 programme. He got the grant after reading about the programme in the newspaper and applying to his regional branch of the Damu Fund.

His farm is small, but there are already 1,000 birds in the poultry-runs, including adult and young quails and chicks. Quail produce eggs and meat. Despite the bird’s small size and weight, breeding quails is a profitable and low-cost business, Zhappar said recently. For example, a house with a live-

stock of 500 birds can recoup costs in just two months. Caring for quail is also easier than tending to hens, says Zhappar. Quail reach reproductive age in one month and yield about 300 eggs per year. There eggs can also be stored for three times longer than chicken eggs. All that is needed for a successful quail-breeding business is proper feeding and constant temperature.

“Once the Japanese, who took from China a batch of this bird, were interested in the medicinal properties of quail eggs used in Chinese folk medicine. As a result of studies, it was found that the product has a positive effect on the mental development of children and helps in the treatment of stomach ulcers and radiation. Since

then, they introduced in child care centres in Japan the use of two or three quail eggs per day. Maybe that’s why the Japanese are technologically ahead of the rest of the countries,” said Zhappar.

Kazakhs are also beginning to understand the benefit of this exotic product for the country. Among regular clients of the farm are a number of local restaurants, cafes and sanatoriums Zharkent

Arasan and Kerimagash. Through the Damu Fund, Zhappar took a business communications course and now plans to go to Germany to learn from the experience of his foreign colleagues.

## Kazakhstan solar panel factory ready to export

By Azat Abyroi

ASTANA – The Astana Solar plant, which produces solar panels, has been certified to meet world standards and is ready to enter the international market, according to the website of the Astana city administration. The plant has been in operation for six years and manufactures panels capable of producing 50 MW per year.

“The plant is equipped with modern, high-tech manufacturing equipment. Four production teams have been formed for the execution of round-the-clock work. The total number of employees is 200 people. We would like to note the working conditions. Factory workers receive decent wages and are provided a good benefits package, including medical insurance

and shuttle buses,” said Rustam Osmanbekov, a repair engineer at the factory.

The factory building itself serves as a kind of exhibition area with a rooftop covered in solar panels and rotary turbines around the building’s grounds. Currently, the company is building links with various regions of Kazakhstan and as well as other countries for supply chain purposes.

“The plant’s products extend to all areas of Kazakhstan. In the future, we plan to export to France, Qatar, and other foreign countries. It is also planned that we will increase production by the time of EXPO 2017. We have negotiations and activities to ensure that our products are widely used in the area of the exhibition,” said Osmanbekov.

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# EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Navigating Economic Waters in Times of Economic Sanctions

**G**lobal geopolitics is never as predictable as theorists prescribe. And in the twenty-first century, too many factors are making it difficult for the more traditional thinkers to make sense of reality. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has ripple effects on many parts of the world and Kazakhstan, being closely tied to that country through its common history and demographic composition, cannot be left unconcerned.

When the US and EU started imposing sanctions on Russian individuals and companies in late April, Kazakhstan was largely unaffected. By May, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has downgraded its 2.7 per cent growth forecast for Kazakhstan to just 1.4 per cent – as long as the crisis doesn't escalate. With further sanctions being placed by more countries on the Russian Federation, it can be expected that Kazakhstan will feel more pressure on its own economy.

Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus have signed an agreement on May 29, 2014 to go ahead with the Eurasian Economic Union, and the new entity is planned to be officially working on Jan. 1, 2015, if the parliaments of all three countries approve the agreement. This union will further integrate the already existing economic links created by the Customs Union that has been in effect since 2010. Originally planned as a purely pragmatic relationship, new political interests add challenges for Kazakhstan and may put hurdles for the country's talks for WTO accession.

But challenges always give rise to opportunities. Chairman of the Committee for State Inspection in Agro-Industry (Agroprom) of the Agriculture Ministry of Kazakhstan Saktash Khassenov, referring to the fluent economic situation in light of sanctions on Russia and Russian sanctions on the West, even said, "I think, here, we have an opportunity to increase exports, and it is primarily grain exports." He also addressed the issue of beef exports. "It is matter of price only. We are exporting beef, and I must say, the volume of exports is increasing every year. It is a matter of price, because compared to the beef that Russia imports from Argentina, Brazil, our prices are uncompetitive," Mr. Khassenov concluded.

According to the head of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan Ablai Myrzakhmetov, Kazakhstan has plans of occupying the niches previously held by the now banned importers of agricultural products. "The President has clearly stated Kazakhstan's position: we stand for a peaceful resolution [of the conflict in Ukraine] and support a constructive dialogue. However, we see some new opportunities emerging. You have witnessed Russia introduce sanctions against traditional suppliers of food products, fruit and vegetables, such as Moldova and Poland. Clearly, Russia will try to develop its own production, but for us, too, there are opportunities in the areas that will be hit by the sanctions. [We should] increase our production of these goods, especially of agricultural products, which is achievable," Mr. Myrzakhmetov said.

The energy sector, however, is more vulnerable. Being a landlocked country, Kazakhstan relies on its northern neighbour to export around 30 per cent of its crude oil. In 2013 Kazakhstan exported 15.4 million tonnes via the Atyrau-Samara pipeline, owned by Russian pipeline monopoly Transneft, in which it is blended with Russian oil, and another 6.3 million tonnes by rail from the Tengiz oilfield to the Russian Black Sea port of Taman.

Another 28.7 million tonnes of Kazakh crude from Tengiz were exported via the Caspian Pipeline Consortium led by Chevron. The route, running to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, has the status of an international pipeline but traders have said it could also face problems if stricter sanctions on Russia were imposed because some Russian oil is blended into the pipeline.

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Russia is Kazakhstan's leading trading partner with annual trade exceeding 23.5 billion dollars. A shrinking Russian economy is not all that appreciated by Kazakhstan, after all, the two countries share the world's longest uninterrupted border spanning 6,846 kilometres.

The only other countries that can take Kazakh exports are China, and the neighbours across the Caspian Sea. Iran and Kazakhstan have a well-established oil trade route through the Caspian Sea and Azerbaijan may see expansion in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

In the extended meeting of the government on Aug. 6, Yerbolat Dossayev, erstwhile minister of economy and budget planning and now head of the new Ministry of National Economy, said Kazakhstan has worked out a separate action plan to mitigate the effects of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. "Together with government agencies, we have developed an anti-crisis plan dependent on further development of the national economy. We have also drawn up a special action plan in case further sanctions are introduced against Russia and the situation in Ukraine deteriorates. This plan will be updated in September 2014," Dossayev told President Nazarbayev and his colleagues then.

But the President, in his turn, accepting six newly appointed ambassadors in the Akorda presidential palace on August 12, has stated that "The ongoing conflict in Ukraine [and] the destabilisation of the situation in the Middle East and other regions of the world are consequences of the global crisis that have spread beyond the economic and financial spheres. In these challenging times, it is of utmost importance that further escalation of the conflict and toughening of sanctions against each other should be prevented. This is a road to nowhere. Finding areas of common ground and negotiating is the only option. Kazakhstan continues to be committed to this option and is doing its best to influence the situation. The main thing is not to stop looking for peaceful means of conflict resolution."

It remains to be seen whether any further sanctions will be imposed on the largest economy of the emerging Eurasian Economic Union, and how these will affect the future of Kazakhstan's economy.

## Knowledge-Based Economy Essential to Kazakhstan's Economic Development

By Saken Yespayev

The main basis for the development of Kazakhstan's society is the formation of a new model of a knowledge-based economy. Its introduction primarily aims to increase the share of finished products in Kazakhstan's export potential to 70 percent.

### To bridge the gap

In his state-of-the-nation address, "Kazakhstan's Way 2050: Common goal, common interests, common future," President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted the need to strengthen innovation in industrialisation and gave instructions to the government on drafting the second five-year plan for the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovation Development (SPAID), for 2015-2019. In addition, the President outlined tasks for introducing a series of principles and standards of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to facilitate the goal of joining the 30 most developed countries of the world. This is to determine the main development path for our society – the formation of a new model of a knowledge-based economy. As President Nazarbayev noted, the creation of new, high-tech economic sectors will require increasing funding for science to not less than 3 percent of gross domestic product, halving energy consumption and increasing productivity by five times, from the current \$24,500 to \$126,000.

Kazakhstan's technological modernisation is to follow three key areas of the global technological revolution: biotechnology, nanotechnology and information technology. Kazakhstan has all the prerequisites for the development of at least five of the 16 key areas determined in the world forecast for technological development up to 2020. Coming innovative breakthroughs may include biotechnologies that sharply raise the efficiency of agro-industrial complex, the medical industry and healthcare; the development of information infrastructure based on modern systems of satellite and fibre-optic communications; new cellular communications and other innovations.

The creation of a knowledge-based economy, as the President said, rests primarily on the improvement of science in Kazakhstan. Over the next 10-15 years, we must create a knowledge-intensive economic base, without which we cannot stand on par with and compete with developed countries. This will require improvement of our legislation on financing, intellectual property protection and support for research and innovations, as well as the commercialisation of scientific research.

Kazakhstan's domestic innovation policy covers many areas that have been developed globally. However, not all measures provide a proper return. Sometimes, private business cannot be relied on to support research and innovation. Therefore, it is necessary to stimulate business and research, including through enhancing the role of foreign investors in the development of science in Kazakhstan. We should conclude contracts not only with industrial companies, but also with research institutes. Abroad, the share of foreign investment in research is up to 20 percent of total spending, while in Kazakhstan the figure is 2.1 percent. Meanwhile, the share of foreign investments in fixed capital in recent years has grown to 30 percent.

The next source of funding is a one percent deduction from the aggregate annual incomes of subsoil users for research and development. According to the former Ministry of Industry and New Technologies, the amount of funding from these sources



son-official-scientist-businessperson. We must also change the structure of science funding to the following proportions: 20 percent for basic research, 30 percent for applied research and 50 percent for research and development.

Taking into account these suggestions, it is advisable to develop a new law "On scientific, technological and innovation activity," especially as precedents are available. For example, a federal law on science and state science and technological policy has been approved in Russia and a law on scientific and technological activities has come into force in Ukraine.

### SMEs are the main tools of the 21st century

The President called small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the main instruments of Kazakhstan's industrial and social modernisation in the 21st century. In order to help SMEs develop around new innovative enterprises, the state must approve a special list of goods and services, the production of which has not yet been established in the country. Incorporating Germany's experience and practice, SMEs will be given favourable long-term loans and their redemption may be provided by their goods and services. The risk of loan default can be balanced against collateral or through co-financing of projects. In addition, it is necessary to consider revising the taxation of SMEs engaged in priority manufacturing and significantly reduce taxes to 6-8 percent.

It is also necessary to bridge the gap between the research and business spheres. Today, this problem is being solved through the creation of innovation clusters, technology parks and venture capital funds. However, experience shows that in addition to this, we need technological intermediaries to promote developments in the market, in patenting and licensing, in consulting and in intellectual property management.

### Legislation is the foundation

Funding alone will not solve this problem. We need to amend Kazakhstan's Law "On Science." First, a new Article 23 devoted to the results of scientific activity must be introduced to enshrine in the legislation norms on protecting and using intellectual property. This would help increase the participation of businesses, including national companies, in research activities through implementing joint projects, co-financing research projects and attracting a new generation of highly qualified scientists and engineers.

In addition, we should legislatively provide more favourable tax conditions to attract high-tech corporations from around the world to Kazakhstan. While encouraging the inflow of foreign technologies, however, we should also establish requirements to "localise" finished products and increase local content. These requirements can be included in contracts on technology transfer.

For example, China constantly introduces new rules of the game, thereby forcing foreign corporations to share their technologies with Chinese companies. Machinery and equipment is so far dominating in the transfer of technologies in Kazakhstan, while the acquisition of know-how and licenses is at a low level. In the balance of payments, the purchase of licenses accounts for only 1-2 percent.

The implementation of these measures would require the revision of policy documents specified in the state-of-the-nation address. In order to coordinate the acquisition of foreign technologies, it is recommended to create a national agency with the main objectives of helping determine the need for foreign technologies in various industries, assisting in obtaining and analysing information about alternative sources of technology and helping evaluate and choose technologies.

