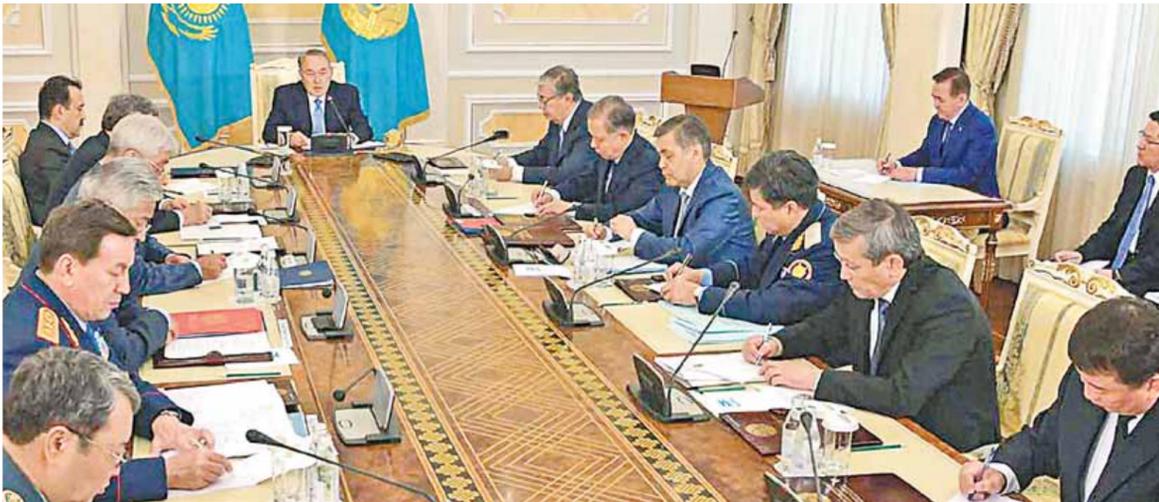




Kazakh Security Council Considers New Measures in Wake of Aktobe Attacks



President Nursultan Nazarbayev tasks officials to tighten security policies after Aktobe attacks at the meeting of the Security Council of Kazakhstan on June 10.

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – President Nursultan Nazarbayev chaired a meeting of the Security Council of Kazakhstan in the Akorda presidential residence June 10 to assess the June 5 terrorist attacks in Aktobe and determine measures to ensure the country's security.

Prosecutor General Zhakip Assanov, Minister of Internal Affairs Kalmukhanbet Kassymov, National Security Committee Chairman

Vladimir Zhumakanov and Akim of the Aktobe region Berdibek Saparbayev presented reports during the meeting.

In his remarks, Nazarbayev thanked all the people in Kazakhstan for their support of anti-terrorist operations held in the country and once again expressed his deepest condolences to all the bereaved families and relatives on behalf of the council members. He stressed that the state will provide all possible assistance to the bereaved families.

Nazarbayev also expressed his gratitude to law enforcement personnel for their professionalism, loyalty, heroism and patriotism.

"We already know that it was a terrorist attack of followers of the non-traditional religious movement, Salafism. Even though we provide freedom of religion in the country, we will fight those who destabilise the situation in Kazakhstan covering under the religious slogans," Nazarbayev said.

He noted that despite the terrorists' plans, law enforcement bodies managed to prevent larger losses among the civilians. He said that almost all criminals were neutralised, and assumed that the rest will be found and punished. (On June 12, the National Security Committee announced that all participants in the attacks have now been accounted for, including 18 killed and 9 apprehended during week-long search-and-capture operations).

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Nation Mourns Dead, Stiffens Laws After Terrorist Attacks

By Dmitry Lee, Malika Orazgaliyeva and Artur Abubakirov

ASTANA, June 13 – As Florida residents are still reeling from the horror of the June 12 nightclub shooting – the largest mass shooting in United States history – residents of Aktobe are also struggling to regain a sense of normalcy in the wake of their own terrorist attacks that killed four civilians and three Kazakh soldiers on June 5.

On that date, 27 suspects robbed two weapon shops and attacked a local National Guard station in Aktobe. City residents also witnessed

numerous violent clashes throughout the city between suspects and anti-terrorism forces in the days that followed.

The violence has since subsided in the western Kazakhstan city and authorities announced June 12 they had arrested or killed the primary suspects involved in the attacks. Eighteen suspected attackers were killed and nine arrested in the initial attack and in the search-and-capture operations in the following days. Officials also confiscated 23 weapons stolen from the weapon shops, according to Ministry of Internal Affairs Spokesman Almas Sadubayev.

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Abdykalikova: Kazakhstan Creates Conditions to Develop Modern, Inclusive Economy

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Kazakh Secretary of State and National Commission for Women's Affairs, Family and Demographic Policy Chair Gulshara Abdykalikova made a working visit to Warsaw to take part in the Global Summit of Women. The conference was attended by delegations from 75 countries, according to a press release from the Kazakh President's press service.

For more than 23 years, the summit has been connecting women worldwide and covering all sectors – public, private and non-profit.

Speaking at the conference, Abdykalikova noted Kazakhstan offers all the development conditions for a modern, inclusive economy by implementing state programmes such as Business Road Map 2020 and Employment Road Map 2020, as well as joint projects with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Asian Development Bank. Inclusive economic growth is not only about expanding national economies, but also about ensuring the reach extends to the most vulnerable in society.

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EAEU Seeks Deeper Cooperation with Key Integration Organisations

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Presidents Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Vladimir Putin of Russia, Serzh Sargsyan of Armenia, Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus and Almazbek Atambayev of Kyrgyzstan met in the Kazakh capital May 31 as the council of heads of member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). They discussed issues of deepening contacts with such integration partners as the European Union (EU), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ways to cooperate under the current conditions of the economic crisis.

"Last year, we signed the first

agreement on forming a free-trade zone with Vietnam. Today we have discussed the issues of closer cooperation with China, India, Israel, Egypt, Iran, Cambodia and other countries. We also consider an opportunity of establishing trade and economic relations between the EAEU and such integration organisations as the EU, SCO, ASEAN and others," Nazarbayev told his counterparts as they assembled in the Akorda presidential residence.

He stressed the EAEU should become a transparent community which is well-integrated into the world economic system and representing the reliable bridge between Europe and Asia.

Putin noted he welcomes Kazakhstan's initiative to hold an international conference on es-

tablishing interaction between the EAEU and EU.

"We know that the interest in our economic union is growing worldwide. We also expand our international contacts. I proposed to announce this year as the year of deepening of economic relations of the EAEU with three countries and key integration organisations," added Nazarbayev.

"The EAEU was established in May 2014. De facto, the union has operated for an even shorter period of time. However, we can see that it has enormous potential. Absolutely, we already have results and success. Also, we have failures and artificially-created problems. We have to clearly understand that our peoples don't have another choice. We are responsible for the future of the Eurasian Eco-

nomic Union, for the future of our states. We need the diligence and patience, wisdom and cooperation of our peoples and the heads of states, as well as all ministries and state bodies. I trust in the future of the EAEU," Atambayev said.

"In spite of the fact EAEU is a young organisation and the economic difficulties that we have in the process, we can state that the EAEU is a complete integration product. Now, our economies are working and improving in accordance with the plans and terms we outlined in the EAEU agreement," he added.

Nazarbayev indicated EAEU governments and businesses are now gaining the required experience in terms of cooperation with each other.

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Kazakh President Calls for 'Inclusive Globalisation' at Ninth Astana Economic Forum

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Opening the plenary session of the ninth Astana Economic Forum (AEF) May 26, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev called for "inclusive globalisation," in which the development of all countries and the welfare of all people are taken into account. To achieve this goal, the Kazakh President proposed establishing a Human Capital Development Fund under the UN auspices, funded by taxing offshore accounts from around the world, as well as developing a road map to develop green economy based on the recent Paris Agreement on climate change.

"Only that type of [inclusive] global growth will be sustainable and we must strive towards it. This is the way of long, difficult and

painful transformation that will require joint efforts at the global level and coordination of the actions at the level of national economies," he said. "It is important to ensure coherence and coordination of the practical implementation of the generated decisions. Thus, it is necessary to take into account the views of all countries. There is a need in the UN structure or establishment of the special committee under its auspices to ensure such coordination. I propose to use the interactive virtual platform G-Global operating in Kazakhstan, which unites more than 30,000 experts from 140 countries."

The May 25-26 AEF included 30 forums, master classes, seminars involving international economic experts, business persons, Nobel Prize laureates, heads of international organisations and politicians.

This year, the AEF's agenda was "New Economic Reality: Diversification, Innovation and Knowledge Economy." Participants discussed the trends and challenges of the global economy, as well as long-term economic growth in the new economic reality and increasing of the role of competition in the integration processes.

In this regard, Nazarbayev presented a number of global initiatives. In particular, the head of state noted the importance of human capital development in developing countries.

"No state can develop without a literate, educated, healthy and enterprising people. We know from our experience how hard it is to build effective education and health systems. It requires patience, knowledge and a huge investment. I believe that Kazakhstan made a big

step in these areas. However, there are many countries that have failed. To solve this problem, I suggest forming the Human Capital Development Fund under the UN. The fund will aim to improve the quality of education and health in the poorest countries," stated Nazarbayev.

He also stressed the need to create conditions for the recovery of economic growth, which implies a reinvestment of funds in the development of education, health and infrastructure instead of transferring into speculative financial instruments.

"Today, according to experts, around 30-40 trillion dollars are being kept in offshore accounts. The introduction of even a one percent global tax on these assets would allow bringing education and health in developing countries to a qualitatively new level.

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Ministerial Meeting in Vienna Seeks Ways to Promote Nuclear Disarmament

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

VIENNA – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Erlan Idrissov took part in a ministerial meeting commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) during his working visit to Vienna June 13, where he and other government and organisational leaders discussed current nuclear disarmament initiatives.

Speakers and panellists commented on the new political momentum supporting the treaty's entry into force and devoted particular attention to countering the threat of nuclear weapons falling into terrorist hands, finding ways to bring forward the entry into force of the CTBT and generally advancing a vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The meeting also took place during the year of the 25th anniversary of the closure of Kazakhstan's Semipalatinsk Test Site, where the Soviet Union conducted extensive nuclear tests over four decades.

Idrissov emphasised that the anniversaries are linked. In closing one of the world's largest test sites, Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev made history as the first to legally ban nuclear tests. It wasn't long before other nuclear test sites were shuttered, following this lead, which supported the conditions needed to ensure a ban on nuclear testing could become a global phenomenon, Idrissov noted.

According to the top Kazakh diplomat, the closure of the site paved the way for the adoption of the CTBT, and the date of its closure – Aug. 29, 1991 – is recognised by the UN as the International Day against Nuclear Tests, now commemorated across the world annually.

Idrissov also stressed the relevance of Nazarbayev's recent initiative – the Manifesto, "The World. The 21st Century." In the document, Nazarbayev suggests the international community develop a holistic action plan to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, of wars.

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Twenty-five criminal cases have also been brought against the suspects, which will be tried as one case, announced Kazakhstan's National Security Committee (KNB) Deputy Chairman General Nurgali Bilisbekov.

While terrorist attacks around the world have become all too frequent, Kazakhstan over its more than two-decade history had somehow managed to avoid major terror events. Therefore, Kazakh authorities acted forcefully to capture or kill those involved in the June 5 attacks and begun considering measures to prevent such attacks in the future.

"Even though we provide freedom of religion in the country, we will fight those who destabilise the situation in Kazakhstan under the cover of religious slogans," said Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in the days following the attacks.

"We already know that it was a terrorist attack of followers of the non-traditional religious movement Salafism," he said, noting that despite the terrorists' plans, law enforcement bodies managed to prevent larger losses among civilians. He said that almost all suspects have been killed or captured

and that any additional suspects will be found and punished.

According to the President, these events demonstrated the need to radically review the working methods of law enforcement bodies.

"It is time to strengthen our legislation. We need to analyse and make appropriate changes in the adopted programmes," he said.

Nazarbayev also noted that the tragic events in Aktobe proved the necessity of the enhancement of protection of important facilities.

"All the airports and railway stations must be equipped with the modern systems of examination. Houses must be provided with video surveillance. All these measures shall not cause any inconveniences for the citizens," he said.

On June 8, citizens of Aktobe bid farewell to the local victims of the attacks: Pallada weapons shop assistant Andrei Maksimenko; retiree Nikolai Onischenko, who happened to be near the store at the moment of the attack; and Mikhail Matrosov, a fisherman who had come to the nearby Pantera shop to buy gear.

Forty-four year-old Maksimenko was killed immediately after terrorists stormed the building, dying on the spot from the knife injuries he received. According to

his widow, he had worked for four years in the shop. Though injured, he managed to press the alert button. Two security guards from the Kuzet Company responded and were attacked. One of them, Merkhan Tazhibayev, died; his colleague was injured.

Onishchenko, a 68-year-old pensioner, died one day before his 69th birthday. According to his wife, he had gone to pick up some vegetables. On his way home, an armed crowd from the Pallada shop reached him and pulled him from the car. The elderly man resisted and was shot. His widow saw the events unfold from the balcony of their apartment and remains in serious shock.

According to Tengrinews, Matrosov was going to buy fishing gear at the Pantera weapons shop, where some of the attackers went following the Pallada shop attack. Matrosov and his brother were planning a fishing trip. His wife says that he must have resisted the attackers, because his hands had injuries. Matrosov died; his brother was injured.

On June 7, Akim (Governor) of Aktobe Region Berdybek Saparbayev visited Maksimenko's and Onischenko's relatives and, along with Deputy Head of the Nur Otan party Mukhtar Kul-Muhammed,

expressed condolences to the families of Onishchenko and Matrosov.

After the shops were attacked, the attackers hijacked a bus and stormed a local National Guard unit. Three servicemen were killed there.

Forty-year-old Major Daniel Mailybaev, the senior detective officer of the Military Counter-intelligence Department of the National Security Committee of the Regional Command Batys of Kazakhstan's National Guard, was killed in the fight. He had a wife and four children. He was buried in Talgar in the Almaty region.

Junior Sergeant Berik Kaliyev died at the age of 38. He was born in the West Kazakhstan region and worked in Aktobe. He also left a wife and four children, and was buried in his hometown. Private Dosbol Sapar, 19 years old, a native of the South Kazakhstan region, was killed while on guard duty at the guard station. He was buried in Koksuy Village in South Kazakhstan.

The country has shown its solidarity with the residents of Aktobe by launching an online campaign "Pray for Aktobe" and lowering the national flag everywhere on the national day of mourning on June 9. Statements of support for Kazakhstan and condemnation of

the attacks have also been coming in from abroad.

"The violent attacks on June 5 in the city of Aktobe in Kazakhstan caused several casualties. The European Union extends its sincere condolences to the families of the victims and wishes a prompt recovery to the wounded," Maja Kocijančič, spokesperson for the European External Action Service said in a June 7 statement. "The European Union will continue to work with Kazakhstan and the other countries of Central Asia in addressing security threats and challenges together and in preventing the spread of violent extremism. The EU condemns radicalism and extremism in all its forms and reiterates that fundamental freedoms of all citizens must be guaranteed in the pursuit of security and counter-terrorism operations."

"China expresses condolences to victims of the Aktobe shootout and sympathy for the victims' families and the wounded," Hong Lei, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, said at a regular briefing on June 7. "China opposes terrorism of any description and supports the Kazakh government in its fight against terrorism and in maintaining domestic stability. We would like to strengthen cooperation with Kazakhstan in the fight against terrorism and in safeguarding regional peace and security."

The Kazakh government and the people of Kazakhstan, knowing all too well the tragedy of terrorism, are now among those sending sentiments of condolence abroad.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

A new draft law on compulsory medical insurance with over 180 amendments was reviewed at the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs (NCE). The new medical insurance law will enter into force from the beginning of 2017. According to the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development, it should make the system more effective. The developers of the law propose to expand the list of recipients of free medical care and include foreigners and permanent residents in Kazakhstan. However, the NCE spoke out against it. According to the business people, it would be an extra burden on the budget. The ministry, however, is more concerned that a third of all healthcare costs are covered by citizens themselves.

Astana hosted a meeting of the defence ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on June 8, Tengrinews.kz reports. The heads of the Defence Ministries of SCO member states exchanged views on international and regional security issues and noted the high level of mutual understanding between the SCO states in this area. "With the growing threat of international terrorism and religious extremism, heads of defence agencies emphasise the importance of coordinated joint action to strengthen stability and security in the area of the SCO," the Kazakh defence ministry said in a press release following the meeting. In this regard, the ministers agreed to enhance coordination and consultative security mechanisms and cooperation to counter military threats in the immediate vicinity of the borders of SCO member states, as well as to facilitate the rapid exchange of information.

A crew from the American TV channel HBO is in Kazakhstan shooting a special project dedicated to Gennady Golovkin, Tengrinews.kz reports. The film crew travelled to Karaganda and Astana. One of the main tasks of the project is to show Golovkin's fans in the native country and hometown of the champion, as well as the beginning of his boxing career. Filming has taken place in Maikuduk, where the Golovkin brothers lived, studied and first went to a boxing gym. "Everyone was training hard in this gym. It was shameful if someone didn't try hard enough or was late. One didn't have to be a champion, but a workaholic. Because everyone understood that great things could be achieved with sweat and hard work," Golovkin said.

South Korean manufacturers of railway products are ready to participate in Kazakhstan's new investment projects. South Korea and Kazakhstan have already cooperated on the construction of Almaty's metro system – that is when the South Korean companies learned more about the Kazakh market. Now, South Korean manufacturers want to deliver their products to Kazakhstan and participate in the construction of new railways. "South Korea will have a great opportunity after the launch of the New Silk Road. This corridor is conveniently located for transportation. We have a large amount of traffic from Japan and the east coast of China. Therefore, we believe we are going to use this line," Gook-Hwan Jeon, professor at Seoul National University of Science and Technology, said. South Korean railway transport is well known for its innovations.

Kazakh citizens can now obtain driver's licenses in categories A, A1, B and B1 within about two hours. A new law governing the licensing process has come into effect and now citizens can take driving tests to get said licenses without special training in driving schools. Now, future drivers need only come to the special service centre and pass a two-hour test. Before the test, however, they need to pass a medical examination and pass the theoretical and practical exams. It would seem an easy procedure for obtaining a driver's license, but the practical exam remains the main challenge. According to one special service centre instructor, Bagdat Akhmetov, even experienced drivers rarely manage to pass the test on the first attempt. A special computer programme evaluates driving skills.

Kazakh Security Council Considers New Measures in Wake of Aktobe Attacks

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According to the President, these events demonstrated the need to radically review the working methods of the law enforcement bodies.

"It is time to strengthen our legislation. We need to analyse and make appropriate changes in the adopted programmes," he said.

Nazarbayev stressed that a number of foreign countries, including the United States, Israel and Germany, use different mechanisms directed at ensuring the transparency of foreign funds. He suggested the government consider their experience and submit proposals on the implementation of a monitoring of

foreign funding of Kazakhstan's citizens and organisations. As reported earlier, the suspects received their instructions from abroad.

"Legislation over the circulation of weapons should be strengthened. The gun shops must not be located in apartment buildings," Nazarbayev said.

He noted that uncontrolled migration, illegal settlements, including those formed by land squatters, create a favourable environment for criminality.

"The government should speed up the work on creating an integrated migration control system based on modern technologies, as well as create a draft law on fingerprint registration. Before that it must enforce the existing

methods of population registration," Nazarbayev ordered.

"In the interest of security and public order, there should be compulsory registration of migrants who arrive in our country. The National Bureau for Migration should be created under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which will be responsible for the control and regulation of migration processes," he added.

Nazarbayev noted that the tragic events in Aktobe proved the necessity of the enhancement of protection of important facilities.

"All the airports and railway stations must be equipped with the modern systems of examination. Houses must be provided with video surveillance. All these measures shall not cause any in-

conveniences for the citizens," he said.

Nazarbayev also stressed the importance of an elaboration of an algorithm of actions during the terrorist attacks and emergencies, as well as the necessity of snapshot notification systems in all large cities.

"Special attention must be given to the measures of safety in military facilities, including military towns and units," he emphasised.

The head of state ordered the Ministry of Health and Social Development together with akimats (regional and city administrations) to work with unemployed individuals. He said that changes in the labour code are possible if necessary.

In addition, Nazarbayev noted that police officers must be respected in society.

"The man wearing the police form must be under the special protection of the state," he noted.

"I think our people will understand correctly why we have to take these measures. Peace and stability in our country is the basic condition for the development and achievement of all our goals. We will not stop only by the listed above measures. In the nearest future, comprehensive solutions will be made over all other matters. I want to say that peace and stability in our country will be fully secured. To ensure this we have all opportunities, resources and people," concluded Nazarbayev.

Drivers Recount Hijacking of Bus Used in Aktobe Attack, Attackers Yell 'Allah Akbar' While Storming National Guard Station

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – In an exclusive interview with The Astana Times, Aktobe bus conductor Aigul Zhumabayeva details how she and her husband, driver Murat Issekenov, were forced at gunpoint to drive the bus that attacked the National Guard station during the deadly June 5 attacks in Aktobe.

"The day started as a regular routine," Zhumabayeva told The Astana Times, recalling the moments before being caught up in the violence that ultimately claimed the lives of three Kazakh soldiers and four civilians when assailants attacked two weapons shops and the National Guard station. "We didn't have too many passengers that day, just a couple."

As the couple drove their regular route, their bus was blocked by a police car engaged in a clash with the assailants. "At that moment, we heard gun shots. Everyone laid down," she said. As her husband struggled to unbuckle his seatbelt, a group of armed attackers boarded the bus and began shouting for



Murat Issekenov

Issekenov to take them to the military base.

"I was shocked and I don't exactly remember what was happening. They ordered everyone out; they were threatening us with guns. They told me to get off the bus, but I said the driver was my husband," Zhumabayeva told The Astana Times. "I didn't want to leave my husband with them, but they surrounded me and threatened me with guns. They told me they would shoot me if I didn't

leave. Witnessing all that, my husband talked me into getting off the bus."

After Zhumabayeva got off the bus, the assailants told Issekenov they would kill him if he didn't drive them to the National Guard station.

"They said [runover] anything that stands in the way [of the bus]," Issekenov told other media. "But I tried to avoid collisions and hitting people. When we got to the gates of the base, they told me to storm

the gates or else I would die..." he said.

"When I stormed through the gates, I deliberately stalled the engine. I thought the guards would react and not let us inside the base. But the terrorists opened fire. They were shooting right above my ear. I was stunned and blinded for some time. At some point I felt I was unconscious."

The attackers then left the bus, storming the military base while yelling, "Allah Akbar," Zhumabayeva recalled her husband telling her.

Issekenov escaped the bus as the attackers exchanged fire with the National Guard security forces.

Meanwhile, after being forced off the bus at gunpoint, Zhumabayeva had flagged down a passing car and asked the car to follow the bus. "They stopped right before the military base and I saw the bus storming the gates. Then my husband called me," she recollected.

"I was shocked when I got off the bus, I wanted to get back to the bus but I don't exactly remember what I was doing. I think the Almighty that my husband is alive. I

just want a peaceful sky over our heads in Kazakhstan," she said.

After the incident, the couple went to their home town of Kobda in the Aktobe region with their 5-year-old daughter. Issekenov is currently in a hospital recovering from post-traumatic shock but still having headaches. Memories of the assault and images of the terrorists continue to haunt him, said Zhumabayeva.

At press time, anti-terrorism operations continue in Aktobe, which has been the site of continued deadly clashes with suspected attackers in the five days since the initial attacks. Eighteen suspects have been killed either in the initial attack or in the clashes that have followed. Thirty-nine people have sought medical assistance, all in all, including 16 who were hospitalised. Aktobe's 400,000 citizens are being told to stay inside their homes as the city is still under the red state of alert.

Life in some parts of Aktobe has returned to a more normal life, but for those who witnessed the attacks, such as Zhumabayeva and Issekenov, the recovery is just beginning.

EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan's SCAT Airlines launched direct scheduled flights from Kazakhstan to Batumi and Sochi from June 5, Tengrinews.kz reports. The flights link Almaty, Astana, Shymkent, Atyrau and Aktope with a connection in Aktau and are operating twice a week on a Boeing 737. The duration of the flight from Aktau to Batumi is 1.5 hours. At the moment, one way tickets start from \$120 and round trip tickets from \$220. Flights to Sochi operate on Fridays and Sundays from Almaty, Astana, Shymkent, Atyrau and Aktope with a connection in Aktau. Tickets from Aktau for adults will be from \$171 in the same direction. For children up to 15 years of age, there is a discount system.

The Khorgos-East Gate Special Economic Zone is becoming increasingly popular among retail tourists, Kazakh TV reports. Tourists from Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries travel to Khorgos to enter China without a visa and do their shopping at the more than 30 stores at the international centre just across the border. Shoppers can find everything from consumer goods and food to clothes and accessories from famous brands, and items at Khorgos are about 15-30 percent cheaper than they are in other retail centres. In the first five months of the year, the centre was visited by almost 2 million people. The figure has doubled compared to 2015.

A flashmob to honour the Day of the State Symbols of Kazakhstan on June 4 was held in Moscow, 24.kz reports. Kazakh students studying in Russian universities lined up in the shape of a heart near the monument dedicated to Abai on Chistye Prudy, Moscow. In the centre of the heart, students raised an emblem of the Kazakh flag. The young people danced the national Kazakh dance, Kara Zhorga, and sang the Kazakh national anthem. "The coat of arms and flag are part of our nationality, part of our national identity. It brings a sense of pride in our country, and patriotism. I believe that it is necessary to carry out such activities, particularly outside of Kazakhstan," said Dauren Kaztuganov, a student at Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Kazakhstan has assumed the chairmanship of the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, Today.kz reports. Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC) recognises the country's contribution to the strengthening of international security and the implementation of the foreign policy priorities of Kazakhstan regarding the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The main objective of the HCoC is to strengthen confidence-building measures, transparency and security in relations between the participating countries through a voluntary exchange of information on existing national missile and space programmes and on advance notice about planned ballistic missile launches. There are 138 states within the HCoC as of today; Kazakhstan joined the organisation in 2005.

Kazakhstan has improved its position in the ranking of the most peace-loving countries, Tengrinews.kz reports. In the annual ranking of the Global Peace Index published by the Australian Institute for Economics and Peace, Kazakhstan rose from 87th to 75th place. In the regional index, which includes all post-Soviet countries except the Baltic states, Kazakhstan placed second after Moldova. According to the report, Iceland was recognised as world's most peace-loving country. The list also included highly peaceful countries like Denmark, Austria, New Zealand, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Canada, Japan and Slovenia. The most dangerous country is Syria, followed by South Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Yemen, the Central African Republic, Ukraine, Sudan, Libya and Pakistan. The index takes into account 23 indicators, including the level of violence and crime, military spending and defence, relations with neighbouring countries, the presence of armed conflict, the percentage of refugees in the country and respect for human rights by the authorities.

EAEU Seeks Deeper Cooperation with Key Integration Organisations

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"Internal issues of cooperation are mostly settled. I am confident that implementation of the tasks we set and observance of the principles of our union will be a good impetus for the economies of our countries," he said.

"The EAEU common market has to become a link between the East and West. Free movement of goods and services within the union meets the initiative of the Silk Road Economic Belt programme announced by the Chinese president. It is planned that the project will include those cooperation spheres that represent the economic benefit and mutual interest for our countries," he added.

The Kazakh President said his nation has built a reliable platform for interregional cooperation by implementing infrastructural projects under the Nurlu Zhol programme. Construction and modernisation projects such as the Western Europe-Western China highway, Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Persian Gulf railroad, an international seaport on the Caspian shore and the Kazakhstan logistics terminal functioning in the



Heads of EAEU countries at the roundtable talks in Astana on May 31.

Chinese port of Lianyungang are underway.

Nazarbayev suggested the EAEU countries look for additional ways for cooperation under the current conditions of the economic crisis.

"The negative things that are now happening in the world economy are a challenge for all of us and they require more efforts from

us using the EAEU platform. Our commission, governments, all of us have to look for additional opportunities because the situation is tough. We have a rapid downfall of mutual trade now and thus we have to find another way for our cooperation," he said.

Putin noted the recent inking of certain documents.

"The EAEU commission signed

memorandums of mutual understanding with the governments of Mongolia, Peru and Chile. We also plan to sign trade agreements with Serbia. The agreements on cooperation with South Korea, Ecuador and Mercosur are being drafted now. Iran, India, Israel and Egypt are also interested in the establishment of close ties with the EAEU," he said.

"The Eurasian Economic Com-

mission should be actively involved in this issue. I would like also to praise the support rendered by the EAEU business council. In my opinion, this area of work is very important. As you know, Viktor Khristenko has been recently appointed its chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to invite all of you to our next meeting in December in Moscow," he added.

KADEX 2016 Brings Together Military Experts, Producers from 40 Nations

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – KADEX 2016, the international exhibition of military equipment and armament, took place June 2-5 in the capital. The event displayed aircraft and space technologies, army and navy armaments, air defence systems, IT technologies, robotic systems and military equipment utilising alternative energy sources, with local and foreign producers closing a number of important deals.

Kazakh President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Nursultan Nazarbayev participated in the opening ceremony. He began by surveying a number of pavilions showcasing domestic and foreign military equipment and armament.

Nazarbayev stated Kazakhstan has done tremendous work to de-

velop its Armed Forces and pays great attention to training its military men, according to the Akorda press service.

KADEX 2016 brought together approximately 350 local and foreign companies and in excess of 3,500 participants from more than 40 nations. The exposition was housed in eight pavilions and open platforms with a total area of 90,000 square metres.

The international event opened its doors to the public June 3 and was visited by thousands of city residents who came to see the achievements in the domestic and foreign military-industrial complex. Russian aircraft pilots demonstrated aerobatics, showing their excellent skills and pilotage. Armoured military vehicles and tanks passed through the exhibition territory and guests also had the opportunity to witness combat shooting.

Deputy Defence Minister Okas Saparov said Kazakhstan will receive four Mi-35M helicopter gunships from Russia this year. The Mi-35M's functions include strikes against armoured vehicles, fire support for ground troops, delivery of airborne assault groups and cargo and evacuation of injured personnel. The model is currently used in Azerbaijan, Brazil, Russia and many other countries.

Kazakhstan Engineering (KAE) entered into long-term cooperation agreements with foreign and local companies totalling 45 billion tenge (US\$134.6 million), according to the Ministry of Defence press service. The company signed a road map with Aircraft Repair Plant No. 405 and Russian Helicopters to implement joint projects. The aim is to expand post-sale maintenance of the helicopters.

KAE also agreed to supply infrared lenses and thermal imagery cameras to Russia's Edelweiss factory for their further use in unmanned aerial vehicles.

A memorandum of cooperation in communications and electronics was signed on the sidelines of KADEX 2016 between North Kazakhstan's S.M. Kirov Plant and India's Elcom Innovations.

A trilateral agreement of collaboration was inked among Petropavlovsk Heavy Engineering Plant, Kazakhstan Paramount Engineering and Israel's Elbit Systems. Kazakh Gidropribor and Spanish company SAES also agreed to launch joint production of naval mines.

A major contract was concluded by Semey Engineering and MCM Pacific Pte, with the aim of delivering conversion vehicles to Myanmar.

Ukraine's Motor Sich and the Kazakh aviation industry signed an agreement on the transfer of technologies for upgrading MI-2 and MI-8 helicopters and engine overhaul for MI-8s. A contract on overhaul and upgrade of SU-25 jet aircraft was signed with Belarusian Aircraft Repair Plant No. 558.

Eurocopter Kazakhstan Engineering (ECKE) finalised several documents on the possible supply of its helicopters to local companies and state bodies. The company entered into memorandums of intention for the purchase of seven EC125 helicopters with the East Kazakhstan administration and 18 EC130 helicopters with KazMedAir. ECKE also plans to carry out technical maintenance of KazAviaSpas EC145 helicopters.

CIS Heads of Government Discuss Cooperation in Bishkek

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – The Council of Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) discussed cooperation in the spheres of economy, industry, energy, innovations and health care, during a meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan June 7. Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov attended the event.

In particular, at a closed-door meeting, the heads of delegations debated the amendments to a single budget of the CIS structures for 2016, informed Chairperson of the Executive Committee and CIS Executive Secretary Sergei Lebedev. Also, they heard a report of the executive committee on implementation of the protocol decision of the Council of CIS Heads of States concerning proposals of Kazakhstan of Oct. 16, 2015.

"During the meeting, a constructive conversation and exchange of views on improvement of the CIS activities were held. The participants adopted a protocol decision appointing the CIS Council of Permanent Plenipotentiary Representatives, Economic Council and the Executive Committee to consider all the comments, opinions and views expressed during the



The Council of Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States gathers in Bishkek on June 7.

closed-door meeting," Lebedev said, according to primeminister.kz.

In general, more than 20 draft documents designed to strengthen cooperation among CIS countries were reviewed.

Opening the meeting, Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbai Jeenbekov said that Kyrgyzstan places great importance on the

country's chairmanship in the commonwealth, especially during the 25 anniversary of the CIS, news.kz reported.

"It is necessary to strengthen trade and economic cooperation between the CIS and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). In our view, it is possible to consider the introduction of a full-term free trade regime between the two in-

tegration associations, which will contribute to strengthening the competitiveness of our countries, especially in times of economic crisis," Jeenbekov said.

Jeenbekov noted that more than a third of documents included in the agenda of the meeting were designed to increase humanitarian cooperation.

"We approved conceptual docu-

ments on countering oncological diseases, prevention and treatment of diabetes. One of the main topics of discussion was the issue of optimisation and adaptation of the CIS to modern realities," Jeenbekov added, informed kyrtag.kg.

According to Jeenbekov, the meeting confirmed the need to maintain the CIS as a regional intergovernmental organisation. The parties reached a common understanding on simplification of the agenda of the following meetings of the Council of Heads of States and Council of Heads of Governments.

The next meeting of the Council of Heads of Governments will take place in Minsk on Oct. 28, Lebedev said.

First Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Yaqub Eyyubov Abdulla oglu, Vice Prime Minister of Armenia Vache Gabrielyan, Prime Minister of Belarus Andrei Kobayakov, Prime Minister of Moldova Pavel Filip, Prime Minister of Russia Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of Tajikistan Kohir Rasulzoda, First Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Rustam Azimov also participated in the meeting.

Following the event, Massimov and Jeenbekov held a bilateral meeting in the Ala Archa state residence.

ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Lagarde Urges Stronger Macroeconomic Frameworks, More Inclusive Economy

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde visited Kazakhstan for the first time May 24, meeting with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the Akorda. The agenda included priority directions of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the fund as well as the key trends in the global financial and economic system.

The head of state noted Kazakhstan has collaborated with the IMF over the past 25 years.

“The fund provided enormous technical and financial assistance in Kazakhstan’s early years of independence. Today, approaching the 25th anniversary of independence, our country is able to implement more in comparison with other post-Soviet countries. Currently the Kazakh economy, as well as the global economy, are in difficult conditions. A number of factors including the decline in commodity prices and the delay of the structural reforms we are implementing, as well as the situation in Russia and the economic situation in China, impact this fact. Despite this, we have not allowed the reduction of the GDP and have ensured positive dynamics which we hope to maintain this year. Our country has been implementing measures



Christine Lagarde

to reduce the economy’s dependence on raw materials for over six years,” he said.

Lagarde noted the IMF supports the reforms Kazakhstan has executed in the country’s economic, industrial and infrastructure development.

“I would like to thank you very much for your partnership with the IMF. We highly value Kazakhstan as one of our long-standing members. Very shortly after your independence you joined the IMF and I am pleased that we could help at the beginning and we continue to provide the technical assistance that you want,” she said.

During her official visit, Lagarde participated in the inaugural IMF regional conference as part of the 9th Astana Economic Forum 2016. Representatives of Belarus, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia discussed current economic problems, regional integration and reforms. Kazakh Prime Minister

Karim Massimov also attended the event.

“President Nazarbayev initiated the five institutional reforms and the 100 Concrete Steps programme. Today, we discussed the steps with Ms. Lagarde and the IMF representatives to implement these reforms. I believe that the only way for the country to overcome all the challenges that are currently facing the economy and Kazakhstan, in particular, is a continuation of the economic reforms,” he said.

Lagarde noted Kazakh authorities have taken steps to address new challenges, including the decline in commodity prices and the slowdown of key regional economies, by notably floating the tenge to help the economy adjust.

“The regional roundtable with senior government officials from neighbouring countries provided a unique opportunity to share views on the economic issues facing the region. We were able to deepen the dialogue about the strong policy responses needed to tackle challenges and the many opportunities ahead. We at the IMF believe that the Central Asia region can increasingly serve as a bridge between Europe and China and serve as a hub for new activities in logistics and communications, energy and green industries and agriculture,” she said in a statement at the conclusion of her visit.

The same day, Lagarde delivered a speech to faculty members and students at Nazarbayev University.

“Forging a path for future prosperity therefore requires unleashing new drives of growth. To remain successful, Kazakhstan will have to go through another transformation that may also take a number of years to complete,” she said.

She added Kazakhstan can build a new, efficient and inclusive growth model based on the students’ knowledge and energy. Lagarde also spoke about the perspectives of the global challenges, opportunities for the region and the country, policies to support the region’s next transformation and how the younger generation can contribute to implementing this vision.

“Think not only of the big players who export grain and machinery, but also of the smaller companies and entrepreneurs who will benefit from new opportunities in light industrial goods, biotech, green products and services. These businesses also need the appropriate environment to succeed and flourish... Kazakhstan has gone through several transformations over the years. This year in particular marks a successful transition from a centrally-planned economy to more market-based institutions,” she said.

Lagarde touched on the four key areas that need further action – stronger macroeconomic frame-

works, more effective and transparent institutions, a more open and integrated economy and a more inclusive economy. Speaking about the gender issue, she noted Kazakhstan ranks 47th out of 145 in the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Index, with higher ratings on economic participation and opportunity, and considered it commendable. Most women, however, are less active in formal sector activities.

Addressing the students as enlightened, empowered and engaged young people, Lagarde challenged them to think about education, embrace technologies and green industries and connect with the world and the IMF.