Next, the management of a knowledge-based economy should be shifted from the principle of scientist-official-scientist to businessper-

son-official-scientist-businessperson. It should be noted that almost all developed countries have a system of government stimulation of business. France has programmes to assist innovative enterprises, participating in their cost through subsidies, tax exemptions, preferential loans, venture capital and consulting. The most illustrative example of successful innovation policy, particularly in the development of small and medium-sized business, is China.

Following the experience of successful countries, we should develop a map of innovative science in Kazakhstan in order to form a knowledge-based economy and a new law "On the cluster economy. This must define the legal and organisational basis of the cluster policy and the principles for organising cluster production in the country to help build a unified management system for cluster activities.

### Emphasis is on clusters

There is a need to develop fundamental scientific research on the global economy. The instability of the world economy requires a new global financial architecture, President Nazarbayev has said. Research into trends and patterns of development of the world economy, estimates of the impact of globalisation on national economies, generalisation of theories and practical experience in mitigating the negative impact of global trends on countries' macroeconomic parameters are very promising.

In this regard, our institute continues to conduct cluster development research, focusing on the impact of accelerated industrialisation on the national economy, on public-private partnerships in the education sector and on procedures and criteria for the self-employed.

**The author is director of the Institute of Economics of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan.**

THE ASTANA TIMES

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Publisher: Svezhaya Pressa LLP  
News and Editorial: +7 701 575 1055  
Advertising: +7 727 252 08 82  
E-mail: info@astanatimes.com  
KazPost Subscription index: 64572

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The Astana Times is printed at "Media Holding "ERNUR" LLP, 30 Sileti Street, Astana.

The Astana Times is published since November 2010. The Astana Times is re-registered by the Ministry of Communications and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the registration No. 14037-G of 20 December 2013.  
The newspaper is typed and made into pages at the computer centre of "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda". Published biweekly, the size of 8 pages.

ORDER: 800

PRINT RUN: 6,000

# OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Kazakhstan Seeks to Increase Meat Exports

By Gulmira Issayeva

Meat production in Kazakhstan is growing every year and the state sets the goal for the agricultural producers to steadily increase this volume and raise the export bar.

By the end of 2013, meat production in Kazakhstan reached 871,000 tonnes, which corresponds to a 3.1-percent growth over 2012. In the total volume of production, beef was 383,400 tonnes, lamb 156,300 tonnes, pork 99,900 tonnes, horse meat 89,400 tonnes and poultry 135,800 tonnes.



Substantial growth in productivity was observed in agro-formations,

where meat production in 2013 increased by 13.5 percent and amounted to 294,300 tonnes. Positive dynamics can currently be traced. As of July 1, meat production in comparison with the same period last year increased by 3 percent. However, imports of meat, including poultry, decreased in comparison to the previous year by 12 percent.

Since 2011, we have also observed a trend in the growth of livestock in agricultural companies. This means that the number of professional farmers has also grown and has a positive impact on the livestock industry as a whole.

Positive dynamics are also seen in the number of breeding cattle. Over the past three years Kazakhstan imported more than 40,000 head of brood stock and more than 67 new, modern farms and reproducers were created. As a result of these measures, the specific weight of breeding stock grew by 8.8 percent and reached 510,600 animals.

Meat and meat products are integral elements in the structure of the country's strategic food plans. Per capita consumption of animal products is the main indicator of the well-being of the nation.

To develop the export potential of

beef cattle, the Kazakh government by its decree approved a comprehensive action plan for the development of export potential of cattle meat in 2011-2015. At present, this programme is an essential tool to ensure sustainable development of beef production in Kazakhstan and to provide independence in import and export supplies of meat and meat products. The project is being implemented ahead of the plans.

Thus, in 2013 about 4,500 tonnes of meat and meat products were exported, including 340 tonnes of premium-class beef. The Kazakh Ministry of Agriculture, regional

administrations and KazAgro have signed a tripartite memorandum on the export of almost 10,000 tonnes of beef. At present exports of beef, including processed meat products, reached 2,283 tonnes and the Western Kazakhstan region accounts for the bulk of the exports (1,308 tonnes of beef to Russia).

As a result, the agriculture industry will gradually saturate the internal market and entrench Kazakhstan as a supplier of quality products to the foreign markets.

The author is Vice Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan.

## I Have a Dream: A World Free of Nuclear Weapons

By Karipbek Kuyukov

The UN International Day against Nuclear Tests on August 29 is an opportunity to remind the world about the inhumane consequences of nuclear explosions. It is a day which has a special meaning for the many thousands of people who, like me, grew up in Eastern Kazakhstan.

I was born 100 kilometres from the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site where the Soviet Union exploded more than 600 nuclear devices between 1949 and 1991. They have had terrible physical consequences for the people who lived near them.

I came into this world without arms. People often ask me if I can be sure that radiation was the cause. If you had lived in my home town or region, this would not be a question.

In the place where I grew up, I saw mothers and midwives shocked at the sight of their babies. I saw families too embarrassed to show their children to the outside world, hiding them deep inside their homes and bringing them out only briefly for fresh air and sun.

I witnessed families and whole communities decimated by radia-



tion-related cancers. As the United Nations confirms, more than 1.5 million people in Kazakhstan have suffered the effects of Soviet nuclear weapons testing.

The most terrifying fact about this story is that we didn't understand the impact these explosions would have. We were taken completely by surprise - and this, I believe, is why it is so important that we use August 29 to warn the world about the impact of nuclear testing. We must never forget what

happened or allow others to remain in the dark.

I saw so much tragedy and suffering in my homeland that I decided to do everything possible to ensure that my generation is the last to suffer such damage. I became an activist in an anti-nuclear weapons movement and found peace in expressing my pain through art.

I use my feet and mouth to hold my brush and pour out in my own colours my inner world, calling on others to follow my cause. Today, I am an honorary ambassador of The ATOM Project, an online campaign to encourage the global leadership needed to totally eliminate the nuclear threat.

Since its launch two years ago, The ATOM Project has taken the stories of Kazakhstan's nuclear testing survivors around the globe. On my travels, I have made many new friends in many countries who have encouraged us to continue our work.

We now have over 90,000 supporters from more than 100 countries and have set ourselves a goal of reach the 100,000 mark by August 29. You can help us reach this milestone by signing the peti-

tion and showing your desire for a nuclear-weapons-free world.

And over the last two decades we have seen progress. Even before Kazakhstan became a fully independent country, our leader, and now President, Nursultan Nazarbayev shut down the Semipalatinsk test site in 1991 in defiance of then Soviet government in Moscow. On independence, our country also voluntarily gave up the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal, which we had inherited from the Soviet Union. Similar courageous decisions were taken by Ukraine, Belarus and South Africa who all renounced their nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons programmes.

In 1996, a major step was taken when the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was adopted by the United Nations. It has since been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 162. But the treaty cannot enter into force until it is signed and ratified by eight more countries: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States.

It is to the leaders and lawmakers of these eight countries that I and my fellow nuclear testing sur-

vivors address our plea for understanding and leadership. Sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Help ensure that not one more person suffers from the consequences of nuclear testing and nuclear weapons use in the future.

**China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the US are still to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.**

I joined The ATOM Project because it inspired me to complete the mission I began decades ago. It may be that finally achieving the goal of eradicating the planet's entire nuclear arsenal will have to be left to future generations. My vision

is to make sure that every single person around me knows what was concealed for decades - the consequences of testing nuclear weapons.

Twenty years ago when I was in the United States, I met a Shoshone Indian chief. When he saw me, he fell to his knees, tears welling in his eyes, and whispered something down into the ground. A translator explained to me that the chief was begging for forgiveness from the Earth. He later urged me and my friends to continue to warn the rest of the world about the dangers of so profoundly defiling the planet.

That is my mission. I don't have arms. I can't know what it feels like to grasp someone by the hand. But I do have feet with which I can paint and I have a voice that enables me to speak.

For as long as I can, I will use whatever I have to tell the world about the catastrophic damage nuclear weapons have done to the planet and all who share it.

The author is the Honorary Ambassador of The ATOM Project.

This opinion was first published by Al Jazeera on Aug. 28.

## Turkestan Hopes to Increase Tourism Infrastructure

By Lyubov Dobrota

SHYMKENT – The ancient city of Turkestan has great potential for the development of tourism which is not currently being used to the fullest. Akim (mayor) Bakhytzhan Ashirbekov told about measures taken by local authorities for the development of the tourist cluster.

According to Ashirbekov, the infrastructure and standards form the base to develop tourism, with the additional need to create the hotel infrastructure, entertainment industry, sports and other tourist activities. With regard to standardisation, it is necessary to create a tourist service corresponding to world standards. The only way to win the competition for tourists is to meet international standards. One monument of cultural heritage, even one with such global importance as the Mausoleum of Khoja Akhmet Yassawi, is not enough to attract tourists. Tourism is a whole sector of the economy, which requires investments.

**What is the current income to the local budget from the tourism industry and how important is its development for the city's economy?**

Last year, the contribution of tourism to the regional economy amounted to 83 million tenge (US\$456,112). Of course, it is a very small sum, taking into account that Turkestan has great tourism potential. It's not just that the mausoleum of Khoja Akhmet Yassawi was included in the UNESCO list of the world's cultural heritage in 2003.

Thus, the Turkestan archaeological expedition of the Margulan Institute of Archaeology excavated the most ancient layers of the citadel. The excavations near the mausoleum opened an architectural complex of the ancient citadel, the structures of which were surprisingly well preserved. Now there are four-metre adobe walls with



Bakhytzhan Ashirbekov

arched doorways on the site of the Kultobe hill. According to specialists, this cruciform building with slotted loopholes in the walls was the most ancient nucleus of the city.

No less interesting is the Sauran complex, located 40 kilometres from Turkestan. It is mentioned by all medieval authors who wrote about the events in region near the Syr Darya River and the Kazakh steppes. Even today, its ruins and walls attract attention as they rise above the steppe.

At the end of last year we commissioned the Centre of Craftsmen. It was designed as a tourist site, but at the same time has applied value. There are shops with local artisans in one of the three blocks of the building. Their skill level is very high. For example, potter Abaikhon Ryspayev and jeweler Kasyk Kalmurzayev are certified by UNESCO. Here you can buy any favourite thing or souvenir in memory of your trip to the ancient city.

We have much to surprise not only pilgrims and tourists interested in the history of the middleages, but also supporters of ecological tours. Ten years ago we created a nursery for breeding deer just 30 kilometres from Turkestan, in the flood plain of the Syr Darya River. At the expense of the World Wild Fund we brought two female and one male of this endangered species from the Almaty zoo. Now

its population is 64 animals. This nursery may well be included in the tourist route and I'm sure that many tourists will enjoy seeing how these precious animals live in their natural habitat.

Unity with nature, long walks in the mountains along the wild alleys of ash and hawthorn thickets, bathing in a mountain stream and even climbing the Khan's throne are offered to tourists in the Karatau State Nature Reserve. It is the youngest reserve in the country, established in consultation with the Global Environment Fund.

We also recently opened the Centre of Tourism Service. The project's cost is 405 million tenge (US\$2.2 million) and occupies an area of 1.4 hectares. This is a big service centre for pilgrims, including a hotel with 200 rooms where accommodations cost only 1,500 tenge (SUS8.24) per day. There is also a cinema, library, parking lots

and ceremonial sites. The staff will also help visitors make an individual or group programme of visits to historical and archaeological sites and natural reserves.