“Abai Qunanbauly, the father of modern Kazakh literature, once said: ‘A strong man may defeat one hundred enemies, but a learned man – one thousand.’ Fortunately there are no enemies in sight, but there will be new challenges that must be conquered. Creativity and innovation will increasingly determine success for your generation. Striving for excellence in math and sciences will equip you with the range of skills necessary to create innovative products and services. For example, this could involve software applications, bio-medical innovations or satellite-tracking devices to ensure the efficiency of cargo traversing across Kazakhstan from China to Germany and beyond,” she said.

ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

The Western Europe – Western China (WEWC) transport corridor should be launched by the end of 2016, said Minister of Investments and Development Asset Issekeshiev in early June. “Some 2,028 kilometres of the road have been completed and also the part from Shymkent to the Russian border to Orenburg and the part of the road from Taraz to Almaty have been opened since the beginning of the WEWC,” he added. Issekeshiev also noted work is ongoing on the following parts: Almaty–Khorogos (304 kilometres), Shymkent–Tashkent (100 kilometres) and Shymkent–Taraz border (81 kilometres). The sections are to be completed by year’s end and will then be opened. More than 900 kilometres of roads are to be reconstructed by the end of 2016 and 16 projects are being implemented as part of the Nurly Zhol programme, he said.

Kazakhstan is planning to extract about 35,000 tonnes of oil in December 2016 after the resumption of production at the Kashagan field, reported Kazakh TV, citing the Kazakh Ministry of Energy. The project involves such companies as KazMunaiGas (KMG), one of the major shareholders of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium), CNPC, Eni, ExxonMobil, Inpex, Royal Dutch Shell and Total. The geologic reserves of the Kashagan field are estimated at 4.8 billion tonnes of oil. Total oil reserves amount to 38 billion barrels, including 10 billion barrels of extractable reserves, and natural gas reserves amount more than one trillion cubic metres. The total investment in the project is approximately \$50 billion.

Fifteen business applications worth 645 million tenge (\$1.9 million) have been approved in Taldykorgan as part of implementing Business Road Map 2020, the unified business support and development programme, according to Kazakh TV. The funds will be allocated for working capital financing, investment and construction and refinancing current liabilities. In addition, the entrepreneurs will be provided with preferential interest rates and subsidies. Borrowers lacking collateral will be ensured with guarantees from the Damu Fund to obtain the required loan amount.

Prices in April for new housing increased by 12.5 percent and for secondary-type housing, 11.5 percent. As reported, the 31-percent difference in prices in primary and secondary real estate markets was almost unchanged compared to 30 percent in April 2015. As of April this year, the most expensive new residential buildings were spotted in Astana, the Kazakh capital, while the second-most expensive new properties were recorded in the Atyrau region. The Mangystau region closed the list of the top three most expensive properties at 309,500 tenge (US\$927.50) per square metre of new housing. The figure is 49 percent more expensive than the cost of new housing in the country on average.

Kazakhstan has been building up its sovereign gold reserves for the past 42 months, according to Kapital.kz. In the first quarter, Kazakh gold reserves increased by 2.9 percent, or 6.5 tonnes, to 228 tonnes, according to the World Gold Council and the International Monetary Fund. A significant shortage of gold supply was marked in the global market. In particular, in the first quarter the total demand exceeded supply by 155 tonnes.

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is planning to launch a specialised exchange for reciprocal trade in oil and oil products, reported Tengrinews.kz, citing the Ministry of Energy press service. The mutual trade will be executed with bilateral agreements. The launch of a common gas market, based on the priority of meeting the internal demand for gas in the common market, is also anticipated. The main objectives will be to increase energy security, reliability, availability and quality of the gas supply to gas consumers in the EAEU territory and enhance the economic efficiency of the gas transmission systems located in the common market.

Kazakh President Calls for ‘Inclusive Globalisation’ at Ninth Astana Economic Forum

Continued from Page A1

The funds from this tax could be directed to the above-mentioned fund for the development of human capital. I believe that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank should propose effective measures for the ‘deoffshorisation’ of the global economy,” said the Kazakh President.

Nazarbayev also stressed that complex environmental issues also need attention.

“A global initiative to combat climate change is very important, but we must not forget about other problems. I suggest developing a road map for the development of the

green economy and sustainable use of natural resources based on the Paris Agreement. It must include not only the reduction of harmful emissions into the atmosphere, but also measures to preserve land, fresh water and bio environment. The obligations should be taken not only by the countries but also by global corporations,” he said.

Also at the plenary session, politicians, business persons, heads of major financial institutions took part as speakers.

These included Director-General of the World Trade Organisation Roberto Azevêdo, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Sir Suma

Chakrabarti, founder of AliBaba Group and business magnate Jack Ma, an American economist and director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University Jeffrey Sachs, who was also recognised as one of the three most influential economists of the world by The Economist. During the session, a video address by Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Christine Lagarde was also shown. Economics journalist and Associate Editor for the Independent Hamish McRae moderated the session.

According to Sachs, there are two important trends for Kazakhstan, technological development and cooperation with China. He

talked about the importance of the Chinese economy and its rapid growth. Talking about the issues of global politics, he said he hopes many conflicts between countries will be resolved. According to him, it is important for NATO to tell the world they do not want to move closer to the Russian or Ukrainian borders.

During his speech, Jack Ma talked about the importance of globalisation and openness of the world. According to Ma, there are three important things that cannot be changed by any new economy: openness, courage and wisdom. He added that after the 1980s, 1.8 billion people were born, who pre-

sent the whole generation of the internet. Confirming words about courage, the founder of the largest internet company said that he almost did not know how to use a computer before his career started.

During the discussion of the global economy, the speakers talked about positive examples of Kazakhstan. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde positively assessed Kazakhstan’s decision to move to a free-floating exchange rate. And Sir Suma Chakrabarti noted a positive development of the country, by saying that Kazakhstan is clearly moving in the right direction, assessing the ambitious goals in the field of economy.

Kazakhstan Ministry of Energy Introduces Renewable Energy Auctions

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Kazakh Minister of Energy Kanat Bozumbayev said the Ministry plans to use special auctions to purchase renewable energy from energy-producing companies. The auctions will make the selection process for projects and investors transparent and clear, increasing the effectiveness of technologies and minimising influence on tariffs.

“First of all, the government will make a renewable energy sources map which will indicate suitable locations, types of sources and capacity in terms of climatic conditions and in terms of power system stability and network bandwidth. The map will be in the public domain. This is what we will have done by the end of the year. Then, we will gradually launch auctions for the purchase of electricity in those regions. The winning companies will sell it at market price,” he said.

“Meanwhile, Kazakhstan intends to strengthen cooperation with the European Union (EU) in the development of renewable energy. Last year, our country signed an enhanced partnership agreement with the EU. One of the chapters of the document is dedicated to



renewable energy sources. The countries will cooperate in joint work to improve the legislative framework in this field, exchange statistical data and implement joint projects,” said Bozumbayev, according to Kazinform.kz.

The Minister emphasised state support of renewable energy in the country is based on long-term policy and realised by means of developing and improving the standard and legal base. The decision to introduce the auctions was made

contingent upon the analysis of best world practices, cooperation with European states, international organisations and institutions and participation in seminars, summits and workshops to improve the legislative base.

Approximately 48 projects on renewable energy production have been launched in the state to date, with plans to implement more than 100 projects by 2020.

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

The mortgage market concentration has reached its maximum: at the end of 2015, just five banks formed almost the entire mortgage loan portfolio. A year earlier, the five banks accounted for 86.2 per cent of the total portfolio, according to the analytical portal Ranking.kz. Strengthening the positions of the largest participants in the market is happening amid the sideways trend in the development of the Kazakh mortgage market. The volume of mortgage loans in the first quarter of 2016 decreased to the minimum for the last 5 years, totalling 24.4 billion tenge (US\$73 million).

Banks in Kazakhstan may be obliged to notify customers of commission rates before making transactions, as well as introduce a unilateral ban on changing the conditions of the contract between the bank and the client, said National Bank of Kazakhstan Chairman Daniyar Akishev. He also announced the terms of the banks' payment execution will be reduced. In particular, Akishev noted the draft law introduces a limit on recovering benefits, social benefits and housing benefits from citizens' bank accounts under the requirements of third parties.

Thirty foreign investors will start new production this year. According to Minister of Investments and Development Asset Issekeshiev, the ministry is reviewing more than 200 initiatives by foreign investors in the manufacturing sector with a total potential investment in excess of \$40 billion. He stressed particular attention is being paid to working with trans-national companies. "At present, we have more than 40 such initiatives. Each multinational company has a concrete plan of action which we monitor almost on a daily basis," said Issekeshiev. As an example, the minister noted "(Italian company) Tenaris runs in the Mangistau region the production of oil pipes with premium connections in July 2016," as well as the Euro-Chemcompany which will begin construction of a fertilizer plant.

Kazpost, the national postal company, has signed memoranda of cooperation with the Agrarian Credit Corporation and Credit Unions Association, reported Kazakh TV. The parties agreed on the provision of cash management services to agricultural credit associations and producers, as well as on the agency services' provision to credit associations to register loans through Kazpost branches in all districts and regions. In addition, experts say the company is now developing online financial services and postal operations. Kazpost is a member of the Universal Postal Union and PostEurop, the Association of European Public Postal Operators, as well as payment systems VISA International and MasterCard Worldwide.

Saxo bank experts conducted financial market research and described the image of an average Kazakh investor, according to Kazakh TV. The majority of participants were 30-40 or older. As a rule, they are business owners, general or financial directors and private investors. Due to the high concentration of natural resources in Kazakhstan, including the oil, gas and mining sectors, individuals can invest 100,000-500,000 Euros (US\$113,429-\$567,149) or more. According to experts, Kazakh investors are also more aware of financial markets.

The National Industrial Petrochemical Park in the Atyrau region will be allocated more than 200 billion tenge (US\$599.4 million) from the national budget, reported today.kz. The announcement was made by the Mazhilis during a meeting of the commission for the control of target and effective expenditure of budgetary funds and the monies of the National Fund of Kazakhstan to implement Nurlu Zhol, the state programme. According to Samruk Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund Managing Director Nurlan Rakhmetov, 93 billion tenge (US\$278 million) has been allocated from the 2014-2015 state budget to finance the construction of the park.

Kazakhstan Expects Restart of Oil Production at Kashagan by End of Year

By Kseniya Voronina

ASTANA – Thirty-five-thousand tonnes of oil will be produced at the Kashagan field in December, announced Kazakh Minister of Energy Kanat Bozumbayev during a recent public briefing.

"The launch of the Kashagan field is expected by the end of 2016, as we planned it. We expect the initial volume of production at Kashagan at the level of about 35,000 tonnes in December," he said.

Bozumbayev also informed about the Karachaganak field expansion project.

"Currently, we have been examining the concept of further development of the Karachaganak field with increased volumes of gas injection on the field for an extended period of stable hydrocarbon pro-



duction. The work on the optimisation of the concept to maximise the country's income is carried out

together with the contractor. The draft extension of Karachaganak is expected in 2017 and new facilities

will be put into operation in 2022. This will create more than 6,000 new jobs," said Bozumbayev.

He stressed the importance of creating favourable conditions for the motor fuel market development.

"We have adopted a comprehensive plan of natural gas vehicle market development until 2020. KazTransGas in cooperation with the akimats (regional and city administration) of the gasified regions are taking steps to build natural gas filling stations," said Bozumbayev.

The minister noted that there are 12 natural gas vehicle refuelling compressor stations and four more stations are at the design stage in the gasified areas of the country.

"In addition, the Gas Vehicle Association of Kazakhstan was founded to promote the use of motor fuel and proposals of organisations and entrepreneurs to expand the use of this fuel," he said.

Internet Platform Provides Information for Country's Entrepreneurs and Investors

Staff Report

The Atameken Centre for Monitoring and Market Expertise recently launched a Business Register, an online business platform listing local entrepreneurs and foreign investors.

According to the head of Atameken, Nariman Tulegenov, the website – located at www.business-reestr.kz – is designed to work in the business-to-business format and contains information about all entrepreneurs who legally operate in Kazakhstan, including contact

information, spheres of activities and their legal status. In addition, each business person will be listed in the special registry of the platform.

The entrepreneurs can also place some information about themselves, which will be available to all users of the website. Another section will include reviews about the chosen entrepreneur, his goods and the service quality his company is providing, as well as procurement plans on goods, works and services of all public bodies and organisations, the Samruk Kazyna Sovereign

Wealth Fund subsidiaries and mining companies. Registered business people will also automatically receive a notification about the beginning of the procurement process of goods, works and services, which correspond to their interest.

"Our task is to attract more entrepreneurs to provide information about their products and services. It can make business more convenient and transparent, so that both buyers and sellers can profit from that," said Tulegenov.

There is also a separate section in the business registry, which

provides information on domestic producers, their production and technologies. In other words, potential customers, both domestic and foreign, get easy and quick access to the necessary information about Kazakh producers and their products.

All the information available on the web site will be translated into the English, Chinese, Persian and Arabic languages. It is planned to integrate the business platform into the largest internet websites in the future.

Furthermore, the Atameken company plans to assist in the or-

ganisation of the export of Kazakh goods included in the register.

"For example, an entrepreneur has 1,000 heads of cattle. He wants to export meat, which means he has to freeze it, organise transportation, find translators and most importantly, foreign buyers of the goods. We can help with all of these issues, including transport and customs logistics, certificates and permits. We find customers, help send consignments, which we also certify, so that later producers are able to work without our support," concluded Tulegenov.

ULJANIK to Construct 155-Metre Ferry



By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – On June 3, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ) Express and Croatian shipyard ULJANIK signed a shipbuilding contract for the construction of one wagon carrier with a total bearing capacity of 54 wagons, reported the press service of KZT.

The 155-metre-long and 17.5-metre-wide ship will be driven by two diesel engines enabling the ship to reach a sailing speed of 14.5 knots. According to the contract, delivery time is scheduled for the end of 2017. The document was signed by KTZ President Askar Mamin and General Director of ULJANIK Gianni Rossanda. President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović as well as Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Croatia Aslan Mussin attended the signing ceremony which took place at the presidential palace in Zagreb.

"Kazakhstan is an important part of the global market with great potential for mutually beneficial cooperation," the Croatian partner of KTZ emphasised and noted that

the company will supply ferries as well as carry out the transfer of technology to work further in the field of shipbuilding.

KTZ takes an active part in the implementation of the Nurlu Zhol programme to develop transit and transport and logistics infrastructure in Kazakhstan. Products of the company contribute to an increase in transit traffic through the territory of the country and the provision of multi-modal transportation.

In addition, KTZ intends to proceed with the construction of a ferry complex in Kuryk to increase the transportation of goods to other ferry complexes in the ports of Russia, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Iran.

"The company has close ties with partners from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and China to increase traffic on the Trans-Caspian international transport route. Development of this corridor will ensure the efficiency of logistics and growth in international trade. In order to achieve these goals we need modern ferries," Mamin said at the event.

FROM THE HEART OF EURASIA

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EDITORIAL & OPINION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Renunciation of Nuclear Weapons: Is There Another Choice?

It was not long ago when supporters of nuclear weapons confidently claimed that, while the destruction they could cause would be catastrophic, their possession was actually preserving peace on Earth. It was an argument based on deterrence and the belief that no rational leadership would ever sanction their use knowing that it would inevitably unleash unimaginable devastation on their own countries and the world.

It was always a morally questionable argument. It left out, for example, the possibility of their use being triggered accidentally or by misjudgement. We now know that our world came perilously close on occasions in the past to nuclear war precisely for these reasons.

Nor, of course, was it an argument which had much resonance in a country like Kazakhstan. As a country which was the reluctant setting for nearly 500 nuclear weapon tests in the second half of the 20th Century, we have seen for ourselves the horrific and lasting impact of nuclear explosions on the health of our citizens and our environment. It was why we had no hesitation, when we had the power, to shut the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and to renounce the nuclear weapons we inherited from the Soviet Union.

But whatever the balance of arguments in the past, the emergence of a new threat has made the case against nuclear weapons undeniable. The question we now repeatedly hear is how to prevent nuclear weapons falling into the hands of the new breed of terrorists and extremists who pose such a danger to global safety and security.

We already know from bitter experience how these groups glory in mass destruction and death. For them and their perverted supporters, the slaughter and long-term economic and environmental damage that the detonation of a nuclear device would cause would be a cause for jubilation not regret. Even more worrying is the evidence that these violent extremists are actively seeking weapons of mass destruction. We have, in fact, been lucky that their ambitions have up to now been thwarted.

It is why it is absolutely critical that strengthening nuclear security so that these weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorists has been made such a priority by the international community. While there is a long way to go, significant progress has been made in recent years.

But in the end, it is nuclear disarmament which is the only rational solution to this threat and is in the interests of all countries. It must be, as Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in his Manifest "The World. The 21st Century", the cause of our time.

It is against this background that President Barack Obama's visit to Hiroshima in May – the first by a serving U.S. President since the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945 – is so important. During a visit steeped in emotion, the President spoke eloquently about the dangers to humanity of nuclear weapons. There is a "shared responsibility" to look into the "eye of history" and ask what must be done to prevent another nuclear weapon from being used, he said.

As we could not eliminate man's capacity to do evil, nations had a duty to defend their citizens, he added.

But he went on to challenge countries, including his own, which hold nuclear stockpiles to show "the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them. We may not realise this goal in my lifetime, but persistent effort can roll back the possibility of catastrophe," he said.

His visit and his words will strengthen international efforts towards nuclear disarmament. There is now a growing recognition that in an era where the main threat to peace is from violent extremism, a doctrine based on a balance of terror or the threat of retaliation can't guarantee security.

President Obama is right, as well, that nuclear disarmament will not be achieved overnight but in a series of small but important steps. One such milestone would be the universal signing, ratification and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Twenty years after the Treaty was open for signature, this has still not happened. While it has been signed by 183 countries and ratified by 164 countries, the Treaty has not still entered into force. Its future depends on actions by eight specific countries with nuclear weapons or nuclear capabilities, listed in the so-called Annex 2 to the Treaty. India, Pakistan and North Korea have still to sign the CTBT. China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the United States have yet to ratify it. Each country which takes that step puts more pressure on the others to follow and brings the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons closer.

As UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon put it earlier this year, "The eight countries that must ratify for entry-into-force have a special responsibility. They can advance us on the road to a nuclear-weapon-free world."

Progress toward universal ratification and signing in this 20th anniversary year is the aim of current CTBT co-chairs, Kazakhstan and Japan, and a special high level event dedicated to this anniversary was rightly held by the CTBT Organisation Preparatory Commission in Vienna on June 13.

Another important initiative would be to see the current regional nuclear weapon-free zones extended and new ones created. They can provide the building blocks towards the ultimate goal of global nuclear disarmament.

The leadership of countries such as Japan and Kazakhstan, which have suffered so much from nuclear weapons, is vital for this ambition. But so too is the pressure for action on governments from their citizens.

The ATOM (Abolish Testing. Our Mission) Project, whose goal is to share the tragic and continuing legacy of nuclear weapon testing with the global community, is one vehicle to harness global public opinion for a new urgency to see the CTBT in operation. Time and time again in history we have seen the impact of popular pressure in improving our world.