**What is the number of tourists per year who visit Turkestan?**

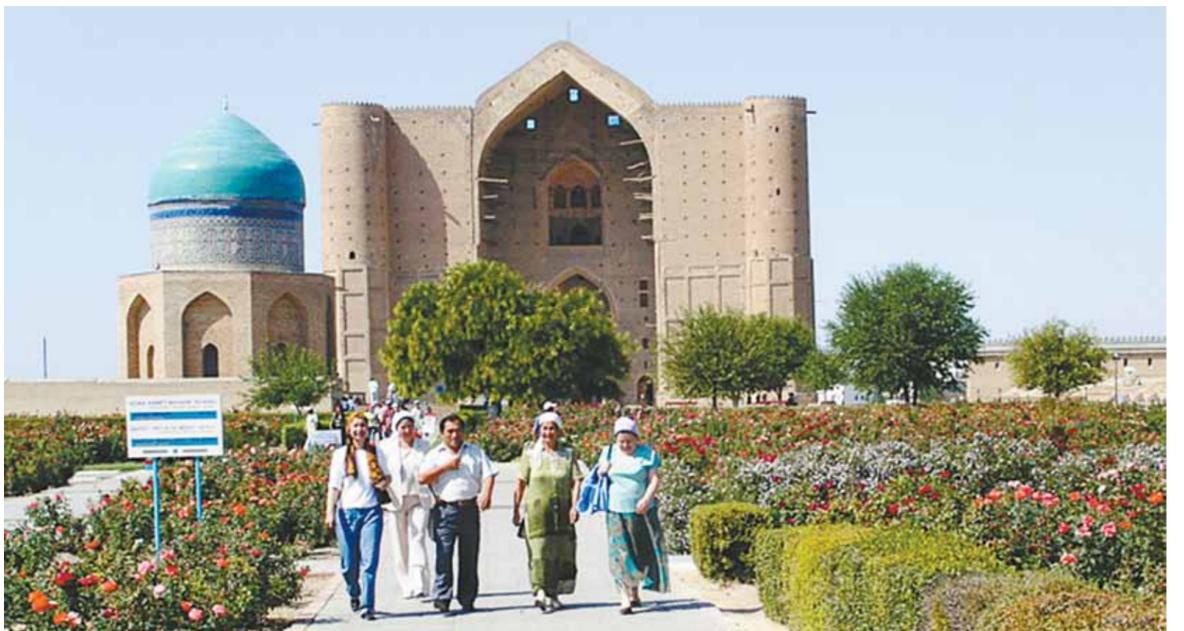
Their number is growing from year to year. Statistics show that in 2012 about 612,000 tourists visited the region; last year this figure was already 701,326. According to data from Azret Sultan, the state historical and cultural reserve museum, the number of visitors exceeded 564,323 in just the first half of this year. This is 65.3 percent more than last year. Of course, there is still little share of foreign guests among them. But we must recognise the fact that we're not quite ready to receive this category of tourists, first of all for the shortage of hotels and quality of service in them. Today they number 11,

differ in comfort and service, and definitely do not comply with the level of foreign hotels.

We have conducted an analysis and found that most of our guests usually limit their stay in the town to one day, without staying overnight. Now we are thinking about a special programme to attract tourists and arouse their interest to extend their stay in Turkestan. In cooperation with the Azret Sultan and Centre of Tourism Services we intend to develop a two-day programme—ziyarat – a rite of worship to sacred places. If pilgrims spend at least one night in the town, the city's economy will only benefit from that and residents who work in the tourist service will have additional jobs.

But the situation is gradually changing. The owners of the hotel complexes are actively engaged in repair, for which they use modern materials, install mod cons and pay more attention to training personnel.

It is very important for us, because the city's population over the past decade has increased by 50,000 people and is about 150,000. The annual birth rate is 7,000 babies. On the basis of this dynamic, we expect that by 2030 the population will reach 250,000 people. Internal migration has also had an impact on the increase in the number of inhabitants. Our city has a relatively cheap cost of living, so no wonder that many residents from Kyzylorda and Zhezkazgan come here for shopping. As it is known, the city is located on the Silk Road and was historically the centre of trade. Our people tend to provide services – they have an entrepreneurial streak. And this is a very important aspect for creating a tourism cluster here, even more especially now that the transport corridor from Western Europe to Western China runs through Turkestan.



Turkestan has great tourism potential, and the mausoleum of Khoja Akhmet Yassawi was included in the UNESCO list of the world's cultural heritage in 2003

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Foreign Minister Visits Singapore, Seeks More Economic Cooperation

Continued from Page A1

During the meetings, Kazakhstan-Singapore relations and prospects for further cooperation intrade, economic and investment cooperation were discussed. The two sides exchanged views on issues of regional importance and discussed cooperation within international organisations.

Idrissov welcomed the arrival of Singaporean companies in Kazakhstan's market. He mentioned the active engagement of Jurong Consultants, which is involved in the development of chemical clusters in Kazakhstan. The National Export and Investment Agency Kaznex Invest and Jurong Consultants have developed special economic zones (SEZ) in Kazakhstan under the Kazakh



Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov (l) and Singaporean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice Kasisivanathan Shanmugam speak on advancing bilateral ties in Singapore on Aug. 28.

industrialisation programme. He also highlighted the work of the joint venture Keppel Kazakhstan, which builds barges and drilling

units for Kazakhstan's oil and gas industry.

The parties also talked about cooperation in the sphere of education

and science, which has become a staple of cooperation between Singapore and Kazakhstan. A good example of this mutually beneficial

cooperation is the strategic partnership between Nazarbayev University and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

In Singapore, Idrissov also spoke at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on Eurasian integration and gave an interview to the Singaporean press. The title of his speech was "The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Its Implications for Asia."

He explained the idea of the EEU as well as its objectives and benefits. "Accession to the EEU serves the economic interests of Kazakhstan. The EEU offers great economic potential to Kazakhstan's economy, providing access to a common market of over 170 million people," he said.

Idrissov stressed that the Eurasian common market has significant potential over the next two decades, with experts predicting a 25 percent growth in the member states' gross domestic product by 2030, which equates to over \$600 billion. Since the creation of the Customs Union (CU), trade between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus has increased

by 47 percent, exceeding \$24 billion in 2013 (before joining the CU in 2009, it was only \$12.9 billion).

According to Idrissov, regarding Kazakhstan's membership in the CU and the Common Economic Space (CES), there has been an almost twofold increase in trade turnover, exports and imports between 2009 and 2013. In that time period, turnover has gone from \$72 billion to \$133 billion, exports from \$43 billion to \$83 billion and imports from \$28 billion to \$49 billion.

"The EEU will have no impact on Kazakhstan's or other member states' bilateral or international relations or agreements and neither will Kazakhstan's integration into other organisations. The EEU respects the sovereignty of its member states," the minister said during his remarks as he explained the benefits of the EEU for foreign companies and their cooperation with Kazakhstan.

Today, Singapore is an important political and trade partner of Kazakhstan in South-East Asia. Diplomatic relations between the two republics were established on March 30, 1993.

## President Nazarbayev visits Ankara, Participates in Presidential Inauguration

Continued from Page A1

In his inaugural address, Erdogan thanked the outgoing president for his service and stressed they had worked in full harmony and coordination over the years. "We are now in the era of a new Turkey, the great Turkey that carries the substance and spirit of the republic," he stressed.

"Our main priority will be developing the economy, increasing welfare to continue with determination on our strategic path to the European Union and continuing reforms and the solution process to

the Kurdish conflict," Erdogan announced, noting the Turkish foreign policy is aimed at promoting peace.

At the end of the ceremony, Erdogan and his wife, Emine, said farewell to Gul and his wife, Hayrunnisa, with a military ceremony.

During the official ceremony, Nazarbayev congratulated the newly elected president on his victory and wished him every success in his office.

Nazarbayev held a number of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the event, including with Togolese President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, Turkmen President

Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) Gjorge Ivanov.

Speaking on the margins of the inaugural ceremony, Nazarbayev and Gnassingbe discussed future prospects for developing bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on international issues. The two presidents stressed the need to intensify trade and economic relations, as well as cooperation in a number of fields that have the highest potential for development.

In a conversation with his Turkmen counterpart, Nazarbayev

spoke about his upcoming visit to Turkmenistan and the opening of the new Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway. The sides also discussed the main directions of bilateral cooperation in economy, trade, transport and transit and fuel and energy sectors, as well as many topical issues on today's international agenda.

Speaking about cooperation between Astana and Skopje, Nazarbayev and Ivanov mentioned the positive dynamics of their development and stressed the need to further enhance trade ties between the two countries. The sides also

touched upon key bilateral, regional and international policy issues.

On the eve of the inauguration, Nazarbayev held an informal "no tie" meeting in the Kazakh embassy with Turkey's outgoing president and his good old friend.

Nazarbayev and Gul discussed the major milestones of the Kazakh-Turkish relations, noting that bilateral cooperation between the two brotherly nations has been continuously growing and developing in the past years.

On the occasion, Nazarbayev said Kazakhstan attaches high priority to its warm relations with Turkey that are based on mutual trust, respect and understanding. Nazarbayev thanked Gul for the valuable contribution he made to the development of bilateral ties and his strong commitment to strengthening relations between Kazakhstan and Turkey.

The two countries enjoy fruitful,

economic bilateral relations and diplomatic ties marked by cordiality, deep mutual trust and understanding. Over the last two decades, the relationship between the two states has transformed into a good neighbourly and all-around strategic partnership, with a strong emphasis on economic collaboration.

Turkey was among the first states to recognise Kazakh independence when the country declared its independence on Dec. 16, 1991. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on March 2, 1992. The two Turkic-speaking countries also engage in significant cooperation in international organisations such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (CCTS) and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

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# Nation&Capital

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

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## Doctors on Bicycles Offer Healing Message against Nuclear Weapons

By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – A group of medical professionals and students from Germany, Austria, El Salvador, Estonia, India, Kenya, Nepal, the United States and Kazakhstan travelled here by bicycle from Semei.

The ride is a planned demonstration of peace organised by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and lasted from Aug. 10-24. Spanning 800 kilometres, the campaign was designed to promote the mission of IPPNW – a world free of atomic bombs and the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The end point of the tour was marked with a student congress organised by IPPNW students at the Palace of Independence. During the congress participants took part in plenaries dedicated to issues such as, "How we as youth change the game and the power of social media" and "Medical responsibility." The student congress was organised on the eve of the 21st Congress of IPPNW that is being held in Astana from Aug. 27-29, for the first time on the territory of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

IPPNW was founded in December 1980 by collaboration among American professor of cardiology at Harvard School of Public Health Bernard Lown, the director of the All-Union Cardiology Research Centre of the Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS) of the USSR

Yevgeny Chazov and a fellow of the USSR AMS Leonid Ilyin. The organisation was awarded a UNESCO prize for its efforts in 1984 and the Nobel Peace Prize for services to public awareness and consciousness of humanity in favour of peace in 1985. In the mid-1980s, the number of members of IPPNW totalled about 145,000, and by the early 1990s, the movement had about 200,000 individuals from more than 60 countries.

The network connects doctors around the world through affiliations and activist links. One of the coordinators and organisers of the Kazakhstan bike tour, Michelle Jin from the United States, became a part the IPPNW movement in Iowa through the organisation Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR). Jin is a Master of Public Health, focusing on maternal and child health at the University of Minnesota. She continues to work to promote the elimination of nuclear weapons through local and international events to raise community awareness and assumed the role of a leader at IPPNW by becoming national and regional student representative coordinator.

Gurley Kuusk, of Tallinn, Estonia, is an oncologist and was also one of the organisers of the bike tour. Gurley became acquainted with the activities of IPPNW in 2002 at the European Students' Congress in Estonia and since then she has worked for the abolition of nuclear weapons by promoting the idea of a nuclear



The bike ride, a planned demonstration of peace organised by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) lasted from Aug. 10-24.

weapons free world. She organises student meetings, bicycle tours and street actions.

Another coordinator is Arashdeep Singh, from India, who graduated with a Bachelor's degree from

a medical university in India and is now a practicing doctor-intern in the department of pulmonology and respiratory diseases. The main areas of his professional activity are improving the quality of health

services for the poor and vulnerable sections of society to improve their standard of living. He has been associated with IPPNW since 2008 and had various positions in the student organising committee.

Together with their peers from Kazakhstan and around the world, these enthusiastic promoters of peace seek to give hope that a nuclear weapons free world is possible.

## Astana Marriott General Manager Has Big Plans for New Hotel



By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – Philippe Mahuas is at the helm of operations of the newest luxury hotel in Astana. The long-awaited opening of the Marriott is welcome news for residents and guests of the capital. Mahuas sat down with The Astana Times for an exclusive interview to discuss the company's plans in Kazakhstan.

How long have you been in Kazakhstan?



Philippe Mahuas

I've worked on the project for almost two years. I started working on the project in October 2012, but I moved to Astana in the middle of July last year. But before then, I had visited a few times, first

with my family to understand the city before committing to move here for two, three, four or maybe even five years. Then I had regular business visits that were aimed at monitoring the progress of the pro-

ject. They concerned the first phase of recruitment, making sure that we're establishing relationships with potential suppliers and that we understand the city and how it works.

What are your impressions of Astana?

So far, so good. Actually, I'm very happy. It's always exciting to move somewhere new. I've been away from home for almost 30 years. I'm a French citizen by birth but I moved from France for the first time in 1986, so for 28 years, I've been living abroad. When I first came here, I did not know Astana. I knew of Kazakhstan, I knew it was a big country. I knew of President [Nursultan] Nazarbayev of course, as well as of one of your sports ambassadors, [cyclist Alexander] Vinokourov.

Continued on Page B6

## Physically Challenged Entrepreneur Turns Tragedy into Triumph, Helps Others

By Asset Kalymov

ALMATY REGION – Yeldos Baialyshbayev from Taldykorgan is a real example of optimism and spiritual strength. He helps the disabled reclaim their health.

Twenty-two-year-old Baialyshbayev didn't just stumble upon the idea. Three years ago, he became permanently bedridden after getting involved in a serious car accident. However, after receiving a Group I disability classification,

the young man did not despair.

Gradually, he began to exercise on a personalised programme developed by a massage therapist. Then, his father and brother found a suitable imported simulator on the internet, which can help restore muscle tone and joint mobility. But the price of the equipment was very high so the men decided to make their own simulator. They made drawings, welded and soldered the parts and after two months, their creation was ready.

Continued on Page B2

## Burabay Golf Resort to Put Kazakhstan on World Golfing Map

By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – The Burabay Golf Resort near Astana, due to be completed in late 2015, will be managed by Troon, one of the most prestigious golf management companies internationally. Located 200 kilometres from Astana on the northern shoreline of Lake Schuchiye, the resort will undoubtedly be a scenic getaway from the commotion of the capital.

Expected to open just before EXPO 2017, it will be a grand new addition to the country's developing tourism industry.

Continued on Page B4



### THINGS TO WATCH SEPTEMBER

**SCHOOLCHILDREN PALACE**

September 7 at 08:45 Group run

**VIP ROOM**

September 12 at 23:00 Svetlana Loboda Concert  
September 13 at 00:00 DJ NICKY RICH Show

**ASTANA OPERA**

September 17-October 5 Silk Road Festival at 19:00  
September 17 at 19:00 "Toska" opera

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

September 2 at 10:00 Painters of the Soviet Kazakhstan exhibition  
September 11 at 10:00 Antique exhibition

NATION&CAPITAL  
**PEOPLE**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Physically Challenged Entrepreneur Turns Tragedy into Triumph, Helps Others



Yeldos Baialyshbayev helps the disabled reclaim their health.

Continued from Page B1

Their years of grueling work yielded results: Baialyshbayev got to his feet and is already walking with the help of a stick, although the doctors said that he would never get out of bed. He decided to share his success with others facing physical challenges. He developed his fitness club and applied

to the Damu Fund to participate in the state programme Business Road Map-2020. He then, took a training course in business and received a grant from the state for 3 million tenge (US\$16,484).

The municipal administration provided a gymnasium and relatives and friends made repairs and manufactured simulating equipment. Some of the equipment was

purchased abroad on special order. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the club, Baialyshbayev emphasized that there is always hope for the disabled, they must not give up and they must believe in themselves and in their own strength; only then will their wishes come true. Deputy Akim (Mayor) of Taldykorgan Galiaskar Sarybayev said that Baialyshbayev is an example of steadfastness, courage and diligence. He gave hope for a better future to many people with disabilities thanks to his persistence and determination to succeed and prove that disability is not a sentence and not a cause for self-isolation.

The new fitness club has all amenities needed, not only for sports, but also for rest and communications. According to Baialyshbayev, this takes away from the pain and discomfort and relieves depression. Massage therapist Murat Zhadanov and coaches Yerlan Orunbayev and Nursultan Zhursinov all work together with Baialyshbayev. They offer training and special procedures to restore and strengthen the health of patients.

In the future, the young businessman, who also heads the public fund Asar and whose main goal is to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities, is planning to expand his business. His fitness club won best social project in the Different – Equals contest.

## Family Adopts, and Raises, 46 Children



Tamara and Anatoly Korolkovs, the founders of the Krokha children's home, have lots of holidays for they celebrate 46 birthdays.

By Alina Usmanova

PETROPAVLOVSK – Tamara and Anatoly Korolkovs are the founders of the Krokha children's home that has existed for 25 years. The couple has three children of their own and 46 whom they have adopted.

"It all started 25 years ago. After seeing the TV marathon from St. Petersburg dedicated to orphanages, my husband and I felt an urge to help children without parents, although at that time our third child was only three years old," said Korolkova in an interview with Bnews.kz.

Two months later, they opened a children's family home and later the whole family of 20 people moved into the cottage.

The Korolkovs, who are teach-

ers, had to develop horticulture and animal husbandry as they wanted their children to eat homemade products.

"In school and at home, I used a great method to stimulate the children's interest in their studies – the spirit of competition. And it largely worked. We provided the children with the freedom of choice and watching them we could identify both the character and abilities of the child," she said.

The girls spend more time with their mother – at the sewing machine, in the garden, in the greenhouse and in the flower garden, while the boys spend time fishing or repairing the car with dad.

"One of our sons was the principal assistant to his father in the

barnyard. Now, he has graduated from college as a veterinarian," Korolkova said.

In this family they have lots of holidays, for they celebrate 46 birthdays. They prepare for holidays together by writing scripts and baking cakes and cooking.

Since childhood, the whole family has become accustomed to work, such as spending a lot of time on the garden plot, thus developing the sense of responsibility and satisfaction from the results of the joint labour.

"Generally speaking, the main thing is if you adopt a child, you should take him or her into your heart with love. Perhaps that is why our adopted children always come back," Korolkova noted.



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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## ‘Van Gogh Alive’ Showcased in Almaty

By Ruziya Ospanova

ALMATY – The interactive exhibition “Van Gogh Alive” opened in early August in the Dostyk Plaza Shopping and Entertainment Centre in the Grande Exhibitions Hall. Paintings by the famous artist Vincent Van Gogh are represented with the latest technology and the help of the 40-projector system Sensory 4to create a multi-screen show.

This exhibition presents 3,000 dynamic images related to the life and work of the artist.

“Van Gogh’s creativity connects our countries with friendly relations. Nowadays, not only do business and economy play a bridging role, but art also. The main thing is that Van Gogh shows us how important it is to follow your dream and to be faithful to it,” said Dutch Ambassador to Kazakhstan Hans Driesser as he opened the exhibition.

The artist’s canvases are projected on large screens, which beside the usual placement on the wall are located in the most unexpected parts of the exhibition space – the columns, the floor, the ceiling. The composition of the screens is arranged so visitors appear to find themselves inside the pictures. This gives a completely different perception of the artist’s work, emphasising his unique style.

The multimedia system reproducing the masterpieces consists of 40 projectors and a surround sound system which is synchronised with the image. The technology, imported from Australia, literally creates a true symphony of light, colour and sound.

The exposition introduces the viewer into the world and work of Van Gogh from 1880-1890. The exposition begins with his self-portraits, continuing to the early years in The Netherlands. The paintings of this period are marked by dark shades.

The heavy hues virtually disappear from the palette with Van Gogh’s move to Paris and the second period reigns with bright colours, gardens and fruit bowls. It was in France that the painter experienced the happiest and most productive period of life. In Arles, he painted the famous “Sunflowers” series. Yet it was also there where Van Gogh’s mental disorders started, which he suffered until the end of his life. A series of letters sent to friends and his brother Theo shed light on many aspects of his life and work. The multimedia reproduction is completed with self-portraits of the late period.

“Van Gogh Alive” is being held in honour of city day and will last until Oct. 1.

The exhibition was created in 2007 by the Australian company Grande Exhibitions. Since that time it has exhibited in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and America and has been visited by more than 1.5 million people.



The interactive exhibition “Van Gogh Alive” presents 3,000 dynamic images related to the life and work of the artist.

## Kazakh Movie to be Aired at Toronto Film Festival



By Bakhytbek Aduov

ASTANA – Adilkhan Yerzhanov’s “The Owners” will be shown as part of the Contemporary World Cinema lineup at the Toronto Film Festival, which will be held from Sept. 4 to 14. “The Owners” is young Kazakh writer and director Adilkhan Yerzhanov’s fifth film.

Films aired under the Contemporary World Cinema heading are ones that traverse uncharted waters and push the limits of modern cinema.

The world premier of “The Owners” was at the Cannes Film Festival under the free-floating special screening category where the film was highly acclaimed by critics. “The Owners” also made the 68th Edinburgh Film Festival.

The movie highlights some of the difficulties related to property ownership. The story is about a tragic situation in which two brothers and their sister are evicted from

their home by a neighbour who is backed up by a powerful relative, a police chief. The boys have no relatives to protect them but they do not lose hope or leave the house.

After the Cannes Film Festival, many top film publications gave Yerzhanov’s work good reviews.

One of them, “The Hollywood Reporter” called “The Owners” “a caustic critique of small-town corruption and cronyism in contemporary Kazakhstan. It is also poetic, surreal and visually arresting.”

The Variety said that “This highly stylized, blackly comic low-budget drama is a biting piece of a social criticism that eventually goes over the top and enters Grand Guignol territory.”

According to Yerzhanov himself, “This film is my civil and artistic attempt to give society a chance to see an honest reflection of what routine and ordinary social problems do to ordinary people before they become complacent.”

Yerzhanov was born in Kazakh-

stan’s Dzhezkazgan in 1982. He graduated from the Kazakh National Academy of Arts in 2009 after studying directing at the Damir Manabay Workshop.

Yerzhanov has shot five films, of which two, “Constructors” and “Realtor,” have already received attention from major international film festivals. He believes in independent cinema evaluation and says that films are not there to entertain people. “Art does not exist in order to divert people from reality, but rather in order to motivate people to change their situation,” he said in an interview with Interfax.

“The Owners” was shot in the Almaty region in 2013. Graduates of the Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of Arts play the majority of roles.

The Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), known originally as “The Festival of Festivals,” was founded in 1976. There are no juries and it is non-competitive. At this festival, there are no customary awards like best actress or best film, which are handed out at similar events. The major prize is the People’s Choice Award given to the feature-length film with the highest ratings according to TIFF goers. Moreover, the Toronto festival is considered a backroom rehearsal before the Oscars, where the Academy Commission takes people’s movie choices into account.

## ‘Abai’ and ‘Shakarim’ Suites to Premier at New York’s Carnegie Hall

By Dmitry Lee

Abai and Shakarim suites, rich in Kazakh history and heritage, will premier at Carnegie Hall in New York on Nov. 12. They will demonstrate a small part of Kazakhstan’s history and culture to the American audience.

The Almaty Symphony Orchestra headed by Marat Bissengaliyev will perform the pieces. The suites were composed by Karl Jenkins, a Welsh composer. The composer specifically visited Kazakhstan to study and research traditional Kazakh instruments, explore nomad lands and experience their lifestyle.

The 52-year-old Bissengaliyev is a famous Kazakh violinist and conductor who won numerous awards and received honourable mentions for his remarkable performances.

“At the premier, the world will be treated to a beautiful presentation of Kazakh heritage through the language of contemporary music and performing art,” Director of the Symphonic Orchestra Raikhan Iskenderov said.

The Symphonic Orchestra was presented for the first time in 2012 during the First World Congress of

Performing Arts. Members of the orchestra are winners of numerous national and international competitions. In the past two years, the orchestra has recorded over 10 albums at Abbey Road and Angels studios.

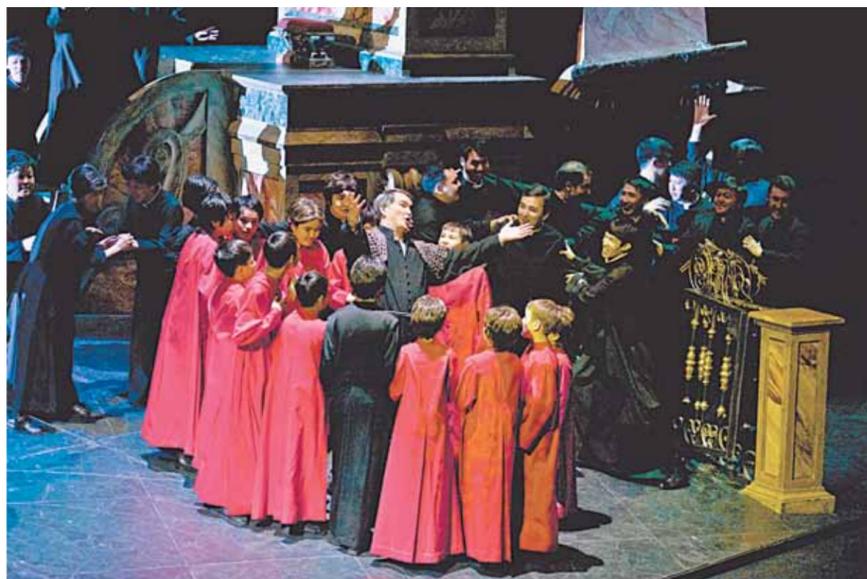
The suite is dedicated to renowned 19th century Kazakh intellectual and poet Abai Kunanbayev who greatly contributed to Kazakh literature. He is considered the pioneer of written Kazakh. His works ranged from poetry

and Russian into Kazakh literary translations to music he composed himself. The other highlighted artist is Shakarim Kudaiberdiyev, Abai’s contemporary, who was a Kazakh poet, writer, historian and a composer. Shakarim was a humanist who stood against the oppression seen under the Russian Empire and later under the Soviet Union in the Kazakh steppes. He was shot in 1931. Later, Soviet officials continued the ban on Shakarim’s works.