President Obama deserves credit both for his visit to Hiroshima and for his appeal to step up global efforts to lift the shadow of nuclear weapons from our world. As President Nazarbayev said, it is rightly the cause of our time.

KADEX Exhibition Helps Countries Maintain Capable National Defence

The terrible events in Aktobe on 5 June have once again demonstrated that no country – not even a society as stable as Kazakhstan – is immune from the threat of rogue religious extremists. The cowardly attack underlines how international cooperation and readiness to fight terrorism and extremism are more important than ever.

Encouraging this cooperation and providing countries with the capabilities to defend their citizens is a major part of the aim of KADEX, the international exhibition of weapons systems and military equipment that took place in Kazakhstan for the third time on June 2-5. The four-day event at the international airport in Astana showcased the latest military products and space technology and provided the opportunity for Kazakhstan to further develop ties with its international partners around the world.

More than 300 companies, including 200 foreign organisations from 40 countries, participated in the exhibition. Kazakhstan signed contracts with defence establishments from around the world and has launched talks on further developing the country's defence sector.

Among the agreements reached were contracts signed by Kazakhstan Engineering Company with Ukraine and Belarus. KazTechnologies Company has agreed to supply ammunition to the UAE, the United Kingdom and Bulgaria. It also signed deals with the Chinese company Norinco Corporation and Turkish firm Diarsan.

At a national level, Kazakhstan signed a memorandum for the supply of a missile ship by the German Abeking & Rasmussen Company to the naval forces of Kazakhstan. An agreement on military technical cooperation was also signed with Pakistan.

During the exhibition, Kazakhstan demonstrated its military capabilities and how its own defence sector has grown and strengthened. Aircraft, unmanned aerial

vehicles and tanks built in Kazakhstan were displayed for the event's thousands of visitors.

Developing Kazakhstan's military-industrial complex remains very important, especially at a time of economic challenges for the country and the region. The experiences of other developed countries have shown how the skills and technological know-how that flow from a strong defence industry are vital for a thriving and diversified economy.

It is pleasing to know that KADEX has helped Kazakhstan attract foreign investment and develop its defence industry. It is also reassuring to know that our country has partners around the world we can rely on and that are keen to cooperate with us on defence matters.

Kazakhstan is, of course, a peaceful nation. Since our independence, it has championed diplomatic solutions to global crises. Today, Kazakhstan continues to call upon the international community to work together to find solutions to the conflicts that have engulfed the Middle East and have had a destabilising effect all over the world. Kazakhstan continues to urge global leaders to give a greater priority to development needs rather than military spending.

However, the tragic and shocking events in Aktobe have shown that every country must be well prepared to defend itself against external and internal attacks. It is the duty of every government to protect its citizens and interests, which is why Kazakhstan has invested in a modern and professional Armed Forces. Kazakhstan's military is more than capable of not only protecting the nation, but also participating in peace-keeping missions around the world.

KADEX this year has been vital for the development of Kazakhstan's defence industry and for increasing cooperation with our partners. Our country must continue on this path.

Zhoshybayev: EXPO 2017 Is an Opportunity to Get a Glimpse of the Future

By Yulia Mager

In less than one year – on June 10, 2017 – the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017 under the theme of Future Energy will open its doors to visitors. In an interview, Rapil Zhoshybayev, the national EXPO 2017 commissioner spoke about the preparations and what guests should expect.

Regarding the way attracting participants has been going, are you sticking to the plan?

Of the 100 states and 15 international organisations expected to participate in the exhibition, 90 countries and 16 international organisations have already officially confirmed their participation. We have signed 53 participation agreements and are preparing to sign agreements with Latvia and the South-East Asian countries in the near future. At this stage, the process of documenting our relations with participants will be kept on a constant basis. And, of course, we keep attracting new states. We are aiming to attract more than 100 countries to EXPO 2017; if we manage to do so, it will be kind of a record for specialised exhibitions.

Moreover, 16 international organisations will take part – it's even more than we planned. It should be noted that some organisations such as World Bank, IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and IRENA (International Renewable Energy Agency) are involved in the expo for the first time. Such interest is a sign of the true importance of our proposed theme.

What countries that have already confirmed participation are leading in the EXPO 2017 theme?

For sure, first of all among the European states that make a lot of efforts to develop renewable energy sources and introduce country programmes, there is a common strategy for the European Union. Switzerland, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Holland, Japan, South Korea and UAE have great experience and they will present their achievements in Astana. Among the leaders in the sphere of alternative energy are the Scandinavian states – Sweden, Denmark and Norway – where even now about 60-65 percent of energy is generated from renewable sources and they plan to fully renounce the use of hydrocarbons by 2050. We are negotiating to involve them in the expo. According to the IRENA rating, 90 percent of the top 20 states in the sphere of alternative energy have already confirmed participation in EXPO 2017.

By inviting states to the exhibition, we also learn many new things about them and very interesting surprises can happen. For example, the Vatican will take part in EXPO 2017. Today, it is the greenest state of the world; the first and only country that uses 100 percent alternative sources to meet its energy needs.

However, I would like to note that expo exhibitions are a platform that is open to the whole international community with no exceptions. That is why developing states are as valuable for us as leading states.

Future Energy is a very extensive theme. Is there a vision of what will be showcased in the exhibition?

For example, during negotiations we learned that the United Kingdom plans to demonstrate up-to-date technologies on waste management and reducing the demand for electricity. Malaysia will show innovations in bio-fuel production; Arab states, know how in solar power. The Netherlands is ready to showcase the experience of the state's transition from industrial and agricultural production to a green economy. Major companies will also present interesting technologies. Vestas, a new generation of wind power stations; Toyota, a hydrogen-powered car and Tesla plans to present the newest models of electric cars.

EXPO 2017 will have a Best Practices Area and leading experts in energy and green technologies are selecting the content of this pavilion. Implemented technologies and projects in different spheres of sustainable energy sources will be demonstrated there. Silicon Valley companies and professors from Stanford University, Indian Industrial Tech Park (Bangalore), China, UAE, Australia and Singapore are preparing to present their most interesting innovations.

Expo construction will be completed in November and we want to hold the third international participants meeting at that time in order to let participants see the exhibition site. In January, states will start working on the content.

Expo exhibitions were always valuable because they demonstrate something new; they give an opportunity to look into the future. This concept still remains the same; here you can see projects which



Rapil Zhoshybayev

we could hardly think about as a part of our daily life. This is a good opportunity for young scientists to introduce their ideas even if they seem to be crazy and unreal now. Each state wants to demonstrate the best.

What will Kazakhstan demonstrate?

Nowadays we have 137 scientific and technical projects as candidates to be presented in the national pavilion. We will show technologies thanks to which renewable energy sources and energy efficiency can become an integral part of our life. These technologies have already been applied in constructing buildings for the exhibition: for example, we set photovoltaic panels and geothermal systems. It will be possible to see a mock-up model of a Kazakh-made Tokamak, a fusion reactor.

Our state is one of the richest in mineral resources and many people were surprised that Kazakhstan had chosen the future energy theme. But we think about tomorrow. We are the only CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) country that has adopted a concept on transition to a green economy and renewable energy sources. We suggest establishing a dialog on alternative energy sources during EXPO 2017 and moreover we raise the issues of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, use of oil, environmental protection and exhausting the mineral and carbon resources of the planet.

Expo is not only exhibition pavilions. What kinds of events will be held in Astana during these three months?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs planned and was supported by the head of state to organise major international events during our exhibition. The SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) summit will be timed to coincide with the opening ceremony of EXPO 2017. There are plans to hold international ministerial meetings on ecology and tourism and the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) summit on science and technology is timed to coincide with the closing ceremony. These are only those events that concern our ministry.

In total, over 7,000 events of different levels and directions will be organised during the exhibition – cultural, sport, and economic. It is clear that we will use the expo platform to properly show Kazakhstan to the world, but there will be many foreign guests as well. Traditionally, national days of participants are organised. Moreover, international organisations involved in expo want to organise their activities. I think that many pleasant surprises are waiting for exhibition visitors and guests of Astana. It will be interesting.

Preparation for the exhibition provides active contacts with almost all states of the world. It certainly has offered opportunities to develop bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and other states, has it not?

Let me start with the fact that thanks to the preparation for expo we have established diplomatic relations with almost ten states.

In general, when we go to invite another country to the exhibition it is only a part of the programme. We meet with heads of state and government, ministers, businessmen and scientists, discuss our bilateral relations and see what directions of interaction should be intensified. During visits within the preparation process for the expo, we signed agreements with many states on participation in different spheres, on the visa-free regime and attraction of investors. We concluded agreements in the field of tourism with more than 30 states. We worked on opening new flights – to Europe, Arab states and Asia including South-East Asia. It is a task set by the head of state to open the sky over Astana. We are on the way to creating a major transport hub and this result will also be a part of the EXPO 2017 legacy.

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EEC Chair Sargsyan Says Eurasian Economic Union Developing, Expanding Ties with Others

By Liliya Syzdykova

May 29 marked two years since the day the Treaty on Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) was signed in Astana. Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) Tigran Sargsyan spoke to the Kazakhstanskaya Pravda newspaper about what the integration union is and what has changed with its emergence for EAEU citizens and businesses.

The Treaty on the EAEU is now two years old. Has the union gained any global recognition so far?

A huge amount of work, creating real results, was done over a fairly short period of time. The interest in our economic project from the more than 40 countries that have expressed a wish to develop trade and economic cooperation with the union is evidence of that. An agreement on establishing a free trade zone between the EAEU and Vietnam was signed last year and the advisability of entering into agreements with India, Egypt, Israel and Iran is being negotiated.

At the initiative of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, chair of the EAEU in 2016, deepening economic relations with third countries and integration unions are priorities of the EAEU this year.

The Asian aspect of our international cooperation is developing. Memorandums of understanding were recently signed between the EEC, Cambodia and Singapore. Both parties are interested in deepening cooperation, down to signing an agreement on a free trade zone.



Tigran Sargsyan

The commission is in dialogue with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and discussing coupling the integration processes of our union with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

We are also successfully cooperating with countries and unions of Latin America – the commission has signed memorandums of understanding with Peru and Chile, and discussions on concluding a memorandum of cooperation on trade and economic issues with the common market of South American countries (MERCOSUR) are being conducted.

Regional economic integration is a defining trend of the modern world. Countries understand that jointly overcoming new challenges and risks is more efficient in the quickly changing conditions and the uncertainty of the global economic environment. In that sense, the EAEU is developing in the mainstream of a global trend.

The EAEU's international activity, including concluding agreements on free trade zones with third parties, will foster the development of export products from countries

of the union, attract investment and support the economic growth of the EAEU as a whole by creating conditions for the diversification of trade and economic relations.

Increased cooperation with China is also being discussed, and the EAEU and that country have decided to link the EAEU and China's New Silk Road Economic Belt programme. Have any steps been taken on this so far?

On May 20, at the EEC session of the Intergovernmental Council in Yerevan, the commission received a mandate for conducting negotiations with China about concluding an agreement on trade and economic cooperation between the EAEU, its member states and China. This is big step forward. It means that our five countries will be jointly holding negotiations in a single format.

How can the EAEU and China cooperate?

An advisory panel examined offers from Chinese businesses and countries of the union. The list of prospective EAEU projects to be linked with the New Silk Road Economic Belt was agreed upon. We plan to discuss an agreement on trade and economic cooperation between the union and China. To reflect the interests of the EAEU business community to the utmost is our main goal here. If our manufacturers can enter the huge Chinese market, this will be create huge potential for the development of the union.

What has the EAEU done to support business so far?

Opening customs borders, first of

all. This allowed companies to significantly reduce shipping times for goods going to the markets of the union's countries and to reduce the costs of cargo clearance. Cancelling customs controls between EAEU countries allowed manufacturers to ramp up exports to other countries of the union and expand cooperation with companies from other countries...

A simplified procedure for declaring international carriage of vehicles registered inside countries of the union was legislatively fixed and is being implemented in the EAEU.

The first phase of the four-stage programme of liberalisation of coastal shipping by car began Jan. 1 this year...

Work on providing access to state procurement markets to companies from EAEU countries is being conducted. Today, mutual access is already provided for companies from Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia.

Technical regulations were developed and accepted within the EAEU that will allow optimal requirements for providing a necessary level of product safety to be established... this means reducing costs and removing trade barriers for business... Manufacturers and importers do not need to adjust to various national standards.

A single market of services has been launched. What does it mean? What has changed for businesses with its emergence?

Now, 43 sectors are part of a single market of services, in total being over 25 percent of the gross domestic product of each member state. Work on liberalising 21 more service sectors is underway.

As part of the single market of services, service suppliers are provided the highest attainable standard of freedom, which includes supplying and receiving services without limitations, withdrawals and additional requirements, except for certain cases...

Does the EEC discuss its decisions with the business community?

We are in constant dialogue with the business community. The interaction is carried out via council committees and work groups. Creating favourable conditions for the efficient development of business inside countries of the union, improving regulatory systems and reducing barriers are the main tasks of the commission. We strive to promptly respond to requests by entrepreneurs. Eliminating the remaining barriers is necessary for this. The earlier they are withdrawn, the faster we will establish a united market and the more comfortable business entities will feel. Expanding the range of authority passed by countries to a supranational level is equally important. This will allow the EEC to actively render assistance to businesses.

Common markets of pharmaceuticals and medical products were started this year, but they are working in a restricted mode, as not all the necessary documents were accepted. What are the difficulties and when will the markets be working at full capacity?

The pharmaceutical field is developing very fast inside EAEU coun-

tries and the main task is to create equal conditions for all participants of common markets and stimulate competitiveness. The adoption of several second-level regulatory documents is being postponed because of a difficult discussion about how to implement the registration of new medications and how to avoid creating advantages for certain business entities. Without them, common markets of pharmaceuticals and medical products cannot work fully. But the discussion is being conducted and all issues will soon be overcome.

What about citizens? How has the union benefited them?

By establishing a common labour market, first of all. Working people from EAEU countries now have significant advantages over migrant workers from other countries. Particularly, they have an opportunity to stay inside the country without registering with migration service agencies for 30 days instead of seven. They have the right to social and medical provisions, including free care in clinics...

Moreover, the mutual recognition of diplomas is valid for all technical and most humanitarian specialties (except for pharmaceuticals, medicine, law and pedagogy.) Work on an agreement regarding pension provisions is in the final stage. After its signing, citizens of the EAEU will be able to receive a pension for the period of their labour activity from the state of the union where they were working, even if they are not its citizens.

The problem of double taxation of value-added tax (VAT) when individuals import goods of personal consumption and during transmission of material assets by structural units of one legal entity located in different states of the union was also resolved.

The process of decreasing prices for roaming has also begun.

Success Story at a Global Level: Kazakhstan on Foreign Policy between East and West

By Matthias Dornfeldt

Kazakhstan, a vital partner of Germany in Central Asia and one of the leading countries in the post-Soviet space, is celebrating this year the 25th anniversary of its independence.

Its achievements are self-evident, thanks to the balanced foreign policy of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who enjoys major standing across the world due to his mediation efforts in numerous crises and conflicts, as well as due to his proactive participation in global nuclear prohibition and non-proliferation processes. Kazakhstan has become both a politically and economically stable country with a higher per capita income than some EU member states. The Kazakh President was able to build up the multi-ethnic nation of Kazakhstan, and the society of the ninth largest country on the planet lives in peace.

These favourable results in the development of the country are certainly connected with distinctive aspects of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, which can be briefly characterised by the following descriptive epithets: pragmatic, balanced, predictive and multi-vectored.

One of the most important aspects of Kazakh foreign policy is the abovementioned domain of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is understandable that Kazakhstan would take the lead on this path, seeing that the nation has the bitter experience of the horrifying aftermath of nuclear tests on its territory. The nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk, shut down in 1991 by the decree of President Nazarbayev, remains a painful wound for the nation. Therefore, everyone believes in the sincerity of Kazakh initiatives in this regard and no one can deny the historic contribution of Kazakhstan to global nuclear disarmament. Back then, all nuclear warheads were removed from the country. Thus, Kazakhstan voluntarily abandoned the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world.

In the Kazakh city now called Semey (former Semipalatinsk), on



Sept. 8, 2006, the foreign ministers of five Central Asian countries signed a historic document – the Treaty on a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia. Six years ago, at the initiative of Kazakhstan, on Dec. 2, 2009, the 64th General Assembly of the United Nations decided to establish Aug. 29 as the UN International Day against Nuclear Tests. This date aims to highlight the continuous efforts by the UN and all involved parties to prohibit nuclear tests.

Moreover, in 2013, the Kazakh city of Almaty was twice the venue for negotiations regarding the Iran nuclear programme in the 5+1 plus Iran format, which were successfully finalised in Geneva last November.

The agreement between Kazakhstan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on establishing a low enriched uranium bank was signed in Astana on Aug. 27, 2015. The project is unique and unprecedented in the history of the organisation. Establishing international reserves of low enriched uranium under the auspices of the IAEA will provide member states guaranteed access to nuclear fuel without violating their rights of sovereignty and support the development of their own peaceful nuclear energy programmes in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the charter of the IAEA.

Kazakhstan's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2017-2018 is ambitious and at the same time promising. This is supported by a number of

peaceful initiatives by Kazakhstan, including the efforts of President Nazarbayev to settle the conflict in Ukraine. European partners recognise Kazakhstan as an anchor of stability and security in Eurasia and as a reliable partner in the global struggle against international terrorism. Kazakhstan's considerable contribution to strengthening international security and expanding multilateral diplomacy could be viewed favourably as it pursues its bid. Establishing the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) is one of the exemplary efforts by Kazakhstan's leadership.

It is expected that Kazakhstan, if it becomes a member of the UN Security Council, will continue developing its peaceful initiatives. Lastly, Kazakhstan will try to seize every opportunity to bring all parties to conflicts to the negotiating table. This policy can be illustrated with the principle, "It's better to achieve some progress than to face an escalation of the conflict."

Kazakhstan gained profound experience in strengthening regional security not only during its chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which successfully culminated in the summit for the first time in 11 years in December 2010 in Astana, and its chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2010-2011, but also during its chairmanship of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Holding the 38th OIC Meeting of Foreign Ministers in Astana during Kazakhstan's chairmanship is worth mentioning in this context. The Permanent Commission on Human Rights was established and the Plan of Action for developing cooperation with Central Asian countries was adopted at that period. Nazarbayev's speech to the Muslim community became the basis for the OIC Astana Declaration. And it was during Kazakhstan's chairmanship that the organisation was renamed the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

A number of resolutions have

been adopted on Kazakhstan's initiative, including on countering the illegal production of drugs, helping develop economic relations with Afghanistan and restoring the former nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk and the Aral Sea. Kazakhstan is gradually implementing its plans, manifesting its diplomatic flexibility and proper situation assessment, and investing effort in solving the problems of Islamic countries. These plans were reflected on the agenda of the country's chairmanship of the OIC Council in 2011-2012 at the ministerial level.

The increasing role of Kazakhstan in Central Asia and beyond brings me to the conclusion that the state has a good chance to become a modern, reliable leading country among the numerous OIC member states. During its chairmanship, Astana initiated a range of measures for the OIC's reformation, including the intensification of collaboration with the EU, OSCE, CICA, SCO and the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. Former OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu called the chairmanship of Kazakhstan in the OIC one of the most impressive chapters in the history of the organisation, outlining the meaningful and highly professional work of his Kazakh colleagues.

Therefore, the country's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council is no coincidence. Kazakhstan has good prospects for the future due to its vast territory, rich natural resources and highly educated population. Additionally, professional Kazakh diplomats are always ready to proactively address existing security challenges. They possess huge experience in the international arena and participate in global processes, promptly and adequately tackling modern challenges.

Kazakhstan has been active as an international mediator, promoting confidence building measures and acting as an honest broker. The country is famous for its neutrality, a balanced and efficient approach towards international actors, states and organisations.

Kazakhstan has made every ef-

fort to tackle the situation and establish peace in Afghanistan. The country provided its distant neighbour with humanitarian and technical assistance. Kazakhstan is also intensively engaged in the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan.

This Central Asian country is strengthening its partnerships with major regional organisations in the world: in Europe with the European Union, the OSCE and the Council of Europe; in the Asian Pacific region with the Association of South-east Asian Nations, the SCO and CICA; in Eurasia with the Asian Europe Meeting Forum, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation; in America with the Organisation of American States, the Caribbean Community and Common Market Organisation and the Union of South American Nations; and with the African Union in Africa.

Kazakhstan confirms its leading position in Central Asia through the consistent and permanent enforcement of regional security and sustainable development. Central Asia is one of the strategic priorities of Kazakh foreign policy.

The government in Astana is keen on fostering economic relations with all neighbouring countries in Central Asia and at the same time respects the positions of countries in the region regarding various political, economic and social development issues. Kazakhstan welcomes consolidating initiatives with neighbouring countries; for example, the proposal of Turkmenistan on holding an International Forum on Peace and Security in Central Asia. The foreign policy of Kazakhstan is focused on prosperity in Central Asia, which can only be achieved and successfully realised through full trust, constant dialogue between all regional countries and mutual commitment to bilateral collaboration.

Kazakhstan is the only donor country in Central Asia. It provides humanitarian assistance both bilaterally and within multilateral institutions. Kazakhstan established recently the National Agency on Technical Assistance and Development (KazAID). One of its main activities will be implementing humanitarian projects in Afghanistan, as well as in some other countries of Central Asia. Kazakhstan is extensively involved in the Central

Asia Water Initiative, also known as the Berlin Process. The country stands for fair water resources management in the region to benefit all Central Asian states.

Kazakhstan has demonstrated its firm commitment to peace and supports UN peacekeeping operations. The Kazbat peacekeeping unit took part in demining operations during the international stabilisation force mission in Iraq in the mid-2000s. Kazakh officers worked as military observers in different UN peacekeeping missions in Western Sahara and Ivory Coast. According to media reports, citing the government as the source, Kazakhstan intends to send its officers as military observers in the UN missions to Haiti and Liberia. In this respect, Kazakhstan suggests that all peace building operations must be carried out only within the relevant UN Security Council resolution in accordance with all norms of international law.

The EAEU is the most pivotal economic integration body in the post-Soviet territory. The EAEU started functioning Jan. 1, 2015. This organisation is an embodiment of the idea of President Nazarbayev on Eurasian integration, which he firstly voiced in 1994 at Moscow State University. The union provides Kazakhstan with many advantages. It is a common market of 180 million potential consumers and its production volume is estimated at \$900 billion.

Kazakhstan systematically and consistently deepens relations and economic ties with all countries. The country is a member of the World Trade Organisation as of 2015. Russia and China are important neighbours and close partners. Europe is the largest trade partner; the U.S. is second to it in terms of investment. Openness to trade, investment and new ideas is the main aspect of the multi-vector foreign policy implemented by Kazakhstan, allowing the country to increase its gross domestic product 19 times since independence.

With its location in the centre of Eurasia, Kazakhstan is a bridge between East and West. The country's role in the international arena will grow gradually, and its successful external policy will continue to help stabilise the world order.

The author is a visiting fellow at the Berlin Centre for Caspian Region Studies, Free University of Berlin.

EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Parliamentarians, Religious Leaders Discuss Ways to Unite Religions against Terrorism in Astana

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – The international conference, Religions against Terrorism, was held May 31 in the capital's Palace of Peace and Harmony, one day before the 15th session of the Secretariat of the Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

The event was convened at Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's initiative, which was first voiced at the United Nations General Assembly in September. More than 60 international delegations came to the city to participate in the conference.

"The threat of terrorism has fundamentally changed the notion of international security. Terrorism knows no boundaries, does not make any distinction between rich and poor countries. There is no exact and comprehensive solution to this problem yet. Therefore, we need to step up joint efforts to seek an effective response to this global threat. It is of crucial importance for politicians, religious leaders, opinion leaders and media to align efforts to root out the ideological basis of terrorism by means of raising awareness," noted Nazarbayev's message read by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Chairman of the Kazakh Senate and Head of the Secretariat of the Congress.

The President added the conference is encouraging dialogue between political and religious leaders and the fact that it is taking place in Astana is particularly important since Kazakhstan, home to more than 100 ethnic groups, is

committed to the principle of "unity based on diversity."

"Terrorism seeks to undermine international law, principles and mechanisms of cooperation between states and their commitments to human rights and freedoms. Better consolidation of the human civilisation can be the only response to this menace. Our societies, and first of all mass media, should establish and spread out ethical norms to prevent any incitement to religious hatred," the message said.

"In broader terms it is essential to eliminate extreme poverty, hunger and epidemics to which we have committed ourselves in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also should solve military conflicts, which serve as a breeding ground for terrorism. Education and enlightenment are crucial. These two pillars are yet to be improved so that the young people are aware of the evil nature of terrorism," said Tokayev in his opening speech.

He also mentioned Nazarbayev's Manifesto "The World. The 21st Century," in which the head of state warns about the erosion of international law and cooperation.

"It concerns national counter-terrorism policies that should be based on the central and coordinating role of the United Nations in global affairs. We need to realise that terrorism must be countered not only by individual countries or their groups, but by the entire world community," said Tokayev.

Religion and parliamentary diplomacy play an increasing role in modern societies.

"Religious leaders and parliamentarians, being prominent and powerful representatives of their people, should be extensively involved in counter-extremism activities including prevention measures, crisis management and the reconstruction of societies that suffered from terrorism and extremism," he said.

Tokayev urged everyone to take a common position condemning actions of anti-religious extremists offending the feelings of believers.

"Consequently, another task facing us is to separate freedom of speech from blasphemy. This is a complex task that requires continued attention, dialogue and cooperation, which our conference stands for," he said.

Dr. Amal Abdulla Alqubaisi, of the United Arab Emirates Federal National Council, presented her viewpoint during the debates.

"Terrorism should not change us or change the values we live by. We cannot trade security for dignity and we should not allow terrorists to change our beliefs and values. Let us through that timely and important conference develop a set of declarations that are comprehensive and actionable and let us pledge to follow up on these recommendations by creating appropriate follow-up mechanisms," she said.

Alqubaisi added terrorism is "a symptom of serious disease" which has many faces, such as poverty, ignorance and intolerance. Tending to those issues is essential in fighting terrorism, while education and economic development also play a vital role in countering it.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly Vice President and Special Representative for Central and Eastern Asia Christine Muttonen noted "diversity is not an obstacle for peace and stability."

"On the contrary, we can find many proofs that diversity can be an invulnerable promoter for development, wealth, content and rich cultural expression," she said.

She noted the important role of inter-parliamentary diplomacy, promoting tolerance and understanding between religions and supporting interfaith cooperation.

"Only together can we fight this. Diversity and respect for multi-confessionality are not only cornerstones for our history and identities, but also preconditions for peace, stability and growing prosperity within the OSCE region. Terrorism is a crime that has no justification," said Muttonen.

Axel Fischer, a member of the German Bundestag and Vice President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, spoke about promoting diversity in the state and its role in countering terrorism.

"In Kazakhstan's 2050 Strategy of President Nursultan Nazarbayev I received lots of good ideas for successful ways, especially in the part about a good basis for success of multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society," he said.

Fischer also mentioned the significance of the President's initiative to create a global anti-terrorism coalition and its role in

promoting understanding between countries.

Parliamentarians from different countries, representatives of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism and members of international organisations had an opportunity to speak on the agenda and express their proposals on resolving the issue. At the end of the day, the 28-point conference statement was read aloud by Roberto Montella, secretary-general of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

The document indicated conference participants "underline the importance of adopting a UN General Assembly resolution banning defamation of religions and their symbols and emphasising the principles of tolerance, peaceful coexistence and interfaith dialogue."

The role of women and families in countering terrorism was stressed as well, especially concerning education of youth, who raise concerns in becoming more exposed to extremist ideology.

"We emphasise the importance of good religious education and the need for specialised training of religious leaders in order to effectively confront the spread of terrorist and extremist ideologies," noted one of the points.

The participants welcomed UN Security Council Resolutions 2250 and 1325, which "emphasise the importance of the participation of women and youth in decision-making at different political levels."

As many speakers talked about the issue, the statement stressed the need for efforts "to eliminate the

root causes of terrorism, including poverty, hunger, unemployment, instability and conflicts."

Those involved in the conference supported further promotion of the UN Global Counter-Terrorist Strategy and welcomed the outcome of the UN high-level dialogue "Religions for Peace," initiated by Kazakhstan and held May 6 in New York. They also backed Nazarbayev's proposal to establish a global anti-terrorist coalition under UN auspices and adopt a comprehensive UN document on countering terrorism.

"We urge the international community to support President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev's manifesto 'The World. The 21st Century,' which proposes a global strategy of concerted and responsible actions by countries to eliminate the virus of wars and conflicts," noted the document.

"We call on the international community to follow the example of Kazakhstan, which renounced the fourth largest nuclear arsenal and closed the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site 25 years ago, which set an example in building a secure future for the whole planet," the statement also read.

"We note the special role of the Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which has become an effective platform for global inter-religious dialogue. We urge the whole international community to join efforts to counter terrorism and underline the need to continue the constructive dialogue among parliamentarians and religious leaders," read Montella to end the statement.

Abdykalikova: Kazakhstan Creates Conditions to Develop Modern, Inclusive Economy

Continued from Page A1

In her speech at the ministerial roundtable, the Secretary of State noted Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has set the task of entering the top 30 most developed countries of the world. In order to achieve this ambitious goal, large-scale institutional reforms have been implemented, including in areas of accountability of the state, the rule of law, economic diversification and development of human capital.

Abdykalikova indicated these measures have allowed Kazakhstan to increase women's participation in the economy. The proportion of women in business has reached 50 percent, 42 percent of whom run small and medium-sized businesses. The level of female unemployment declined from 9.2 percent in 2006 to 5.6 percent in 2015 and the gender wage gap re-

duced from 62 percent [of the average wage for men] in 2006 to 67 percent in 2015. In 2015, Kazakhstan took 25th place in the Global Competitiveness Index indicator "Working women, the Proportion in Relation to Men."

The Secretary of State used the opportunity to meet with Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo and discuss topical issues of Kazakh-Polish relations. Abdykalikova stressed Poland is an important

partner and thanked the country's leadership for supporting Kazakhstan's accession to the World Trade Organisation, as well as Poland's official confirmation to participate in the upcoming EXPO 2017 in Astana.

Abdykalikova also held talks with Elzbieta Rafalska, Poland's Minister of Economy, Labour and Social Policy. They discussed a number of issues, including the need for an exchange of experi-

ence regarding social protection and gender policies.

In a session with Agata Kornhauser-Duda, Abdykalikova thanked Poland's first lady for the excellent organisation of the summit and emphasised the importance of successfully developing educational cooperation between the countries. More than 500 Kazakh students are currently studying in Poland.

The Secretary of State also met with the heads of the French, Ger-

man, Malaysian and Vietnamese delegations. Vietnamese Vice President Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh spoke about a free trade agreement between her nation and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), adding it would open new cooperation opportunities for the two countries, as well as for Vietnam and other EAEU nations.

Abdykalikova participated in the conference's June 11 closing ceremony and invited participants to visit EXPO 2017, adding a women's forum under the auspices of the Global Summit of Women is planned during the exhibition. She called on women leaders from around the world to join the discussion of innovative ideas and advanced technologies in the field of green economy.

Ministerial Meeting in Vienna...



(L-R) EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, Foreign Minister of Romania and Chair of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission Lazar Comanescu, Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov and UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo open the CTBTO-themed exhibition at Vienna International Centre on June 13.

Continued from Page A1

It highlights the need to create sustainable peace; to eliminate military blocs, which impede broader international cooperation; to adapt the international disarmament process to new historic conditions; and to ensure fair global competition in international trade, finance and development.

Idrissov expressed confidence that the initiative could guide the international community in achieving its common goals of ensuring a safe

world and strengthening the stability of the planet. He also remarked upon the long 20 years that the CTBT, a treaty designed to be a key element of the international security system, had waited to enter into force and condemned the actions of North Korea's leadership, which he said damaged international nuclear disarmament efforts and undermined efforts to ensure the CTBT's entry into force.

Members of the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), members of the CTBTO Youth Group (CYG),

academic representatives and parliamentarians participated in the event, holding conferences and panel discussions.

The Civil Society Panel aimed to promote dialogue and creative collaboration between experts in nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament and the next generation of specialists in these fields in order to advance the entry into force of the CTBT.

Representatives of CTBTO Youth Group presented findings from their research on benefits and new opportunities – nationally, regionally and

globally – that could result from CTBT ratification by the remaining states. While CTBT has now been signed by 183 states and ratified by 164 states, it still cannot enter into force until eight specific countries sign and ratify it. Following their presentation, key academic and civil society experts on disarmament and nonproliferation discussed the role of civil society groups in promoting the treaty and raising awareness of the urgency of achieving its entry into force.

The event in Vienna included receptions, a 360° virtual reality film installation, an evening concert and an exhibition of paintings by Honorary Ambassador of The ATOM Project Karipbek Kuyukov, which was visited by a number of participants.

Kuyukov is a victim of the nuclear testing at the Semipalatinsk site in Kazakhstan. His parents were live witnesses to the nuclear tests conducted for 40 years at the site near their home and had two children who didn't live to reach one year old. Kuyukov was born without arms.

He expresses his creativity and frustration through painting and has devoted his life and art to making sure that no one anywhere else suffers the devastating effects of nuclear weapons. Kuyukov has travelled the world on this mission and has spoken out against nuclear weapons, calling on everyone to sign a petition to world leaders to ban them for good.

The core of his exhibitions is always the fight against the nuclear weapons that marred the land of Kazakhstan.

"The diseases, tragedies, graves and pain that I witnessed in my life spur me to campaign against this evil to my dying day. I call on you to sign The ATOM Project's online petition, which now has more than 250,000 signatures from more than 100 countries, to finally put an end to all nuclear weapons and their development," Kuyukov said at the event.

The legacy of nuclear weapons testing lives on, with children born to this day with horrific health issues associated with their family's exposure to these tests generations past.

"The Cold War has ended but a new era of terrorism makes this call ever more urgent. Let us not give these terrorist madmen the chance to acquire any nuclear-weapons grade material to sow their carnage. This is a real danger and one that should spur nations holding or developing nuclear weapons to sit around the table of peace and negotiate a final, fair and secure end to all nuclear arsenals. The starting point would be for the remaining eight nations to sign the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty," the artist said.

"I weep when I hear those calling for a return of nuclear weapons. I fear for our planet and humanity when I read news stories about countries rebuilding their nuclear arsenals. After all the horror, all the fear, and all the danger, the recent terrorist attacks, have we learnt nothing? How many more, like me, must suffer?"

Kuyukov said that this new type



Karipbek Kuyukov

of terror demands attention, ensuring the safe decommissioning and disposal of all nuclear weapons for the sake of mankind. Its urgency was underlined with the recent Nuclear Security Summit hosted by U.S. President Barack Obama in Washington, D.C., and attended by 55 world leaders.

"Eradicating nuclear weapons from this earth is not a Cold War relic or a fashion of the 60s and 70s. It is the responsibility of our generation in securing our children's future and putting an end to the generations of suffering of millions of silent victims," Kuyukov concluded.

He asked visitors to consider signing The ATOM Project's petition to global leaders by visiting its website.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, Foreign Minister of Romania and Chair of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission Lazar Comanescu, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo and CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo also participated in the ministerial meeting.

Nation&Capital

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PEOPLE

Hungarian Author Introduces Book on Eurasian Ethno-Linguistic Group

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CULTURE

Abai Keshi Charity Gala Dinner Raised \$1,800 for Children of Atyrau's Orphanages

B3

SPORTS

Astana Pro Team's Vincenzo Nibali Wins Giro d'Italia 2016

B7

Digital Kazakhstan 2020 to Be Launched Next Year, Says Zerde Holding Chair

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Next year's launch of the Digital Kazakhstan 2020 state programme was announced June 9 during the SAP Forum. The results and goals of the strategic partnership between Samruk Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund and SAP, the world's third largest independent software manufacturer, were also discussed.

Implementing Digital Kazakhstan 2020 will be carried out in four key directions, said Zerde National Infocommunication Holding Chairman Assel Zhiyenbayeva. The first step is creating the so-called Digital Silk Road, which involves developing a reliable, affordable, high-speed, secure digital infrastructure. The second is widespread introduction of digital technology to enhance the competitiveness of various sectors of the economy. The third is forming a "proactive digital government" by improving the electronic and mobile government system, developing open government components and optimising the supply of public services. The last direction is establishing a "creative society," which implies developing the competencies and skills for the digital economy, upgrading digital literacy and training specialists for industry.



The main theme of the forum was the "way to digital economy" and more than 70 speakers, including top managers of large local and foreign companies, leading SAP experts and their partners, shared their experiences and stories.

With an excess of 44 years of experience, Germany-based SAP has more than 310,000 customers in approximately 190 countries. The corporation helps companies

of any size and specialisation to manage their business more effectively by creating unique solutions for different cases.

SAP signed an agreement on strategic partnership with Samruk Kazyna in 2015 aimed at an increase in labour productivity, positive economic effect and special personnel training course. The fund's transformation programme will be implemented in the next

five years with the help of SAP's business solutions.

The company's technologies are currently in the highest demand in the country in areas such as retail, distribution and banks, said SAP Kazakhstan Director Maksim Lamskov.

"Another direction where we can be useful in Kazakhstan is the sphere of state administration.

Continued on Page B4

'Kazakhstan Through the Eyes of Foreign Media' Contest Entries due June 25

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Non-Kazakh journalist wishing to participate in the third annual "Kazakhstan through the Eyes of Foreign Media" competition need to submit their work and applications by June 25.

The contest is open to foreign journalists who have had their written work about Kazakhstan published in non-Kazakh media between Jan. 1 and June 25. Applications must be sent to contest@mfa.kz. Winners will be announced July 6 on the eve of Astana Day. The contest is meant to promote Kazakh culture and news internationally.

Five winners from across five global regions will receive trips to Kazakhstan, including visits to Astana, Almaty, the Burabai resort

area, sightseeing activities and a cultural programme, along with interview opportunities with Kazakhstan's senior government officials and leading academics and journalists.