Marat Bissengaliyev

## ‘Tosca’ to Open Silk Road Festival



The “Tosca” premier took place on Jan. 14, 1900 in Rome, while its vibrant music and an exciting plot is popular even today.

By Alina Usmanova

On Sept. 17, the Astana Opera will open the International Silk Road Festival with the timeless opera Tosca, by Giacomo Puccini. This is a big event for the Astana Opera and will be highlighted by renowned “Tosca” singer Anna Pirozzi (Italy) famous tenor Massimo Giordano as Cavaradossi (Italy) and brilliant Italian opera singer Alberto Gazale as Scarpia.

Kazakhstan audiences loved Pirozzi’s Tosca, which premiered in May of this year.

Eminent Giordano (tenor) and Gazale (baritone) will sing for metropolitan opera goers for the first time.

Famed for his vocal prowess and outstanding dramatic abilities, Giordano performs on the world’s most famous stages. He has worked with leading conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Riccardo Chailly, Bruno Campanella, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Lorin Maazel and others, as well as with such

famous directors as Franco Zeffirelli, Luca Ronconi, Pier Luigi Pizzi, Alberto Fassino, Declan Donnellan, Liliana Cavani and Graham Vick.

Gazale, with his timbre rich baritone, performed more than seventy roles on the stages of the most prestigious concert halls and opera houses such as La Scala, the Vienna Staatsoper, Carnegie Hall in New York, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Teatro Real in Madrid, the Opera House in Zurich and the Megaron in Athens amongst many others. His repertoire includes such operas as “Attila,” “La Traviata,” “Il Trovatore,” “Masquerade,” “Aida,” “Rigoletto,” “Macbeth,” “Othello,” “La Boheme,” “Madame Butterfly,” “Cavalleria Rusticana,” “The Barber of Seville,” “Faust” and “Werther.”

The performance will also involve Astana Opera soloists: Arthur Kaipkulov (Anelotti), Sundet Baigozhin (Sacristan), Beimbet Tanarykov (Spoletta), Talgat Galeyev (Sharon), Bolat Yessim-

khanov (Jailer) and Aisha Oryn-bassarova (Shepherd.)

The “Tosca” premier took place on Jan. 14, 1900 in Rome at the Teatro Costanzi. Vibrant music and an exciting plot make it popular even today. The play takes place against a backdrop of historical events that illustrate the hard times of the year 1800, during which Napoleon’s army invaded Italy. Despite the trying times, the love between Tosca and her lover Cavaradossi grows.

The original performance of “La Scala” was impressive thanks to the inexhaustible imagination of Director Ronconi. The director focused the main emphasis on human passion, rather than on the story of lovers who by the will of fate were involved in political events and were the victims of despotism, torture, and execution.

The musical masterpiece written more than a century ago is today among the world’s top five operas. It excites viewers and leaves them interested in Puccini’s music.

## COUNTRY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

# Almaty's Barakholka Bazaars to be Reinvented

By Yelden Sarybay

Almaty Akim (Mayor) Akhmetzhan Yessimov is actively preparing for new business developments at the renovated Barakholka. To do so, the people who currently work there must first leave.

According to Yessimov, the traders of the street markets are regularly evading taxes, using illegal labor and selling contraband goods. This lowers the image of the city as a modern metropolis and results in the problem of unenforced health and safety regulations.

The giant bazaar, a network of smaller, separately-owned markets spanning around eight kilometres, is famous for providing a wide range of products, from household items to specialty goods. The metal containers that host the retailers provide low cost spaces but also very poor sanitary and work-

ing conditions. The city authorities are concerned that the market is in need of a revamp and are pushing for a redevelopment agenda that has been ready for two years but faced resistance from market owners. Four fires at different parts of the Barakholka last year spurred a new incentive for renovation.

Barakholka, Russian for "junk market," originated chaotically in the 1990s as a flea market. At the extended meeting of the government on Aug. 6, President Nursultan Nazarbayev instructed local authorities to close in on the shadow economy by shutting down such uncontrolled bazaars and replace them with modern shopping malls. He also stated that the government must take into consideration individual traders so they would not be hurt by the provision.

According to a World Bank study in 2010, the market had annual sales of \$1.7 billion and around 18,000 people working

there, making it the second largest market in Central Asia. Critics of the new development plans are concerned that individual traders will not receive compensation since they rent rather than own their trading spots.

But the retail boom that Kazakhstan is experiencing due to the growing number of middle class consumers is expected to cover that gap. According to the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of Economy, retail sales have more than quadrupled over the decade and as of last year are currently hovering at \$27 billion. Newly-built, modern shopping malls are expected to open as early as September of this year.

Official ownership of the Barakholka markets remains murky and traders hesitate to name their landlords. However, the shadow economy is steadily being curbed, as formal trade overtook informal trade in 2011, and last year bazaars



According to a 2010 World Bank study, the Almaty market had annual sales of \$1.7 billion and around 18,000 people working there, making it the second largest market in Central Asia.

and informal outlets accounted transparent, modern and clean markets is timely for the entire city as it seeks a bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics.

# KazNU Named One of Top 50 Universities Worldwide for Tech

By Tatiana Yevseyeva

Kazakh National Al-Farabi University (KazNU) took 31st place in a ranking of the 50 most high-tech universities worldwide, which is another example of the success the university is having in making itself a top-tier academic institution.

According to a study from the internationally well-known organisation, Great Value Colleges, the Kazakh National Al-Farabi University was among the 50 most technologically advanced universities in the world. It should be noted that the Kazakh university is the sole representative of not only the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), but also Eastern and Central Europe and Singapore and Japan in Asia in the rankings.

Great Value Colleges uses a multi-faceted approach in preparing its world rankings of universities in various areas of teaching and research; this helps people choose the best college at which to get a quality education. The ranking takes into account the presence of national, regional and international awards in technology and innovation, specialised laboratories and research centres, research units, availability of re-

search opportunities for students and the prevalence of scientific and technical activities. The rating is given to the universities by an interested third party and is based on available public information from reputable sources.

Today, KazNU is the largest scientific and educational institution in the country. It is comprised of eight research institutes and more than 30 centres and laboratories devoted to the study of science, technology, the humanities and social sciences. The lion's share of state-funded research in Kazakhstan is carried out at KazNU and 10 percent of these funds go to support young scientists. It should be noted that in the last three years, KazNU's research and development activities increased by almost three times. Scientific advancements made at the university are put into production and KazNU scientific works are actively published in top journals and included in the databases of Scopus and Thomson Reuters.

KazNU is the first and the only university in Kazakhstan awarded a special diploma for outstanding achievements in the field of science by Thomson Reuters. This-

special international recognition of scientific and technological potential of the university is demonstrated by the funding of KNU educational and research centres and laboratories by world-renowned companies like Hewlett-Packard, Cisco, Intel, Konica Minolta and Microsoft. Together with partners from the United States, the UK, China, Germany, Finland, Japan and others, the university has carried out 56 major international research projects funded by INTAS, the International Atomic Energy Agency, EU, NATO, the World Bank, and UNESCO. Every year, more than 1,000 foreign students and teachers choose KazNU for study and scientific training. For example, 24 students from the United States chose KazNU for training this academic year. Last year, based on results from the respected UK rating agency QS, which is known for its rankings of academic institutions, KazNU entered the top 300 best universities in the world, taking 299th place. Also, according to EU experts, KazNU is the undisputed leader among universities in Kazakhstan in scientific, technological and innovative potential.



KazNU is the first and only university in Kazakhstan awarded a special diploma for outstanding achievements in the field of science by Thomson Reuters.

# Progress Continues on Plans to Build Kenderli Resort in Mangystau

By Julia Rutz

A cooperation agreement on the construction of Kenderli in the Mangystau region was signed between the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund and the Rixos Group on Aug. 20 during negotiations organised by the Kazakhstan Ministry for Investment and Development. Plans and financing to build two hotels (four and five stars), an aquapark and several cottages are now under development.

When construction is completed on the full resort, it will include 20 hotels, 8,000 villas and cottages

for 40,000 guests. Investments are expected to exceed \$3 billion. According to approximations, Kenderli resort may attract 640,000 tourists by the end of 2020. The project is aimed at foreign visitors – 70 percent are expected to be foreigners and 30 percent locals; 54,000 jobs will be created. Annual profit is expected to reach \$800 million.

As part of the United Nations Green Bridge initiative, construction will be carried out in accordance with the highest standards of fourth generation resorts and will incorporate sustainable elements.

The akimat (regional government) of the Mangystau region is now developing transportation related infrastructure for the resort. Technical and economic assessments, as well as design estimates have already been created for several tourism projects in the region. Construction of Kenderli International Airport has also been approved.

Kenderli is located 210 kilometres away from the city of Aktau on the Caspian seashore. Kenderli was given status as a national project under Kazakhstan's 2020 Tourism Development Concept.



The future Kenderli resort will include 20 hotels, 8,000 villas and cottages for 40,000 guests.

# Burabay Golf Resort to Put Kazakhstan on World Golfing Map

Continued from Page B1

Bruce Glasco, chief operating officer and managing director of Troon's international division said: "This will be an exciting addition to golf in the country and the first golf resort to be built here. With exciting developments of this sort, there are real opportunities to grow and heighten Kazakhstan's position on the golfing map."

Archetype, a French company ranked in the top 100 architectural firms in the world, is planning to

build a five-star, 150-room hotel with a clubhouse totaling 35,000 square metres. The golf course with all 18-holes will be the work of Korean firm In-Sung.

The Burabay area, known to locals for its beautiful nature, will provide an ideal setting for the visitors of the golf club who will be able to enjoy the imagery of mountains in the backdrop, a dense forest of pine woods, distinctive rock formations and lakes. The club will also include 15 chalets and two artificial lagoons.

Troon was founded in 1878 as a five-hole golf course following a meeting in a pub by a group of golf enthusiasts. In its centenary year, 1978, it was granted royal patronage and remains the first (and last) club in Great Britain to have been granted royal status under the long reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Burabay Golf Resort is Troon's second development in the region, joining the National Azerbaijan Golf Club and will be the company's 41st venue.

# SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Kazakhstan Opens Exhibit for International Day Against Nuclear Tests in Kuala-Lumpur

By Altair Nurbekov

KUALA-LUMPUR – Two days before the Aug. 29 International Day Against Nuclear Tests, the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Malaysia with the support of the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Malaysian Ministry of Tourism and Culture opened a week-long exhibition dedicated to the day and The ATOM Project, one of President Nursultan Nazarbayev's most prominent initiatives.

Among those who attended the ceremony were representatives of Malaysia's foreign and defence ministries, the National Nuclear Agency, the foreign diplomatic corps, the Malaysian public and the media, as well as students from Kazakhstan.

Chairman of the Committee for International Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Roman Vassilenko represented Kazakhstan. In his welcoming speech, he briefed the audience on the background of Kazakhstan's nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives inspired by the tragic consequences nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site have had on the country. He noted that the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site was mandated by a decree of President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1991 and that newly independent Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced the world's fourth largest nuclear ar-



Chairman of the Committee for International Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Roman Vassilenko (centre-right), Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Malaysia Daniyar Sarsekenov (r) and Malaysian officials cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony of the exhibition dedicated to the International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

senal, which is the country's most important contribution to global nuclear disarmament and an example worthy of following.

The Kazakhstan diplomat further elaborated on his country's main anti-nuclear efforts, including the adoption of the UN General Assembly's resolution in 2009 proclaiming Aug. 29, the day of

the official closure of the Semipalatinsk test site as the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. The yearly commemoration was conceived and promoted by Kazakhstan. The diplomat specifically noted the importance of the establishment of a Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ) by the five regional countries. Last

May, this initiative received the so-called negative security guarantees from the five recognised nuclear weapon states, making an important further step towards zone legal establishment of the zone.

As chairman of the CANWFZ, Kazakhstan has made significant contributions to its establishment. On May 6, in New York, represent-

atives of the nuclear five – Britain, China, Russia, the U.S. and France – signed a protocol to the CANWFZ treaty. The protocol will require approval by the parliaments of signatory states before coming into force. In October, a delegation from Kazakhstan will participate in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in New York to address the

adoption of the next UN General Assembly resolution on CANWFZ.

This year marks five years since the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution creating the commemorative Aug. 29 occasion. Since the Kazakhstan-initiated resolution was adopted, Kazakhstan, along with other countries around the world, has conducted conferences, seminars, exhibitions and other events calling for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Although all members of the nuclear club currently observe a moratorium on testing, a de jure global ban on nuclear testing is not currently in place. Putting the CTBT's into force is one of Kazakhstan's top priorities.

Vassilenko put a special emphasis on yet another important initiative of President Nazarbayev, The ATOM Project, which seeks to enhance the international community's awareness of the human and environmental consequences of nuclear testing.

"Today, almost 100,000 people from more than 100 countries have signed The ATOM Project's online petition at [www.theatomproject.org](http://www.theatomproject.org), calling on world governments to ensure that the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty comes into effect early," he said, adding that stories of nuclear weapons testing in Kazakhstan and other countries should be told and live on to prevent future generations from making the same mistakes.

## Nuclear Disarmament a Top Priority of Kazakh Foreign Policy, Official Says

Continued from Page A1

Certainly, the Nuclear Security Summit in March 2014 in The Hague with the participation of our President has become one of the major events in this area. At the forum, the President gave an objective assessment and pointed out the real way out of the crisis situation in the world. He stressed that the root cause of the crisis of global security is the lack of political will to put an end to the practice of "double standards" and the selective application of international law. There was made a call to focus efforts on the most important areas, such as general and complete nuclear disarmament, which is the only guarantee for nuclear security, combating nuclear terrorism and eradicating its foundations and establishing zones free from nuclear weapons. He also noted that the way to a fair, transparent, multipolar, constructive world order is through the participation of all countries in the discussion and the search for political, rather than military solutions, to global problems.

An important event in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation was the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) of 2015, which took place in April - May 2014 in New York. The session once again showed how polar may be the approaches of non-nuclear states and nuclear states in matters of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the mentioned meeting, all the countries of the "nuclear five" declared "significant progress" in nuclear disarmament and stressed the importance of a phased approach to reduce nuclear weapons. However, calls to eliminate the threat or use of nuclear weapons from the military doctrines of security, to conclude a comprehensive convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons were not supported by the nuclear countries.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the world's states believe that any threat or use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the principles of international law, in particular international humanitarian law. Nevertheless, calls for the



Barlybai Sadykov

speedy abolition of nuclear weapons and providing legally binding negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon states have also remained unheard by nuclear countries.

In this regard, the initiative launched by the head of our state on the acceptance of a Universal Declaration on achieving a world free of nuclear weapons in the UN framework is particularly relevant. In conditions of global security crisis, it is crucially important to restore confidence both in the global process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and in responses to international and regional issues. Therefore, the efforts of the foreign ministry are directed toward the development of such a document.

**This year marks five years since the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution, on the initiative of Kazakhstan, on the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. Could you tell us what is being done to implement this resolution?**

Of course, the first step towards the development of a future non-proliferation policy of Kazakhstan was the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site on Aug. 29, 1991. It was the first case of closing a nuclear test site in the history of the world at the will of the people. After the closing of the Semipalatinsk test site, other major test sites in Nevada, Novaya Zemlya, Lop Nor and Moruroa fell silent.

In the past four years in Kazakhstan and many other countries around the world, in order to remind the world about the terrible consequences of nuclear testing, conferences, seminars, exhibitions

and other events that called for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) have been conducted. This year, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution, the following events were and will be held: a conference on Aug. 27-29 in Astana and Semey by the International Physicians for the Prevention of the Nuclear War, a conference in Semey dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the anti-nuclear movement "Nevada-Semipalatinsk," a special session on Sept. 10 in New York of the UN General Assembly and an international conference on Sept. 15 in Washington devoted to the International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

The CTBT is one of the key elements of international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and that is why it is so essential to take measures on its early entry into force.

For five years since the adoption of the resolution, through collective action, there has been a great increase in the number of countries who have joined and ratified the treaty. Today, the treaty has been signed by 183 and ratified by 162 states, including three recognised nuclear powers: Russia, Britain and France. And, as known, its entry into force depends on the signature and ratification of the eight countries mentioned in the so-called Addendum II to the CTBT, which have nuclear weapons or the potential for the production and testing of nuclear weapons: Egypt, North Korea, China, Israel, India, Iran, Pakistan and the United States.

Although today all the powers of the "nuclear club" observe a moratorium on testing, de jure global ban on nuclear testing is not currently valid. And for Kazakhstan to achieve the CTBT entry into force is one of the country's most important priorities.

**Could you explain more about The ATOM Project? What has been done and what are the future plans?**

The ATOM Project is a new initiative of our President, which continues the policy commitment to achieve global nuclear disarmament. The ATOM Project is an

international campaign designed to provide information about the threats and consequences of nuclear weapons testing. The project aims to involve civil society, non-governmental and youth organisations in the struggle to end the testing of nuclear weapons, promotes the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and, finally, a world free of nuclear weapons. Within the framework of the project, any person on the planet, who opposes nuclear weapons, can sign the online petition to the leaders and governments of the world calling to abandon forever nuclear tests and to achieve the early entry into force of the CTBT.

During the two years since the announcement of the initiative, a lot of work has been done to promote it. Presentations of the project, as well as exhibitions of the paintings of famous artist and Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project Karipbek Kuyukov, have been held in The Hague, Geneva, Washington, Oslo, Moscow, Tokyo, Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Berlin and at UN platforms in New York and Vienna, including the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT.

Currently, the total number of signatories to The ATOM Project petition at [www.theatomproject.org](http://www.theatomproject.org) is approximately 100,000 people from more than 100 countries. In addition, last year on Aug. 29 a minute of silence was observed by many people around the world in honour of the victims of all nuclear tests. This year, the event will take place again, and we encourage everyone to take part in it.

We firmly believe that the stronger the public support that will be generated by The ATOM Project through its education and outreach efforts and its international campaign to collect signatures for a petition against the testing of nuclear weapons, the more effective will the project be as support to the efforts of non-governmental organisations, parliamentarians and activists. Ultimately, this will help influence the leaders of leading countries to take the necessary steps to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

**In his speech at the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague,**

**the head of our state appealed to the "nuclear five" to speed up the signing of a protocol on the provision of negative security assurances to members of the treaty on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia. What is the current situation with the agreement?**

That's right, President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the Summit made such an appeal, and his appeal has been welcomed and supported by the heads of the "nuclear five" states. Kazakhstan has made a significant contribution to the establishment of a Central Asian-zone free of nuclear weapons. After the signing of the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (CANWFZ) in 2006 in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan has been making practical efforts for the institutionalisation of the treaty. We have developed and agreed with the states parties of the treaty on a single position paper on approaches to the interpretation of the treaty's provisions. Kazakhstan as a chairman of the CANWFZ treaty for 2012-2014, held meetings with the countries of the nuclear five, discussing the conditions of signing the protocol. In total, more than 20 formal bilateral and multilateral meetings and negotiations in the capitals of the nuclear countries and on international platforms, both at the expert level, and at the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan have been conducted.

On May 6, 2014 in New York, representatives of the "nuclear five" – Britain, China, Russia, the United States and France - signed the protocol to the treaty on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia.

Under the protocol, the nuclear-weapon states have provided negative security assurances and committed themselves not to use nuclear weapons against CANWFZ and threaten countries that are parties to the CANWFZ treaty. After the ratification of the protocol by the parliaments of the signatory countries, these commitments will be of a legal nature.

The signing of the protocol to the CANWFZ treaty undoubtedly was an important event in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. However, it is important, but only the first step

in the process of institutionalisation of the treaty. We hope for an early ratification by nuclear countries.

**What are the challenges in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation facing the foreign ministry?**

The international agenda in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is saturated, and we have a lot of work to do on promotion of Kazakhstan's initiatives aimed at achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

In October, our delegation will take part in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in New York, where the adoption of the next UN General Assembly resolution of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia will be discussed. We very much hope that this time will be the first time when the resolution is adopted by consensus.

We will continue to work on the text of the Universal Declaration on achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

We also plan to attend in October the first meeting on the preparation of the Nuclear Security Summit in 2016 in Washington and in December in Vienna will host an international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons tests, where a delegation from Kazakhstan will also participate. Together with interested governmental bodies, work also continues on the the agreement and its technical annexes on conditions for the creation of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) international bank of low-enriched uranium in Kazakhstan. Within the framework of the IAEA General Conference in September this year in Vienna, meetings of representatives of a Kazakh delegation with the organisation's Secretariat to discuss the agreement to place the bank in Kazakhstan is also scheduled.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are among the key priorities of the foreign policy of Kazakhstan, and in the case of election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2017-2018, Kazakhstan will actively promote them in this important UN body.

# TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## The Landlocked Shore: Kazakhstan's Caspian Region

By Michelle Witte

A landlocked country isn't the obvious choice for a beach holiday, and, to be sure, landlocked Kazakhstan's Caspian coast isn't bursting with foreign tourists. This, however, is part of the region's charm: clean water, relatively undeveloped beaches and intact traditions, plus mellow cities and unique, sun-blasted rock canyons.

The Mangistau region that encompasses much of Kazakhstan's Caspian shoreline is one of the focuses of the country's new cluster tourism concept, but as yet it's pretty quiet. The capital, Aktau, sits on the shore overlooking multiple public beaches. It's also the launching point for tours to the region's cultural destinations, including the underground mosques and necropolises Beket-Ata, Shopan-Ata and more.

### Salt, Water, Oil

It's only natural that a country of unusual superlatives (home to the aquarium farthest from the sea, world's biggest producer of uranium) would have a share of the world's largest enclosed body of water. There's some debate as to whether the Caspian should be called a sea or simply the world's biggest lake. Its water is slightly salty; about a third of the salinity of most seawater. More than 100 rivers pour into the Caspian, including Kazakhstan's Ural river and the Volga, Europe's largest river. In the shallow north Caspian, oil and gas deposits are being slowly, painstakingly accessed; as the sea warms and deepens toward the south, it becomes an important home for birds and other animals – including humans.

Humans have been living around the Caspian for more than 10,000 years, drawn by the water and the abundant oil that even in the 10th century was being dug for and used for heating. Now, its water and energy support Kazakhstan's oil capital, Atyrau, plus Aktau and other population centers. But Kazakhstan's Caspian region is still largely a calm place, with friendly people, traditions still in practice and a slowly increasing stream of intrepid visitors.

### The Landlocked Shore

A number of beaches are accessible from Mangistau's mellow capital, Aktau. "Beach tourism in Mangistau is developing," Gulmira Suieuoova, head of Mangistau's tourism department, told EdgeKZ. "The swimming season is 5-6 months of the year. In recent years, there has been an influx of tourists who want to relax on the sea. Beaches near the town of Ak-



The Mangistau region that encompasses much of Kazakhstan's Caspian shoreline is one of the focuses of the country's new cluster tourism concept.

tau are Manila beach, Nour Plaza and Dostar."

Shinar Bek of Astana visited Aktau with a friend in 2012, with only a Lonely Planet to guide them. "We were there in the middle of July, but there weren't a lot of tourists there. We saw many foreigners but not too many locals at the beach." The water was very cold, she said, but very blue and very clean, and the weather was perfect for swimming. "We didn't visit many places – every day we went to the sea. We liked the beaches!"

Aktau's beaches are not pristine stretches of white sand, mind you. This is Central Asia, not Southeast Asia. But the water is cold and clean and inviting, visitors say, and the atmosphere is welcoming.