Last year's winners were journalists from Argentine, Egypt, Indonesia, Poland and Uzbekistan. They visited Kazakhstan in August 2016.

This year's competition is sponsored by Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, the National Olympic Committee of Kazakhstan, the Rixos President Astana and Rixos Borovoye hotels and the Argymak Transport Company.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, which launched flights to and from Astana in May 2016 in addition to the service to Almaty that is in existence since 1995, is the competition's international partner.

Almaty Residents Make Unusual Dog Rescue from Sairan Reservoir

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Five Almaty men formed an uneasy human chain to rescue a dog that fell into Sairan Reservoir and could not escape due to the steep slopes. The video detailing the operation shot by an eyewitness has gathered millions of views on social media.

The rescue, which Maryana Khadeyeva filmed on her smartphone and posted on YouTube, shows a frightened pooch that got caught in a strong current and struggled to stay still.

Stuck in the middle of the running water, the dog could have been trapped for a long time or carried away into a weir had his owner not rushed into the water. The young man slowly and carefully approached his dog, grab-

bing him by the scruff of the neck and dragging to the water's edge.

Unable to climb the slippery incline or place his dog on the land, the man waited for another person to join the human chain reaching from the railings on top of the bank to the waterside. Passers-by and fishermen formed the chain by linking their hands together and carefully sliding down the concrete slope.

When one more man joined the row, it became long enough for the owner to reach his pet, grab him and pull him to safety. All the rescuers were safe and happy to have lent a hand. News sources report the way the dog ended up in the water was not revealed.

The video of the touching rescue operation was posted on the Club Dobryakov Almaty (Almaty's

Club of "Kind Souls") Instagram page, which thousands watched in one day. The video later went viral, evoking heartfelt emotions and praises from users.

"It was very scary for a dog, especially when it began to slide down. But the guys were really good!!!! They did not pass by and the first guy did not hesitate to descend into the icy water. There are still indifferent people in our world! Fine fellows!!!!" YouTube user Anastasiya (last name unknown) noted on Khadeyeva's video post.

The video even reached foreign commenters on other social media.

"Yes, we love to see videos like this! Thank you to all from this group!" wrote Sybilla Lazaj Aubree on the Facebook post that as of June 13 had gathered more than 21 million views and nearly a quarter million shares.



Kazakh Felt Manufacturer Brings Ethnic Items to World

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – The Aigul Line company's Kazakh-style goods are a great example of a successful Made in Kazakhstan campaign. The items produced by the company include interior and design objects, clothing, footwear and accessories made of felt. They also offer classes for felting skills.

Aigul Zhanserikova, a biologist by occupation and founder of the Aigul Line brand, shared with The Astana Times how her ordinary hobby became a unique business.

"The company's slogan 'Presenting the best Kazakh traditions' has a mission to revive traditional Kazakh crafts and disseminate best practices with the introduction of modern technology and design. Our friendly team shares a love of

the beautiful traditional material, felt, with our customers and partners," she said.

The company has repeatedly represented Kazakhstan at international and national trade fairs and exhibitions of applied arts, including L'Artigiano in Fiera Milano 2013, the World Travel Market London 2013, the Tourism Fair Fitur Madrid 2013, China's New Silk Road 2014 and the International Tourism Fair Berlin 2014. The company's shops are located in Astana, Almaty and The Hague.

How it all started

The Almaty-born Zhanserikova received a biology degree and worked on environmental and sustainable development projects.

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EXPO 2017 Chairman Yessimov Congratulates First Ticket Holder

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Capital resident Olzhas Onalov, 24, received an invitation to the EXPO 2017 chairman's office after making the first online ticket purchase to the event. Akhmetzhan Yessimov congratulated him on the successful procurement.

"It is very symbolic that the first ticket holder to the exhibition is a resident of Astana. I hope all people in Kazakhstan take advantage of online sales of tickets," said Yessimov.

Onalov noted he was happy to hold the first pass.

"I am very pleased to become the first purchaser of the ticket. I always wanted the expo to be held in Kazakhstan; thus, I can invite my whole family to the exhibition. I had a chance to attend the international exhibition in Shanghai and I was impressed by what I saw. Therefore, I bought four tickets. Frankly



speaking, the ticket price surprised me. I invite all the people in Kazakhstan to visit this exhibition. I believe we will see something new and breathtaking," he said.

Electronic tickets have been on sale on the official website, tickets.expo2017astana.com, since June 10. Buyers can purchase several types of tickets in differ-

ent price categories, with open and fixed dates for weekdays and weekends.

An open-date ticket allows the holder to visit EXPO 2017 any day (weekday or weekend will be shown on the ticket). Guests must confirm their visit using their personal account or at the ticket office before going to the exhibition. A visitor can

exchange the ticket 24 hours in advance.

The preliminary sales period will continue through June 9, 2017. Discounted tickets will be available for pensioners, mothers with many children and school and university students. Customers and especially foreign guests can use the currency calculator to help to determine the prices in different monies.

The lowest prices will be offered during the promotional period from June 10-July 10. A 50-percent discount will be available June 10-20; a 30-percent discount if tickets are purchased by June 30. The final discount period is through July 10, when tickets will be reduced by 20 percent.

A promotional period will be also offered July 10-Aug. 10 to tour operators and resellers. Offline offices throughout Kazakhstan will open Sept. 1. Exhibition partners such as Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, Kazpost and Air Astana will join the ticket sales process.

THINGS TO WATCH & PLACES TO GO

ASTANA OPERA

June 15 at 7 p.m. *Abai. Opera*
June 24-25 at 7 p.m. *Notra Dame de Paris*

RAMADA PLAZA ASTANA

June 18 from 11 a.m. *First Mama Fest*

METRO SUPERMARKET

June 18 at 9 p.m. *OPEN AIR PARTY*

MUNAITPASOV STADIUM

June 18 at 4 p.m. American Football: Astana Wolves VS Bishkek Bars

KAZAKHSTAN CONCERT HALL

June 26 at 7 p.m. Radio&Juliet Quatro by Denis Matvienko

PEOPLE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Hungarian Author Introduces Book on Eurasian Ethno-Linguistic Group

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – Well-known European linguist László Marác presented his new book, "Towards Eurasian Linguistic Isoglosses: The Case of Turkic and Hungarian," for the first time at the Great Steppe Human Sciences Forum May 24 in Astana. The event was organised by the International Turkic Academy with the participation of the Library of the First President of Kazakhstan – Leader of the Nation and the Ataturk High Council of Culture, Language and History.

A professor of European studies and one of the initiators of the "Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe" consortium, Marác shared insights from his book with a crowd of scholars



László Marác

involved with Turkology and the ancient history of this area.

"The book deals with the Turkic languages and the relation between the Turkic and the Hungarian languages," said Marác in an exclusive interview with The Astana Times. "It is about the Tur-

kick and Hungarian people and also about the ancient history of Central Asia."

"I try to make a connection between the Hungarian and Turkic languages. There are a number of similarities in the lexicon and grammar of both languages. We [are dealing] here with very old relations. And it shows that the forefathers of the Hungarians once dwelt here in this area. I suppose they could be the Scythians. We have to search for the connection, and it must lie somewhere in Central Asia," he said.

According to the author, those languages have been treated separately: the Turkic language as part of the Altaic family and Hungarian as part of the Finno-Ugric family. "I think both classifications are

not correct. You have groups of languages that show some cohesion, like Turkic, and you understand Azeri, Uzbek, Kyrgyz and so on. So that's clearly a group. But Hungarian is also a group, but a group in itself. It has some relations with Ugric and with Finnish but more with Turkic," he said.

The book is planned to be presented at Izmir University in Turkey, and in the Netherlands and Hungary. In November, there will be a conference at the University of Padua in Italy where this topic is on the agenda.

As a scientist, Marác considers that there will be a lot of work to do in the coming years.

"A new theory in a scientific community leads to criticism. And this is normal, because anytime

you come with a new theory, you will get critics. People will sometimes write friendly critiques and sometimes they will be unfriendly. That's the individual fate of the author. The most important thing is that as a scholar, you should sometimes be convinced that all the theories are possible. You should go beyond existing theories and try to innovate. ... That's what researchers should do," he explained.

As an honorary professor at Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Marác also delivers lectures and conducts consultations with young researchers.

"I am pleased that there are many talented students with ambitions to get into the top levels of scientific research. Kazakh students doing PhDs are required to publish an article in a high-ranking journal. So the will is there, ambition is there and talent is there. If you require students in Kazakhstan to do this, you must do a lot of good coaching. You must train people. You must give them the opportunity to write a

paper. That's very important," he said. Marác recommends his PhD students not focus only on innovation, otherwise they will get too much criticism and never be able to finish their articles.

The professor also noted that the scientific community is getting more and more worried about the unstable global economy.

"Today's world is not moving in a peaceful direction. If this atmosphere reaches the network of interacting scientists, it will be much more difficult to keep contact with experts all over the world. Science should be objective. It should help the world develop in a peaceful and prosperous manner. I hope Kazakhstan's policy will continue in the same direction. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has been one of the fighters for a peaceful world, free of conflict and nuclear [weapons]. I think from this point of view, Kazakhstan should be one of the countries that should stand firm and also be a guarantee of objectivity in science," he said.

Batyr Arular Contest Announces Best Servicewomen

Staff Report

The names of winners of the Batyr Arular Second National Contest of Female Soldiers were recently announced.

Eighty participants competed for the right to be called the best

servicewoman of 2016. After the open voting, which was held on the website of the Ministry of Defence from the beginning of April to the end of May, 12 female representatives of the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan become winners.

More than 253, 875 people voted.

According to the press statement of the defence ministry, before the award ceremony, the finalists of the contest will demonstrate their physical and combat skills, fighting techniques and exercises in the field. They will have to prove that they are in constant combat readi-

ness and can always successfully perform their tasks. Also, the winners of the competition will participate in a special photo shoot for the calendar.

The maximum number of votes (4,883) was given to Zhanar Ibrayeva. Among other finalists were Ainur Abugaliyeva, Azai-khan Barakbayeva, Elmira Moldasheva, Sandi Smagulova, Rimma Ramazanova, Elvira Ayazbayeva, Symbat Karzhaubayeva, Aizhan Musayeva, Aigerim Idrissova, Aiyim Bytkova and Laura Bektur-ganova.



Kazakh Felt Manufacturer Brings Ethnic Items to World Market

Continued from Page B1

As a representative of the Central Asian Mountain Partnership (CAMP) Programme financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Zhanserikova initiated a project on the revival of felting in Kazakhstan. As part of the project, Austrian and German craftsmen conducted masterclasses to implement the project on felting revival.

"I was inspired by the skilled European women, who produced with their own hands brooches, hats and bags made of felt and sold at special markets during Christmas fairs. I was surprised that we had forgotten about the crafts that [remained] really interesting in other parts of the world. Foreign masters appreciate the positive properties of felt – its natural, environmentally friendly qualities and beneficial health properties. Felt became a subject of creativity for many European women," she said.



The first felt handicrafts workshop, Ak Kiiz (White Felt), was opened as Zhanserikova organised the first national training specifically for Kazakh women in 2004.

"I developed various training modules on felt crafting in collaboration with the United Nation Development Programme and the Civic Alliance. More than 250 women from Almaty, Akmola,

Pavlodar and the East Kazakhstan regions participated in sessions over the next few years. However, felting remained for many at the level of a hobby. My project is not only environmentally friendly, but turned out to be socially significant, as many formerly unemployed women started to revive the ancient craft and earn a living," she said.

Zhanserikova visited the workshops of many German felt makers and studied the organisation of their activities in 2009. She saw that the traditional Kazakh craft provided them with a stable source of income and decided to introduce their successful experience in Kazakhstan.

"I faced the choice of whether to continue working with international environmental projects, go to the civil service or continue scientific and teaching activities in 2009, upon completion of the CAMP programme. But I decided to demonstrate to all my students that folk crafts can be developed into business," she said.

After working a few years as a solo entrepreneur, Zhanserikova founded the Agul Line brand and patented the trademark of the same name in 2011.

The business of craft

"We are representatives of a small business. But our little company has been a stable business for

five years. To me, the quality of our products is important. I always adhere to the principle of 'less is more,'" she noted.

The company's staff consists of 15 employees who are master artisans.

"I often take part in international exhibitions, where there are a number of artists from many countries," Zhanserikova said about her team. "But I am always proud that all our products stand out among all the others and are recognised for their all-natural quality. We always update and renew our range of new

products and provide exclusive orders. Felt came into fashion, thus we are contributing to the development of ethnic style. We are planning further expansion, as there are a lot of ideas and projects."

"Sooner or later, the designers and artists return to their cultural roots and look for ethnic motifs. My goal was to revive this craft in Kazakhstan. I suppose it has already been achieved, as I have a lot of followers. Currently, felt is gaining popularity worldwide. This is more proof that this material is invaluable," she said.



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DENY THEIR CHANCE TO DESTROY OUR LIVES.
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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Abai Keshi Charity Gala Dinner Raised \$1,800 for Children of Atyrau's Orphanages



Organisers, volunteers, hosts and young attendees pose at the Abai Keshi venue.

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Approximately 600,000 tenge (US\$1,800) was raised for children from orphanages in the Atyrau region June 4 during the Abai Keshi charity gala dinner. The event, dedicated to the arts and heritage of famous Kazakh philosopher, composer and poet Abai Kunanbayev, was held for the first time at the Hilton Garden Inn in the Kazakh capital.

"We constantly work with, support and visit the Atyrau Regional

Boarding School No. 1. They performed the Kara Zhorga dance and Abai songs... People were crying; it was very touching and pleasant and we are still getting feedback from our guests," said host Zhanagul Kozhanazar in an interview with The Astana Times.

The event, which has become a kind tradition in Atyrau, is a unique opportunity to pay tribute to an honoured poet whose spiritual heritage remains interesting to the modern world. In association with the Atyrau Burns' Society

public fund, Kozhanazar worked to establish the non-profit Abai Social Trust Foundation in 2013. The first Abai Keshi event was held the same year in Atyrau.

"Back then we were not officially registered; we didn't know how to get started, how charity and public funds work... With the good reputation that the Atyrau Burns' Society has earned over the many years of their charity activities in Atyrau, we managed to gain the trust of many people and raise significant funds for our charity

activities," noted Kozhanazar on the fund's Facebook page.

The money raised at the dinner will be used to improve the living conditions of children from orphanages in Akmola and Atyrau region. The contributions will be given to Atyrau Regional Boarding School No. 1 and Atyrau Regional Residential Care for Children with Intellectual Disabilities, according to the Abai Foundation press announcement.

"The event aims to promote distinctive Kazakh culture and make it more accessible for foreign guests of Astana, which is why it was held in Kazakh and English languages," it added.

Abai Keshi was attended by guests from Aktau, Almaty and Atyrau cities, the United Kingdom and Tengizchevroil, Chevron and other companies involved in the diplomatic, culture, education and oil and gas fields.

Guests had a chance to hear Kazakh artists and culture activists sing Abai's songs and read his poems and see performances of the Akku dance ensemble and Tattimbet academic orchestra, composed of 33 soloists and dancers. Items were also on display from Zhidebai Borili, Abai's state historical, cultural and literary-memorial reserve museum in Zhidebai, the poet's motherland in Eastern Kazakhstan.

Ornek fashion house presented Kazakh national costumes, manufacturer Empire Group showed national souvenirs and gifts and Kazyna Gold exhibited national jewellery. Traditional snacks and drinks were on display and Arba Wine vineyard and winery presented their exclusive collection.

"People complimented them on their white and red wines. On one hand, this supports our local company and shows that wines are produced in Kazakhstan, too," said Kozhanazar.

She stressed her wish to invite guests to the next Abai Keshi event to be held in mid-October.

"This is becoming a tradition and developing into a business and networking platform for entrepreneurs and young designers, for example, and this is one of our goals. We want them to make new connections and improve existing relations as partners during this event," said Kozhanazar.

The fund will be organising Abai Keshi in every city and town, not just Atyrau and the capital.

"We surely will take into account people's earnings in each of the regions so that everyone has a chance to participate in Abai Keshi. We are now looking for like-minded young volunteers," she said.

National Geographic Magazine Photo Exhibit Opens in Astana



Staff Report

The exhibition of the Fifty Best Photos of National Geographic magazine opened May 27 in the National Museum of Kazakhstan in Astana, as part of the official presentation of the National Geographic Kazakhstan publication, reported the press service of the museum.

The exhibition features some of the most amazing pictures that have been created during the 128-year history of the publication. These included the famous Afghan girl by Steve McCurry, Michael Nichols' iconic Jane Goodall, Thomas Abercrombie's unique view of Mecca and other well known photo compositions. The visitors could also discover interesting historic facts behind the exhibited pictures, which usually remain behind the scenes, as well as see other versions of the scenes, which were taken before the best shot was finally made.

The official opening ceremony was attended by the Minister of In-

formation and Communications of Kazakhstan Dauren Abayev, who in his speech stressed the significance of the fact that a well-known magazine is now publishing in the Kazakh language.

"I believe our diverse natural landscapes, spreading from Altai Mountains to the Caspian Sea, rich history and unique traditions will offer a wide range of interesting topics for future stories," said Abayev.

The event was also attended by Fazila Zhanaltay – a photo of her was published in the National Geographic magazine in 1954.

The National Geographic Magazine is distributed in 38 languages in more than 80 countries. Main topics of the publication embrace the fields of history, geography, archeology, science and culture. The magazine promotes careful attitude toward the planet and the necessity of preserving its unique beauty.

The first issue in Kazakh was presented in February with four published this year.



Hosts of the evening Lyazzat Shatayeva (L) and Yergulan Zhanpeissov.

Astana Opera to Premiere 'Notre-Dame de Paris' on June 24-25

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Audiences will have the chance to witness ballet the way it was directed a half-century ago, as Astana Opera will present June 24-25 its premiere of "Notre-Dame de Paris." The state opera and ballet theatre will dance the 1965 choreography of Roland Petit to the music of Maurice Jarre.

Based on the novel by Victor Hugo, Jules Perrot originally staged "La Esmeralda" in 1844. Petit wrote the libretto and changed the title and the ballet entered the list of classics of world choreography shortly after its premiere.

"I want the Middle Ages to be forgotten, so that the tragic sense of Victor Hugo's creation becomes clearer to the audience," Petit was once quoted as saying, according to Astana Opera's press release.

The statement outlined the differences between the two versions.

"It is not the beautiful gypsy who is in the centre of his ballet, but Quasimodo. The choreographer, who was also the first performer of this part, did not need to put on a disfiguring costume and make-up – he 'danced' his hump. Quasimodo's regeneration – from the dog-like loyalty to his 'master' Claude Frollo to the heroic attempt to save the innocent Esmeralda and take revenge for her death – is convincingly presented on stage," it said.

The sharp grotesque, imbued with modern plasticity, accentuates the perfect beauty of classical dance in the ballet "Notre-Dame de Paris." The harsh reality and grim fantasy are intricately combined in this monumental tragic spectacle. If the 19th century's "La Esmeralda" had an obligatory happy ending, the lone miserable Quasimodo is the only character who is granted life in the severe 20th cen-

tury performance," noted the press release.