Theo Navarro, 22, assistant director at Study Inn in Astana, traveled to Aktau over the winter. "This was a trip in February, so it wasn't cold, but it wasn't swim season. The beach was mostly empty but very clean," he said. "There's also amazing shashlyk [kebabs] in Aktau and people are friendly." Service is better there than anywhere else he's been in Kazakhstan, he said.

### Legends in stone

The Mangistau region is home to some of Kazakhstan's holiest and most mysterious cultural sites. The strange underground mosques and tombs of Beket-Ata and Shopan-Ata are there, a few hours from Aktau, where tours can often be arranged.

### Beket-Ata

Beket-Ata was born near Atyrau in the second half of the 18th cen-

tury. A respected warrior in the first part of his life, at age 40 he became a Sufi, a follower of a mystical facet of Islam, and began to develop a reputation as a teacher and a healer. He built four mosques and many schoolrooms before his death in 1813. His ashes are interred next to one of these rooms in which he used to teach, deep inside a mountain in the middle of a rocky Ustyurt desert.

The underground mosque, called simply Beket-Ata most of the time, is a site of pilgrimage for many Kazakhs, and certainly the 1.5 kilometer walk over winding, exposed stone stairs down into a rocky mountain hollow to his small tomb can feel like a major effort in the heat. Along the way, there are resting places with pumps that deliver clean, salty mineral water.

Bek visited Beket-Ata on her trip, tipped off to it by some strangers she met on the train to Aktau. Traveling from Aktau to the necropolis via Zhanaozen takes about five hours, she said, and takes you from the seaside into a stark, bleached desert and through the lowest point in the former Soviet Union, the Karagiye depression, 132 meters below sea level. As you pass through the bleached desert, color starts to creep back into the scenery.

"I was surprised by the nature – the nature is different," Bek said. "You see multicolored mountains in different shapes. The road goes way down into the mountains, then way up high." There are also often camels by the side of the road, and yurts and people wearing traditional clothes, she said.

"They say it is a holy place, and the nature is untouched. It's beautiful – it doesn't look like anywhere else in Kazakhstan," she said. "They believe if you go there, if you touch his tomb, your wish will come true."

Most visitors there are Kazakhs, often believers on pilgrimage. Before and after visiting the mosque, there are often prayers and time to share tea and bread and fruit.

Bek and a friend hired a van from the town of Zhanaozen. Tours can also be arranged from Aktau. Advantour (<http://www.advantour.com/kazakhstan/>) organizes a 16-hour, 600 kilometer tour from Aktau to Beket-Ata and back along an ancient caravan route.

### Shopan-Ata

Beket-Ata is often combined with a trip to Shopan-Ata, 100 kilometers away, the dwelling, tomb and mosque complex of the older Sufi mystic who was Beket-Ata's inspiration. Shopan-Ata was a follower of one of Kazakhstan's most important religious figures, Khodja Akhmed Yassau, whose mosque in Turkestan is perhaps the country's most important religious and historic site.

Shopan-Ata's necropolis is a large complex: over 3,000 tombstones, plus structures and caves with Islamic imagery as well as animal carvings and animist motifs.

### Shakpak-Ata

Shakpak-Ata was one of the sons or grandsons of Shopan-Ata,

and followed in his father's footsteps as a mystic. His cave mosque (thought to be built in the 10-11th centuries) was cut into the edge of a stone cliff on the edge of the Ungazy mountain, and features stone carvings and columns with the remains of ancient paintings visible. The arches between the columns have remnants of multi-colored murals. The complex includes cells for private contemplation as well as larger prayer rooms, and columns with the remains of old painted murals visible.

### Blasted Land, Blessed Land

"For casual visitors, at first glance Mangistau may seem colorless, withered, tired and burnt by the sun and wind. For people in this land of deep grown roots, it is a blessed land. Each stone carries a history of the peoples who once inhabited the Mangistau," reads a tourism brochure distributed by Mangistau's tourism department.

"Withered, tired and burnt" don't usually make up a compelling description – and yet the land they describe is full of intrigue, color and mystery of its own.

### The Black Mouth

The giant Karagiye ("Black Mouth") depression, 132 meters below sea level, once held an ancient salt lake, and ringing its long ago shores are the artifacts of the peoples it supported. The drying of the ancient sea and the rise of underground water through lime-

stone and other types of rock has created mile upon mile of bare mountains, craters and caves.

### Valley of the Balls

One of the oddest sights in this harsh environment is pink-and-white Sherkala mountain, which either looks like a yurt or a lion, depending on your angle, and the strange "Valley of Balls" that it watches over. About 150 kilometers from Aktau is the small town of Shetpe, the closest town to the mountain and the balls. Stone spheres of different sizes, some of them huge, are scattered across the valley, sometimes grouped in lines, as though part of some giant's game of marbles. As you pass through the valley and approach the chalk mountain, there are more underground mosques and cities of the dead, plus evidence of ancient caravan stops. Nearby are the remains of the medieval settlement of Kyzylkala, a 10th century Silk Road trading post.

### Visitors Wanted

Because of its energy resources, Mangistau isn't completely off the beaten path. But the region is hoping to host visitors other than oil men. As Kazakhstan embarks on a new tourism development program, Mangistau is preparing for some major investment. Aktau city will be the center of a cluster of tourism development in Aktau, Suieuoova told EdgeKZ. "The cluster of Western Kazakhstan [which includes Mangistau] will be positioned as the 'Caspian Riviera.' The main tourist products that will be developed in this cluster include beach tourism, cultural tourism and tours."

"The region is getting popular after TV commercials and some international programs about Mangistau, but it is not very developed yet," Zamira Imanalieva of Advantours.com told EdgeKZ. "The region is mostly visited by people who want to visit holy places, the underground mosques Beket-Ata and Shopan-Ata for pilgrimage, locals and neighboring countries' citizens."

The relative lack of international tourists means English-speaking waiters, desk staff and taxi drivers are not always going to be at hand. That's not a problem, Bek said. "Sometimes we met people who spoke English. Sometimes. We stayed in a hotel and our neighbors were one Japanese traveler, one Korean and one Ukrainian." The Korean traveler didn't speak any English, but got around fine using sign language and smiles. "He said, 'I behave like Charlie Chaplin,' and it works," she said.

## Astana Marriott General Manager Has Big Plans for New Hotel

Continued from Page B1

I knew of him as a cyclist, not as the boss of the Astana team like he is now. He has done a lot in putting Kazakhstan on the map. I knew it was very cold in the winter and very hot in the summer. But I can't change that, you can't change that, we just wear warm clothes, that's it. So far so good, it's an exciting city. It's a vibrant city with a youthful feel.

### Who is your main target group?

In terms of clients, the entities that we will be serving the most are corporations. This is for two reasons: we are located in the capital and Astana has a strong presence in many fields, whether its oil and gas, finance, etc. I feel that we will be dealing with customers involved in these fields for the most part. I feel that EXPO 2017 is quite far ahead in the future, but yet again, very, very soon and that the exhibition will be driving business not only during its operations. I think that since Astana won the bid for EXPO 2017, work with different countries has picked up visibly, especially

with energy and environmental associations. One could say that Expo 2017 has already started. I think corporations have already been doing a lot of work related to EXPO. The other type of organisation we will be working with will be embassies. Being Marriott, being a large international hotel company, we have an international presence in most countries; we have over 4,000 properties ranging from our Courtyard brand all the way to Ritz-Carlton. This gives us an edge against our competition; people will recognise us as a hotel. Embassies, the government and various ministries will be definitely one of the markets that we will serve.

The rest will be just what we call one-shot events, whether they are regular events related to government, i.e. the Astana Economic Forum each year at the end of May, or events similar to the one which took place at the beginning of May, put on by the Asian Development Bank. We will also service the UEFA Congress in March. There are a lot of events that are taking place in Astana; there are an increasing number of events

taking place each year in terms of congresses, meetings and sports. I think Astana is positioning itself as a leading destination in terms of sports; the number of ice hockey clubs, wrestlers, footballers, etc., here is growing too. These are our main segments. There will obviously be individual clients that just want to stay in a Marriott hotel for a weekend. They will come to have dinner and eat in Aroma or Vista on the 27th floor. These, I would say are our biggest segments.

### What makes you different from the competition?

Yes, we have competition. I think we are very clear about who our competitors are. What makes us different? I think it's the brand. As Marriott, we are one of the leading companies in the world, which helps us position ourselves. When travellers look at renting a room in Astana, they will see Marriott and think "Ah, there is a Marriott!" So I think the Marriott name is important. I also believe Marriott's presence helps further put Astana on the map; it's a give and take relationship between both us and the city in

my opinion. I would say our brand is an asset, the values that our brand carries, such as high quality service and attention to detail, as well as the facilities we provide.

Our Marriott rewards loyalty programme is again a leader in its field, if not the leading programme in the world of hotel loyalty programmes. Our location in the new part of the city, the hotel's easy access to the airport and close proximity to government ministries, which are on the left bank of the river are what make us competitive. We will seek to work with various business centres, oil and gas consortiums such as NCO or CPC, and others, which also gives us an edge. We are the only hotel in Astana with an executive lounge, an environment for clients staying on the executive floor.

And, last but not least, I think our team, our people will give us an edge.

### This isn't the only Marriott in Kazakhstan; do you have plans to expand into other cities?

In new cities, for the time being, no. We are already represented with two Renaissance hotels

in Atyrau and Aktau. We have a Marriott executive apartment in Atyrau, we have a Ritz-Carlton that opened in October last year in Almaty and then there is [here] which opened in early August. And we have the Ritz-Carlton due to open most likely in 2017. At this stage, based on my knowledge, there is no further development plans for Kazakhstan. But I believe with cities like Karaganda and Shymkent, why not in the future? These are corporate decisions that are made between the company and local investors.

### Do you have anything else to add?

I would just like to say that we are delighted to be opening a Marriott in Astana. Like I previously mentioned, I think it's a fantastic opportunity for us as a company to position ourselves in the new capital. I think it is important for the company to be located in all capitals of the world and to be associated with a city like Astana and the vision of the President. The 2020 plan is almost complete. The President's plan lasts until 2050, so we

have very much a long-term vision and I think it is important to be part of the project Astana truly is. The city is still young, the city is big, not in size, but rather because people are speaking about it everywhere I turn. Ten years ago, if I had spoken of Astana, people would be like "what?" And now people know.

People associate Astana with events, with strength, with the capital, with sport, with Expo 2017. We are delighted to be here and I think we are helping Astana put itself on the map with being the newest hotel in the city and in offering a new style and different location. Hosting two restaurants like Aroma, which will be our all-day dining room, where you can see our Marriott breakfast and our selection of grills, fish and meat as well as a lot of French-oriented dishes (our executive chef is French) will make us a notable dining location. In the next few weeks, we will be opening Vista Bar and Lounge on the 27th floor, which offers great views of the city. We will be serving what I would say classifies as "East meets West." So that means Asian-influenced cuisine in small portions that is easier to share when people are travelling together.

It's an exciting time and we're looking forward to a successful relationship with the city.

## SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Kazakh Athletes Take 8 Medals at Second Youth Olympic Games in China

By Dmitry Lee

At the Second Youth Olympic Games held in Nanjing, China on August 16-28, young Kazakh talents managed to take eight medals: three gold, one silver and four bronze.

These eight medals put Kazakhstan on the 21st place in the standings while China led the Games with 65 medals in total. Russia and the mixed National Olympic Committee (NOC) teams made up of athletes representing different Committees occupied the second place.

The Kazakh judoka Bauyrzhan Zhauryntayev took gold in the 55

kilogramme weight category by defeating Natig Gurbanly of Azerbaijan in the final.

The boxer Abylaikhan Zhussupov of Kazakhstan was victorious in the 60 kilogramme category after the final bout with Alain Limonta Buda of Cuba 2:1 and took gold.

And Kazakh wrestler Mukhambet Kuatbek became a gold medalist by beating Russian Amirkhan Guvazhokov (3:1), Armenian Vaginak Matevosyan (3:0), Brahma Richards from New Zealand (4:0) and Venezuelan Eliezer Aulara (4:1).

Another Kazakh boxer Vadim Kazakov took silver, and gave the gold medal to the Bulgarian

Blagoja Naidenov with the score 0:3.

Among the bronze medallists were the Greco-Roman wrestler Yevgeniy Polivadov, weightlifters Zhaslan Kaliyev and Tatyana Kapustina, and Kazakhstan's gymnasts Viktoriya Guslyakova, Amina Kozhakhmet, Nuray Kumarova, Dariya Medvedeva, and Aliya Moldakhmetova.

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) is an international multi-sport event organised by the International Olympic Committee. The games are held every four years in summer and winter.

This year, around 3,600 athletes from 201 nations participated in the Games.



Kazakh athletes brought three gold, one silver and four bronze medals from the Second Youth Olympic Games.

## Street Workout Site Opens in Almaty Central Park



By Julia Rutz

ALMATY – A new street workout site sponsored by the World Class Fitness Clubs chain opened Aug. 22 in Central Park here.

The first visitors have already tried the exercise and workout equipment. According to Max Team captain Valentin Labezki, the rubber coating is one of the main advantages of the new street workout complex.

"Because of the rubber floor people can workout barefoot. An-

other advantage is the equipment diversity – here you can find parallel bars, gym wall bars, parallel bars for chin-ups, climbing frames and a gymnastics complex. The whole site is pretty big, so I expect more people will be coming to the park to exercise. As we know, about 100,000 people in Kazakhstan do street workouts," explained Labezki.

Managing Director of World Class Fitness Clubs Valikhan Ten said that a street workout championship will take place in the city next year.

"I would like to invite all street workout lovers to participate in the championship we are going to organise next year in Almaty. The competition will take place in the site opened earlier in the Mega Centre Alma-Ata shopping mall," said Ten.

The new street workout site measures 400 square metres. Ac-

ording to the organisers, fitness instructors from World Class will organise master classes for all who are interested. Another street workout complex is expected to be opened soon in Mega Park Mall located between Seifullin and Makatayev streets. More workout sites are planned for construction in the Shakhristan and 29th district living complexes. Entrance to the street workout complex is free for locals and city guests.

Street workout was recognised as a sporting event in Kazakhstan last year. According to one of the organisers of the Street Sports Federation, Islam Badurgov, street workout is now actively supported by sports authorities in the country. Badurgov also said that street workout can become a professional kind of sport in the future and sportsmen will get the opportunity to make their hobby a lifetime business.



A street workout site sponsored by the World Class Fitness Clubs chain in Almaty.

## Fans Make Predictions as Golovkin-Rubio Fight Looms



Gennady Golovkin (l) and Marco Antonio Rubio (r).

By Dmitry Lee

As tickets went on sale Aug. 27 in the US for the next big fight in WBA middleweight champion Gennady Golovkin's (30-0, 27 KOs) career, fans predict and speculate on whether he will defeat WBC interim middleweight champion Marco Antonio Rubio (59-6-1, 51 KOs) on Oct. 18 in Carson, California which, in turn, could give him a shot to face long sought opponent Miguel Cotto, provided he wins.

Golovkin has not lost a single fight yet and has won Best Boxer 2013 title. He is considered by many fans the No.1 160 pound

fighter in the division and will walk in on Oct. 18 as the apparent favourite. But recently Cotto's coach Freddy Roach made a rather derogatory comment to BoxingScene.com in Golovkin's address: "Nobody knows who he is. On pay-per-view he can't do ten cents. Why fight a guy like that for no money? Unless he's bringing money to the table we're not going to fight him." According to Golovkin's trainer Abel Sanchez, Cotto's camp team has been making "all kinds of excuses" not to fight the Kazakh.

The win against Rubio will make Golovkin the mandatory challenger for WBC middleweight champion Cotto. This is why this bout

has so much on the table for the Kazakh boxer.

If Rubio defeats Golovkin, he'll have his WBA title and will remain as Cotto's WBC mandatory challenger as well. However, according to the majority fan's predictions, Rubio doesn't have a chance against the Kazakh.

Golovkin will also try to win the audience in on the West coast of the US with his fighting style, which he calls himself the "Mexican style" that he learned from his trainer Sanchez who turned Golovkin's open fighting style into a fighter with rapid powerful shots and who pressures his opponents constantly to wear them down.

## Zarina Diyas Advances to 3rd Round Doubles at US Open



By Dmitry Lee

Top Kazakh tennis player Zarina Diyas from Almaty and doubles partner Yi-Fan Xu from China advanced to the third round in doubles at the U.S. Open in New York on Aug. 31 when they defeated Lucie Hradecka of the Czech Republic and Michaella

Krajicek from the Netherlands 7:6, 6:2.

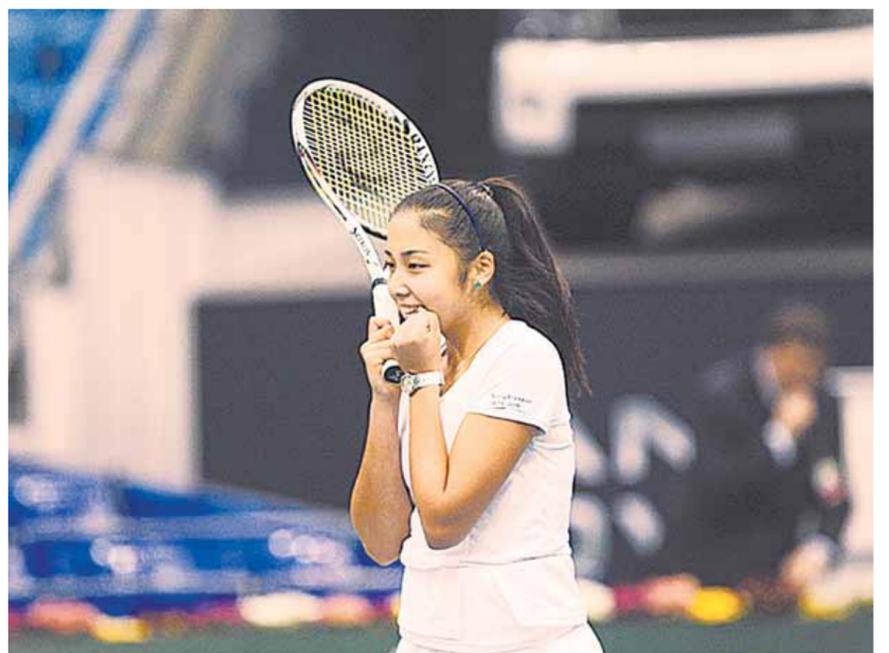
The duo had beaten American Lauren Davis and Renata Voroca from the Czech Republic 6:3, 7:6 on Aug. 29 to advance into the second round.

Twenty-year-old Diyas was eliminated from the singles competition when she fell to 17th seeded Russian Ekaterina Makarova 2:6, 4:6 in the third round. In

the first two rounds, she defeated Ukrainian Lesia Tsurenko 6:1, 6:2 and 15-year-old Catherina Bellis who played in front of her home crowd.

Diyas is now the only remaining tennis player from Kazakhstan in the U.S. Open. Kazakh players Alexander Nedovesov, Yaroslava Shvedova, Michael Kukushkin and Andrei Golubev were all defeated in earlier rounds.

**Diyas is now the only remaining tennis player from Kazakhstan in the U.S. Open.**



# CAPITAL

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014

## Bicycle Race Commemorates Constitution Day, 100th Anniversary of Local Cycling

By Julia Rutz

ASTANA – Local cyclists participated in a bicycle race organised Aug. 24 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Kazakh cycling and celebrate the Aug. 30 Constitution Day. The starting point of the race was the Saltanat Sarayi Wedding Palace.

More than 2,000 cyclists joined the Sunday race, among them Mayor Imangali Tasmaganbetov, Olympic champion Alexander Vinokourov and bicyclists from the Astana Pro Team, including team captain and the winner of 2014 Tour de France Vincenzo Nibali, Jakob Fuglsang, Michele Scarponi, Maxim Iglinsky and Dmitry Gruzdev.

“I am really happy to welcome all the participants today. This

race proves that Astana is a city of active and goal-seeking people. I congratulate all [Kazakhstan residents] on Constitution Day and wish them good health, welfare, good luck and all the best,” said Tasmaganbetov.

“When we heard about the race, we decided that the whole family would participate in it, so I came here with my wife and my two children. The mood is great and so is the weather. I think it is good that our city promotes cycling. Of course, we need to reconstruct the whole city infrastructure to let cyclists ride safely,” explained race participant Ardak Tashenov.

According to another cyclist, Alibek Dairbayev, such races should be organised every Sunday to let people stay fit and cre-

ate an image of a dynamic capital.

Such celebratory bicycle races have become a good tradition for locals. The event not only allows the city to promote the necessity of leading a healthy lifestyle, but also instills public spirit among youth. All the collected assets will be allocated to promote sports among people with disabilities. The best cyclists of the race received awards in the following categories: the youngest cyclist in the race, the oldest cyclist in the race and the most athletic family.

Racers rode a 4,600-metre route from the Saltanat Sarayi Wedding Palace to the Astana Arena stadium. The same route was chosen for the Kaiser Keruen public race, organised this year to commemorate the 16th anniversary of Capital Day.



More than 2,000 cyclists joined the Constitution Day race, among them Mayor Imangali Tasmaganbetov, Olympic champion Alexander Vinokourov and bicyclists from the Astana Pro Team.

## Bordeaux Star to Play Romeo in Astana Opera Production

By Rufiya Ospanova



Kazakh star and leading soloist Madina Basbayeva will play the role of Juliet in Sergey Prokofiev's ballet, "Romeo and Juliet."

ASTANA – Sergey Prokofiev's ballet, "Romeo and Juliet" will be presented to the metropolitan audience on Sept. 19 with the star of the National Opera of Bordeaux, France, Roman Mikhalev playing Romeo.

Kazakh star and leading soloist Madina Basbayeva, who will play the role of Juliet, was choreographed by Charles Jude. The ballet will be performed as part of the first Silk Road International Festival.

Basbayeva played the role of Juliet in France at the invitation of Jude and was well received by the French public. She recalled that the audience would not let her go, giving a standing ovation and shouting bravo.

The love story that has become a world ballet classic took its niche in the repertoire of the theatre after a big premiere in its first season. The classic staging of the world-renowned chore-

ographer of the Bordeaux ballet troupe, Jude conveys the drama and boiling passion behind the ballet accompanied by the great music of Prokofiev. Jude's rendition is based off that of Rudolf Nureyev, which is renowned for its sophistication.

and musical works that make love an inexhaustible theme.

Jude, the director of the Bordeaux ballet troupe, is the winner of the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters (1990) and Chevalier of the Order of the Legion of Honour (1996).

### Basbayeva played the role of Juliet in France at the invitation of Jude and was well received by the French public.

The production's decorations and costumes will be designed by Italian designers Ezio Frigerio and Franco Skuarchapino. The conductor will be Aidar Abzhakhonov of Kazakhstan.

Since the last century, more than fifty movies by the same name have been filmed worldwide, in addition to the literary

Mikhalev, the leading soloist of the Bordeaux ballet troupe, won third prize in the Maya-98 international competition in St. Petersburg (1999), first prize at the Nureyev International Ballet Competition in Budapest (2000) and second prize of the Ninth International Ballet Competition (2001).

## International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Hold Conference in Astana

Continued from Page A1

Exactly two years ago, President Nazarbayev launched The ATOM Project, an online petition designed to raise awareness of the consequences of nuclear tests and explosions. The project and its Honorary Ambassador Karipbek Kuyukov, a renowned armless painter and weapons testing survivor from Kazakhstan, have been presented in numerous countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Under the auspices of the project, Kuyukov shares the stories of the horrible consequences of nuclear tests and their impact on the people of Kazakhstan in the Semey region

in hopes of eventually securing the abandonment of nuclear weapons worldwide.

“We hope that after this congress, countries will show decisive initiatives in establishing a new treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Therefore, we are here to discuss such a treaty,” noted Ira Helfand, co-president of IPPNW, during the congress.

Kuyukov told the audience the story of his life and of his hometown Egindybulak - a village located only 100 kilometres from the Semipalatinsk test site. His parents were exposed to radiation, a fact which has impacted Kuyukov's whole existence - he was born without arms. However, despite

the challenges to his future, he became an activist against nuclear tests and an artist that paints with his feet and mouth.

“I would like to say today that throughout my life, I've seen a lot of families in which children were born only to be hidden from the public by their parents. They simply could not show their children. With a heavy heart, I saw that these parents loved their children. Today, standing on this stage, I am proud that I live in Kazakhstan, the country which was one of the first countries to renounce nuclear weapons.”

Kuyukov left the stage to a standing ovation.





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