The 1965 version is also famous for costumes by designer Yves Saint Laurent, who shocked the Parisian beau monde at the time. He dressed the heroine in minis, which were only entering the fashion scene. He felt the "beautiful and conquering Esmeralda" should enter the stage wearing a white-lilac mini-dress, added the press release.

Revival choreographer and ballet master Luigi Bonino provided an overview of the presentation.

"At the time, the eminent couturier [Saint-Laurent] himself created all the costumes for the Paris premiere of the ballet and now the viewers of the Astana Opera will be able to admire the restored creations of the designer. The sets are fantastic! When the curtain opens, it makes a huge impact on the audience. In the second act, there is

only a big bell onstage. It is truly beautiful and Quasimodo is all the way up there. 'Notre-Dame de Paris' is always a huge success everywhere we stage it and I think that it will also delight the Kazakh audience," he said in the interview on the opera's website.

Esmeralda will be played by Kazakh Honoured Workers Madina Basbayeva and Gaukhar Ussina and Aigerim Beketayeva. Quasimodo will be portrayed by Kazakh Honoured Worker Rustem Seitbekov and Bakhtiyar Adamzhan. Serik Nakyspekov, Gaziz Ryskulov and Doszhan Tabyldy will dance the part of Frollo. Phoebus will be played by Kazakh Honoured Workers Zhandos Aubakirov and Tair Gatauov and Arman Urazov.

The set designs are by René Alio and the conductor and music director is Arman Urazgaliyev.

The ballet will be performed at 7 p.m., June 24 and 6 p.m., June 25.



Madina Basbayeva and Gaziz Ryskulov during rehearsal.

COUNTRY

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

International Archaeologists Examine Ancient Mounds of East Kazakhstan

Staff Report

An international team of historians and archaeologists has started large-scale excavations of five ancient monuments in East Kazakhstan, reported the InfoCentre of the region.

The archaeological expeditions are being conducted in the Berel mounds in the Katon-Karagai district, the Shilikinsk Valley in the Zaisan district, Ablaitik fortress-monastery in the Ulan district, Kyrykungir monuments in the Abai district



and Eleke Saży in the Tarbagatai district.

The team consists of 20 experts from 10 countries, including professors and scientists from Japan, Great Britain, Hungary, Turkey and China, as well as geo-archaeologists from Italy, Belgium and Russia. At the moment the scientists are conducting air-photography and geo-scanning of the research area.

The research is going to last three years and will be divided into several stages. The gathered results will be published and pre-

sented at the Valley of the Kings forum. The regional administration has allocated 100 million tenge (US\$296,000) this year to support the scientific project.

"It is important that we actively work on the implementation of the development plan on archaeological activities in light of the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence. We have invited archaeologists from around the world, as our mounds deserve much attention of the world known scientists," said Akim (Governor) of the region Daniyal Akhmetov.

According to professor of historical sciences, Zeinulla Samashev, the quality of research has shifted to a higher level, and the involvement of foreign experts is beneficial for both sides.

"Our challenge is not only to find artefacts for reconstruction, but the further use of archaeological findings for patriotic education and development of science and technology, as well as tourism. I also hope this step will bring us closer to the establishment of a major scientific centre in Kazakhstan," said Samashev.

The recent research conducted in the Ablaitik fortress has gathered information about the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in Kazakhstan. On the Berel mounds, the working group of architects and restorers plan to build an open-air museum.

Global Conference Discusses Best Practices for Civil Service Development

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Alikhan Baimenov, Steering Committee Chairman of the Civil Service Regional Hub located in the city, outlined "the quality of human resources and the quality of systems which create conditions for realising full human potential" as vital points regarding institutional and long-term sustainable development. He made the comment May 26 during the global conference on professional civil service for successfully implementing institutional reforms held as part of the Astana Economic Forum (AEF).

Baimenov stressed public administration plays a key role in creating such systems.

Welcoming speeches were given by Kazakh Minister of Civil Service Affairs Talgat Donakov, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UN Development Programme (UNDP) Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Cihan Sultanoglu, Kazakh Academy of Public Administration Rector Bolatbek Abdrassilov and Baimenov.

About 20 leading international experts and specialists from Azerbaijan, Canada, Estonia, France, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, the Netherlands, Russia, South Korea, Tajikistan and the UK discussed issues such as modern trends and international best practices for improving the civil service system, issues of good public administration, developing preventive diplomacy and improving public services quality, innovation in training civil servants and conducting public administration research projects.

"Well-known scientists, the world's leading experts and politicians gave talks during the conference," the Civil Service Regional Hub said in a press release.

Among the renowned names were Estonian Minister of Finance Sven Sester, UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia head Petko Draganov, Korean National Human Resource Development Institute President Oak Dong-suk, Canadian Institute for Citizen-Centred Service Executive Director Dan Batista, Dutch Institute for Public Administration Chief Executive

Officer Leo Smits and Abdrassilov.

The conference was organised by the Kazakh Ministry of Civil Service Affairs, Kazakh Academy of Public Administration, the Civil Service Regional Hub and UNDP.

"The proposal for the establishment of a Civil Service Regional Hub has been inspired by the Agency of Civil Service Affairs of Kazakhstan jointly with the UNDP in Kazakhstan," according to an official statement. "It was envisioned that the regional hub would be a multilateral platform engaged in the exchange of experience and knowledge, uniting efforts to reform and build the capacity of civil services in the member states of CIS, the Caucasus and beyond."

Such hubs play an important role in enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation between countries, enabling them to share accumulated experience in developing civil service systems while supporting regional cooperation. The formation of a platform based on leading international experience may be the most practical and effective joint solution.



Speakers of the Global Conference.

New Shymkent District under Construction

Staff Report

ASTANA – Construction of a new district in Shymkent aims to develop the city as the third major city of the state under the order of Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Construction of so called "Shymkent City," a new administrative and residential area started recently.

"Today is a fateful moment, when we start to build our future, a new milestone of Shymkent development, development of major

megapolis of the Central Asian region. First of all, we create new living standards of our city. It is a sort of testing site where progress and careful attitude to nature, as well as the highest level of safety and comfort will be properly combined. Here new business and new jobs will be created. The district will become the business card of the city, the centre of entrepreneurial activity and a leisure place for locals," Akim (Mayor) of Shymkent Gabidulla Abdrakhimov said.

The new district will be located in the northern part of the city,

close to the Baidibek by Monument. The area will have modern infrastructure, convenient conditions for living and doing business. The conditions will correspond to the highest standards of planning and architecture.

Laying of roads and other infrastructure has started. Construction of the area's central park will begin in 2017. The project is part of the Concept of Shymkent Development Plan until 2020, which was presented last year. The construction will be funded by private investment.

UNDP, EU Support Kazakhstan's Move to Green Economy

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – International experts pledged support for Kazakhstan's efforts to establish a green economy during a conference titled "Green economy: Providing social innovation, economic diversification and environmental sustainability" at the May 25 Astana Economic Forum (AEF).

"We applaud Kazakhstan's leadership's foresight and vision to establish a sovereign wealth fund from its oil proceeds when the markets were favourable, which can catalyse the green growth initiatives in the country," said UN Assistant Secretary-General, UN Development Programme (UNDP) Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) Cihan Sultanoglu.

"It is laudable that Kazakhstan has initiated a series of structural transformations aimed at creating a more diverse and stable economy. More importantly, these transformations could support a deeper

integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into the national plans and policy frameworks. With the Presidential 100 Concrete Steps programme and an aspiration to elevate the national economy to the OECD's standards, a strong momentum exists and should be seized upon to deepen the economic diversification processes," she added.

The Sustainable Development Goals are aimed at ending poverty, fighting remaining inequalities and injustice and tackling climate change by 2030. They were introduced at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015.

"Promoting similar ideas, UNDP and the EU in Kazakhstan united their efforts in implementation of the project 'Supporting Kazakhstan's transition to a green economy model.' The joint project aims to integrate green economy principles into the water sector of Kazakhstan," a UNDP press release said.

"Kazakhstan adopted the concept of transition to a green economy in 2013 to seek green drivers for economic growth, create more sustainable livelihoods for people and pro-

tect the environment," the release said with the note that the "concept is part of Kazakhstan's aim to become one of 30 most developed nations by 2050. UNDP has provided support to Kazakhstan's goals on greening its economy encapsulated in national strategies."

The European Commission has adopted a new Circular Economy Package to help European businesses and consumers switch to an economy where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained for as long as possible and where waste generation is minimised.

"The circular economy involves a fundamental change," said head of the European Union Delegation to Kazakhstan Ambassador Traian Hristea, admitting the challenge is huge. "It really means re-thinking the way we design, the way we produce, consume and dispose of products. We want to unlock the potential for more re-use, re-manufacturing and recycling of products, and for that we need new solutions, sometimes unconventional business models using modern communication tools."

Zhayik – Ural Expedition Kicks Off at the National Museum

By Azamat Syzdykbayev

ASTANA – The anniversary 20th expedition devoted to the Day of Kazakhstan State Symbols kicked off recently in National Museum. Members of Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and ethnic and cultural centres took part in the exhibition. The "Ural – the River of Friendship" photo exhibition was held as well.

Deputy of Mazhilis (lower house of Parliament) Yelena Tarassenko is a permanent member and one of organisers of the expedition.

"We celebrate the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's Independence this year. It is very symbolic that our event takes place in anticipation of

the Day of Kazakhstan State Symbols. Today, we make conclusions of long-term work in the National Museum of our country. Let me congratulate all participants of the expedition and all our associates and teammates. We are happy people, because we live on our land, set a high value on our wealth and preserve our region. We are the patriots of our states. This is the 20th expedition and the event was established by the Kazakhstan side. Our idea was supported by our neighbours from friendly Russian Orenburg. We have cooperated for 15 years," she said.

Deputy Chairperson of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan Yerally Tugzhanov emphasised

that such noble work can be done only by people with pure hearts.

"Today, the Russian delegation headed by Vice Governor of Orenburg region Pavel Samsonov arrived. Such great expedition is organised in cooperation with Russian side for 20 years. This expedition has not only historical, but even more cultural meaning. It aims at cleaning of the Ural River," Tugzhanov said.

The first expedition started in 1997 and in 2001 it became an international one. Deputies of the Mazhilis, representatives of political parties, legislative and executive power, experts and scientists, historians and archaeologists took part in the event.

Digital Kazakhstan 2020 to Be Launched Next Year..

Continued from Page B1

Based on the experience of our cooperation with developed countries in terms of implementing digital strategy in state administration, we understand that the key aspect of the effective and transparent state administration is state services oriented at consumers," he added.

Digital Kazakhstan 2020 is presently under discussion and Lamskov noted SAP can increase the transparency of the state administration process by implementing its technologies. SAP successfully operates a project at the Kazakh Ministry of Finance.

"Ministries should do those services that they are supposed to. They should not be engaged in accounting or personnel work. They should be aimed at [providing] qualified service for consumers. It is the foundation of effective government," he added.

This year, the company launched SAP Institute for Digital Government, a global initiative of non-commercial partnerships which unites experts of various government organisations to exchange experience on executing digital governments.

"It is important for Kazakhstan,

because it will allow you to directly transfer the experience of other countries to increase the effectiveness of the digital government development. It is important not to repeat the mistakes of others if the country wants to make a digital breakthrough," said Lamskov.

During the forum, SAP organised a special exhibition for participants to present the latest innovations in their industries. ArcelorMittal, ERG, Halyk Bank, Kaspi Bank, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, KazTransOil, Technodom and Zhol Zhondeushi are among the company's largest Kazakh partners and clients.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Almaty Entrepreneurs Produce Natural Playgrounds, Promote Socially-Beneficial Activities

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – Social entrepreneurship is a global movement being successfully implemented in Kazakhstan. When small companies build values-driven businesses and identify themselves as social entrepreneurs, it has a positive effect on the economy and population as a whole.

Teplaya (Warm) and Eco-Culture Public Fund head Alesya Nugayeva runs a small business producing unique, environmentally-clean kids' furniture, playhouses, accessories and household items. Last year, the project was put into action in 10 yards in Almaty and Esik town in the Almaty region with the participation of more than 800 children and parents.

"At the moment of profit generation, businessmen always have the question what to do next? To reinvest in your business, invest in expansion or start a charity project? So, we chose the third option. Of course, we understand that by doing this we have extended our business line, because it is crucial for us to maintain a harmonious,

balanced activity where you not only take but also give something. And this is very important," she said.

Nugayeva, a psychologist by trade, once headed the children's development centre and obtained a management degree. Her husband, Arseniy Tarasov, was involved in manufacturing musical instruments.

Initially, young people made the wooden playgrounds and conducted eco-programmes. Later, they expanded and refocused their workshop to produce children's outdoor furniture.

As a like-minded activists' initiative, the Eto Dvor (This is a Yard) project was launched three years ago. The mission is to provide children with outdoor play equipment.

"We transform, together with children and parents, the space they live in. We also organise the eco-art education programme including reading evenings, watching cartoons on the walls of houses, master classes on street art and flower planting. The key moment here is to create an environmentally-friendly and creative atmosphere and take part in urban

development. Due to this, the contribution to urbanisation issues and solving the social problems are the essential parts of the project," she said.

In mid-May the Eco-Culture Fund provided furniture for kids, including playhouses, tables and chairs for the autism rehabilitation centre.

"Our philosophy is simple. Many people think that their home ends at the doorstep and the city with its grey background does not belong to them. And it's better to wait for the 'hero' who will change the world. Then, the parents send this message to their children. We do believe that these norms in society are abnormal and we offer the tenants to start with their own yard," said Nugayeva.

Their project is unique because they make furniture from environmentally-friendly materials, noted Tarasov.

"We do not use particleboard and use only wood, plywood, water-based paints and wax. Fifty percent of our enterprise is socially oriented and the part of the profit we provide for the municipal programmes supports the children's

environment. During production, we take into account age and the psychological and physical needs of the children. We do not just produce the goods, but we create a caring environment for children," he added.

The project won the Saby Charitable Foundation's grant this year. The financing helped purchase equipment, including milling, engraving and laser machines for a vast number of complex operations, and produce a line of wooden toys.

"Our furniture is affordable for any customer. Our clients are in sympathy with our individual approach, eco-friendliness, reliability, design and the social component of our business. We are happy to welcome new partners and parties interested in the development of our project. At the same time, we are not afraid the financial support is not provided," said Nugayeva.

The entrepreneurs aim to enter the national market and become competitive with foreign manufacturers in designing eco-friendly furniture with a careful approach to the child and respect of his or her psychological needs.



"As part of the project, our staff and volunteers provide creative environmental classes and urban Saturdays. The residents and children

also participate in the installation and painting and they also show solidarity in the maintenance of the playground equipment," she said.

Z Camp Invites Teens to Dive into the World of Business, Technology and Design

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Z Community, a project and educational platform for young people, proposes a new way for teenagers from 12–18 to spend their summer vacation: to join Z Camp, a two-week programme where participants can immerse themselves in the world of business and start-ups and find new like-minded friends.

"The programme consists of three areas: start-ups and business, new technology and programming, and active holidays. The main mission of Z Camp is to help [participants] find their business [activity] and to discuss the possibilities of our time. Our friends-mentors help us. Among them are Google employee Madiyar Aitbayev; one of the best programmers in Kazakhstan, Dmitry Melnik; designer and student at the European Institute of Design Aidana Zhanyrbayeva; human resources director of an international company Elmira Kusainova and others," said Diya Batenova, programme coordinator at Z Community, in an interview with the Astana Times.

Most camp mentors are entre-

preneurs, key employees or creative people. Many of them live or work abroad, so they communicate with the teens online.

According to her, the main advantage of Z Camp is its cool atmosphere. "We change formats all the time. Now it's a master class, tomorrow there will be a business game and the day after tomorrow we will have a competition for the strangest idea for a start-up, which will then need to be defended," she

added.

Over the summer, the Z Camp team plans to welcome around 80–100 people in Astana and Almaty. "It's a small amount, but we emphasise our quality and our ability to devote time to each participant, to lay the first brick in building their future, full of ideas, creativity, and large-scale projects," said Batenova. She added that the programme will definitely become an annual event with a large number

of participants and mentors.

Z Camp is the first start-up camp in Kazakhstan and is one of the projects created by Z Community. Z Community was founded by Ildar Tapalov and officially launched only a year ago.

"Two years ago, myself, my partner Diya Batenova and a couple of like-minded people were discussing the importance of education in human life. Each of us had had an experience of spending more time

and effort to study than was necessary. And we agreed that the 15–20 years we spend in the education system still do not allow us to fully unleash our potential and to inspire us to future achievements," said Tapalov in an interview.

He stressed that he is not criticising teachers or educational institutions in any way. "But any well-established model of work changes under the influence of time and technology. And now the world is beginning to understand the importance of personalised education, a learning model that is right for you and for harmonious development," he added.

This is how they came up with the idea of Z Community, a community of teenagers who want to do what they like and become the best at it. The development of the concept, through discussions with teachers, parents and children, took around a year. Some 400 teenagers in Astana and Almaty took part in their programmes while the concept was being developed.

"We had the idea of a start-up camp from the very beginning. And like all the best ideas, it was pointed out by the teenagers themselves, who get bored sitting at

home all summer or wasting their time. By the way, young people actively participated in the drafting of the programme, so I am fully confident that each participant will like it," said Tapalov about the Z Camp summer programme.

"Z Community combines the features of a business school, a platform for the realisation of ideas and a co-working space for teenagers. [Teenagers] can come to us and go through a basic course on the basics of business, programming, marketing, design and personal development and receive mentoring from entrepreneurs and professionals," said Tapalov.

It is hoped that participants will begin working on their own creative, scientific or business projects during the camp or after. Teens are encouraged to work on any idea, even those that seem insignificant, Tapalov said.

"Perhaps some of these ideas will grow into real businesses or productions, but most will certainly remain amateur projects. More important are the skills they acquire in the course of project work, and the self-reliance they learn," ended Tapalov.



Chevron and Nazarbayev University Students Introduce Model Eco-Village Project

By Serzhan Bekturov

ASTANA – Chevron's contribution to science and technology development in Kazakhstan is designed to create opportunities for students and young researchers to develop their professional and academic skills while searching for solutions to improve the quality of life.

The company helps local universities in purchasing advanced equipment, upgrading laboratory infrastructure, supporting faculty research programmes, and providing funds for scholarships and project teams of young scientists and students.

Last May, in partnership with the Nazarbayev University, Chevron introduced a model eco-village – a futuristic, human

and environment-friendly settlement that could be built 25 km from Astana. The eco-village is designed to be energy efficient, sustainable, based on innovative technologies, and integrate harmoniously with the natural landscape.

The 3D eco-village model is a result of a year-long research carried out by a team of 25 university students representing various departments and contributing their knowledge and skills in the areas of design, engineering, ecological studies, energy studies, and IT. Mentors from the university worked hand in hand with students on project management and technical issues.

"The whole modelling part was implemented by the students with the support of university admin-

istration, professors and experts. We plan to submit it for presentation at EXPO 2017. And I have no doubt that we will succeed," shared his confidence Daniil Tarasov, a 3rd year student and project manager. "To be part of this project is a great honour and priceless experience for me."

Later this year, the project team plans to arrange a peer-review by local expert community.

Since its establishment in 2010, Nazarbayev University has swiftly developed into one of the leading educational and research institutions in Kazakhstan. Starting from 2012, the university and Chevron entered into a long-term partnership based on the shared philosophy of striking the right balance between environment preservation and the advancement of technology.



TOURISM&EXPO 2017

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Ust-Kamenogorsk – City that Kept a Secret

By Yerbolat Uatkhonov

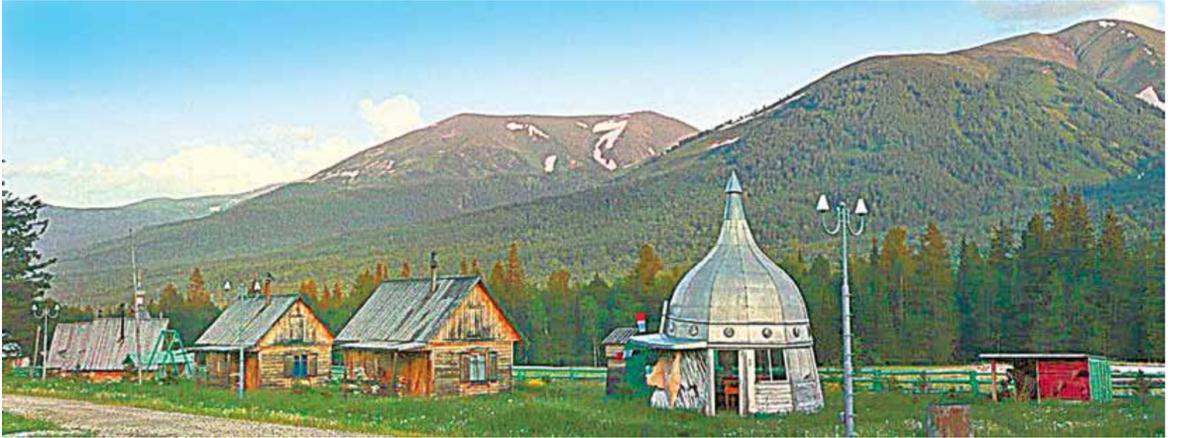
ASTANA – Ust-Kamenogorsk was founded in 1720 as a military fort at the confluence of the Irtysh and Ulba rivers under the order of the Russian Emperor Peter the Great. The city developed into a major mining and metallurgical centre during the Soviet period and was very closely connected with the Soviet nuclear bomb project. For many years Ust-Kamenogorsk was closed to outsiders and one of its numerous plants, which produced and still produces uranium products, was kept entirely secret despite employing thousands of people.

large-scale production of lead, silver, copper and many other metals.

Titanium Magnesium Plant specialises in producing and selling nonferrous metals.

Ulba Metallurgical Plant manufactures hi-tech uranium, beryllium and tantalum products for the needs of atomic engineering, electronics, metallurgical and other areas. The plant is currently the largest nuclear fuel producer for the nuclear industry among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) nations, the only one in Eurasia that makes all kinds of beryllium products and the only producer of tantalum in the CIS.

The Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank, which is expected to



Economy

The city has three giant plants which employ most of its citizens.

Kazzinc is a fully-integrated, major zinc producer with considerable copper, precious metals and lead credits. The company continues seeking to have a stable position among the world's five lowest cost zinc producers. It also has

be operational by the end of 2017, is to be hosted at the Ulba Metallurgical Plant, which already stores 800 tonnes of uranium materials and has 60 years of experience in storing and handling such supplies. The LEU bank is expected to hold 90 tonnes of uranium hexafluoride, which will be stored as an option of last resort for countries with peaceful nuclear power programmes in the event of a disruption of their commercial fuel supplies.

Azia Avto car assembly plant manufactures 34 models of Chevrolet, Kia, Lada and Skoda, making it the largest facility of its kind in the Central Asian region. A new plant, established by Azia Avto together with Russian Lada, is currently under construction. The facility will produce up to 120,000 cars per year, exporting most of them.

A large part of electric energy in the region is very cheap and clean thanks to five hydroelectric power stations.

Traffic

The city's economy is diversified. Ust-Kamenogorsk's small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) are quite developed and city residents work in many fields, especially in the plants. This fact is demonstrated by the thousands of cars moving from each of the giant facilities at the same time. Traffic is not usually heavy, but every local knows that twice a day it is packed because of the employees. After staff members arrive at their work places or homes, the city roads are free again.

Popular activity

This city has a very popular activity among its inhabitants. Even if people didn't have or never wanted to have a garden, they will if they live in Ust-Kamenogorsk. Most locals are vegetable growers and real fans of their gardens. Nothing will stop them from gathering all the necessary equipment and travelling to their country house every Friday evening. Those who are unaware of the interest will wonder why 70 percent of the city leaves in hurry, as if somebody

asked them to escape. Gardening in the city is more than a hobby, because it unites not only members of a family, but those who are not related. It is a sort of unofficial club with more than 200,000 members. In early March they start to think, plan and actively discuss their gardens, instruments, houses and vehicles and often begin to repair all the tools and plant the first seedlings on their window sills.

Tourism

Locals go abroad but usually foreigners come to the city, because it is located in an amazingly beautiful part of Kazakhstan. It possesses high mountains such as 4,506-metre Belukha Peak, hundreds of rivers and lakes, snowy winters and hot summers. As a result, locals buy or construct small and big villas close to tourist attractions and relax there as often as possible, but also make money renting them to guests. Most travellers come to the region from all parts of Kazakhstan and Russia, giving high marks to the quality-price ratio. Three months of summer in the East Kazakhstan region are great for beach recreation lov-

ers and climbers. Winter makes a gift, too – numerous ski resorts with high-quality services offering reasonable rates.

Hockey

Hockey is a big deal in the city and young and old know when the local team is playing. The love is based on the success, past and present, of Kazzinc Torpedo hockey team. This squad has produced such Soviet and NHL hockey legends as Boris Alexandrov, Nikolai Antropov, Max Birbraer, Anton Khudobin, Yevgeniy Nabokov, Yevgeniy Paladyev and Konstantin Shafranov.

Old city

Part of the city is quite old and the city administration has preserved the architecture. Businessmen reconstruct the old buildings and very often build new ones in a similar style, making them appear as if they were erected 150 years ago. All this creates a special touch and charm. Walking the city streets can transport one to the past in his or her imagination and only the up-to-date cars parked under big trees serve as a reminder that the person is not in a time machine.

Ethnographic Camp Allows Visitors to Live as Ancient Nomads

Staff Report

The Nomads of the Great Steppe ethnographic camp will open its doors June 10.

The three-day festival will be organised on the Ili River in the Almaty region and held under the motto: "Living in the present, thinking about the future, without forgetting the past!"

According to the organisers of the event, the ethnographic recreation camp is a new and ambitious project aimed at the expansion and strengthening of a common cultural space, promotion of national cultural traditions, moral values, patriotism and respect for history. It will also promote traditional crafts and national sports games.

The camp participants will get an opportunity to visit several thematic events taking place

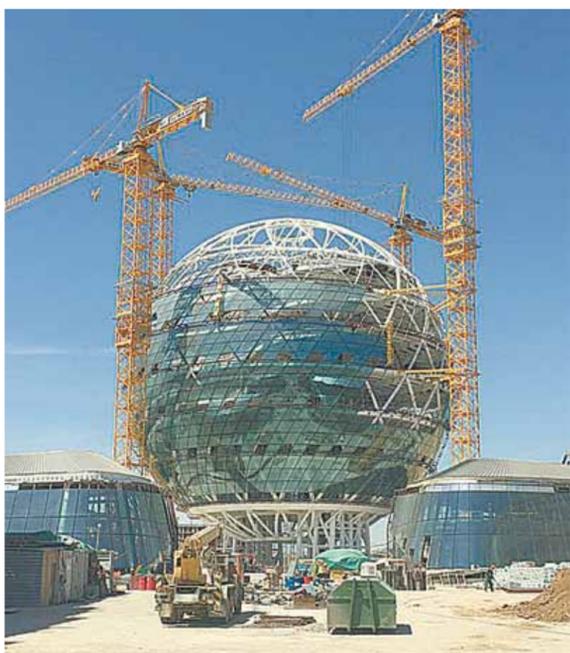
throughout the camp, which will allow them to get acquainted with the life, traditions and customs of Kazakh ancestors. For those who want to learn how to work with felt, leather and silver, the camp will offer special master classes. Besides lessons, guests will be able to participate in recreational activities and competitions and attend a concert of ethnic music.

The camp organisers also remind that life in the camp will be established in accordance with the laws of the steppe. This means that only traditional nomadic cuisine will be available for guests, which includes meat (mutton, horse meat, veal), dairy drinks (kymyz, boza, ayran, tan), as well as special meals like irimshik (curd), kurt (dried salted cheese) and kaimak (sour cream). In case of alcohol consumption or discipline viola-

tions, the participants will be excluded from the camp. All camp participants are obliged to follow the rules and requirements of the organisation committee.

In the camp, each guest will need to have comfortable sports hiking clothes, warm clothes, a hat and sun protection products, as well as personal utensils, insect repellent and camping chairs if needed. Also, potential participants are recommended to bring national costumes and national musical instruments (kobyz, sazsyrnai, sybyzgy, dombra etc.). The travel expenses will be covered by the participants themselves.

The camp voucher costs 7,000 tenge (US\$21) for adults, for students and schoolchildren the price is 5,000 tenge (US\$15) and for children up to 6 years – 2,000 tenge (US\$6).



International Interest Increases in EXPO 2017 Participation

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – During the Ninth Astana Economic Forum May 25-26, EXPO 2017 Commissioner Rapol Zhoshybayev signed EXPO 2017 participation agreements with Poland, Saudi Arabia and Singapore. Austria confirmed May 23 its intention to participate in EXPO 2017.

Austrian authorities also announced plans to celebrate a National Day of the country on June 27 during the expo, to hold an economic forum, to illustrate the best Austrian technologies in the field of green energy and to provide cultural events with participation of Austrian artists during EXPO 2017.

By 2040, Saudi Arabia plans to eliminate the use of fossil fuels and

replace traditional oil and coal with alternative energy sources, such as solar energy and wind power. To this end, over the next 20 years, the country intends to invest \$109 billion to develop solar energy infrastructure.

Currently, Singapore is developing a concept plan for their pavilion under the theme Future Energy.

Poland is developing alternative energy sources in accordance with the European Union's programmes to achieve 20 percent of its total energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020. In 2015, Poland adopted a new law on renewable energy sources.

In addition, on May 26, Finland formally decided to participate in EXPO 2017. Helsinki attaches particular importance to the fact that

EXPO 2017 will be held in the year of the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence.

EXPO national company signed agreements totaling \$113.2 million and collected \$744.5 million in investments.

Commissioner of the Israeli section of EXPO 2017 Elazar Cohen confirmed his country's participation in the international exposition to be held in Astana. "A few years ago, we were dependent on oil and

gas. However, thanks to government programmes, today our country is in a leading position in the field of green energy. We are confident that EXPO 2017 will be an ideal platform for us to present to the world the latest developments in the field of renewable energy," Cohen emphasised.

As of the end of May, the Astana EXPO 2017 national company signed agreements on partnerships with domestic and foreign companies totaling \$113.2 million and collected \$744.5 million in investments.

Chair of the company Akhmetzhan Yessimov and members of the Foreign Investors Council under the President of Kazakhstan met May 27 to discuss the expo's preparations and goals.

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Astana Pro Team's Vincenzo Nibali Wins Giro d'Italia 2016

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

TURIN – The Astana Pro Team, part of the Presidential Sports Club, once again confirmed its status as one of the best cycling teams in the world. Captain Vincenzo Nibali proved he has strong spirits, winning the Giro d'Italia 2016 after a poor second week at the multi-day event.

The race was held May 6-29 in the foothills of the Western Alps and the last week saw developments that nearly turned it upside down. Before the start of the decisive mountain climb, Nibali lost more than four minutes to the holder of the pink jersey, general classification leader Steven Kruijswijk of LottoNL-Jumbo. It seemed cutting that lag was something fantastic. In the 19th stage, however, where riders rose to the highest mountains of the race, Nibali showed who was who.



Photo credit: Sportske

Cycling is full of surprises, some of which are unpleasant, and Kruijswijk's fall played a role in the final outcome. On the way down the mountain the Dutchman fell and was injured, which unfortunately excluded him from the fight for victory in the general classification. Given this change of events,

Nibali decided to attack. Neither Spaniard Alejandro Valverde of the Movistar Team nor Colombian Esteban Chavez of Orica-GreenEDGE could meet his challenge, as racers had to face serious fluctuations in temperature when exhausting heat was replaced by chilliness while climbing the roads

among the snow-capped Alps. Nibali's attack secured a stage win and helped him climb into second place with a slight lag behind Chavez.

Commenting on Nibali's stage victory, Team Astana's General Manager Alexandre Vinokourov noted the group's wisely-chosen strategy.

"We showed a good team and work and tactics. Nibali is our captain and his shape means a lot to the team. Tactically, we acted well. Two guys were sent to a breakaway group. We are very glad that our young Kazakh rider Bakhtiyar Kozhatayev played a role, too, in assisting Vincenzo today. Nibali found his feet and met the challenge like a true champion," he said.

Astana's fans had reason for concern before the decisive battle for the pink jersey. Could Nibali recover after such a difficult stage and overcome a 44-second

disadvantage at Chavez's back? Vinokourov was right to point out cycling was at least partly a team sport and a good team nearly always wins. Strong partners turned out to be a key factor in Nibali's eventual success. Tanel Kangert, Michele Scarponi and Jakob Fuglsang – all pulled out and secured and laid a solid foundation for the club's victory.

What about Nibali? He showed he was the strongest in the race and at its critical moment demonstrated an incredible will to win. The Italian captured more than a minute and a half from Chavez to overtake the Colombian in the overall standings. Valverde took third place, leaving Kruijswijk behind the podium.

"At times I thought everything had been lost. But at the same time, I understood that the race was not over yet. I knew that something could change in the last week. I never gave up. During the last Tour

de France I had bad days. But I always try to come back. This Giro was crazy – I felt the pressure on me as a favourite to win. The race itself was exhausting. But I coped with this pressure and we created a big show [and drama]," said Nibali following the race.

Astana Pro Team's sports director Alexandre Shefer called the victory one of the most difficult for the Kazakhstan-backed squad in recent years.

"The team worked brilliantly. The entire Giro we were up and down. But the last two days were spent on the maximum. Frankly, many did not expect this result. For Vincenzo, one day was normal and another was not. But yesterday he showed his class and has set the bar high. Of course this is his victory first of all, but also of the entire team, of all the guys who believed in him to the end and worked hard to secure his success," he said.

FIBA 3x3 U18 World Championships Completed in Astana

By Zhazira Dyussembekova

ASTANA – The Qatar men's team and France's women's team were the winners of the 2016 International Basketball Federation (FIBA) 3x3 U18 (under 18) World Championships. The tournament was held June 1-5 in the capital.

"Exciting, urban and innovative, 3x3 is inspired by several forms of streetball played worldwide and is considered the world's number one urban team sport. Steered by FIBA, games see two teams of three players face off on a basketball half-court," noted the event website.

Usually known as streetball or street basketball, the game has gained the popularity throughout the world. Kazakhstan has followed the trend and two teams represented the country at the tournament.

Qatar defeated Brazil in the finals, 20-12. Italy beat last year's champion New Zealand, 21-14, in the bronze medal game.

Similar to 2015, France and the US met in the finals. The French team stayed undefeated in the tournament, defeating the Americans, 21-12. Spain and the Czech Republic met in the game for third place, with Spain winning, 18-12.

In addition to the team event, the championship had three individual contests.

"The number one 3x3 player in the U18 women's category, Veronika Kanyasi, dominated the skills contest in every round. Julia Niemojewska (Poland) won silver and Nathaly Pinelo won the first-ever medal for Guatemala at a 3x3 event," said the press release.

In the shoot-out contest, Poland's Weronika Nowakowska won gold, Hamish McDonald (New Zealand) struck silver and Robert Füzi collected bronze.

Belgium's Zaccharie Mortant captured the gold, while Alberto Perez (Spain) earned a silver medal and Krisztofer Durazi from Hungary gained the bronze in the dunk contest.

In the final standings, Kazakh-

stan took 11th place among 20 countries. The men's team was represented by Kamal Aubakirov, Bakhtiyar Namazabayev, Artem Parfenov and Ilyas Zhunusov.

On the first day of the championship, the team defeated Romania, 17-12, before losing to Italy, 19-14.

Two days later, the Kazakhs beat Indonesia, 15-12, but were topped by Qatar, 21-9.

Madina Baibolekova, Railya Mybarakova, Karina Olenberg and Luiza Zukova composed the women's team.

The girls began June 2, winning against the Netherlands, 12-11, but losing to Italy, 21-6.

The team ended its run on the final day, defeated by the USA, 19-14, and Poland, 12-10.



Kazakh National Team

Kazakhstan Ranks First at AIBA Women's World Championships

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

ASTANA – The city's Barys Arena played host May 19-27 to the AIBA Women's World Boxing Championship and the host country ended the event with the top ranking.

The tournament's lineup featured not only defending world champions, but also Olympic champions and many younger talents. Combined, they held what became arguably the strongest tournament in the 15 years of its existence.

The eight days culminated in amazing finals that produced 10 deserving winners. In addition to the title of world champion, licenses to the Rio Olympics were contested in the flyweight, lightweight and middleweight categories.

The final bouts featured representatives of 13 countries. Kazakhstan took first team place with four gold medals, followed by China with two and one each for the athletes from France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States.

Kazakhstan's Nazim Kyzaibai, opposed in the final by China's Yuyan Wang, retained her title in the lower weight category up to 48 kg. The fight was tense, but thanks to the

support of the home fans Kyzaibai managed to win.

"I am happy that I won today. In all the matches, I tried to show my best qualities. I won thanks to all the fans who have supported me throughout the championship," she said after the fight.

The second gold for the Kazakh team was captured by Dina Zholaman (54 kg), who defeated experienced Bulgarian athlete Stoyka Petrova.

In an unexpected turn, another world champion was the debutant of the competition, when Kazakh Valentina Halzova was opposed by China's Gu Hong in the final. With an enormous advantage in the form of fierce support from the host fans, Halzova brought the country its third gold in the tournament.

The home team also got the victory in the heavyweight category (more than 81 kilogrammes). The gold went to Lyazzat Kungeibayeva in a hard-fought contest with Shahdasia Green (USA).

Zhayna Shekerbekova reached the finals in the up to 60 kg weight category, winning a ticket to this year's Games.

As anticipated, American Olympic champion Claressa Shields (75 kg)

defeated Nouchka Fontijn (Netherlands) in the final. China's Yang Xiaoli (81 kg) also took the gold after her win in the finals against Kaye Scott (Australia).

"Once again, we have seen a remarkable development and a healthy state of women's boxing championships. My congratulations to all the boxers who were part of this amazing event, particularly to the new world champions. With every tournament, the quality of boxing and organising effort keeps improving and the Kazakhstan Boxing Federation no doubt organised the best Women's World Championship in the 15-year-old history of the competition," said AIBA President Dr. Ching-Kuo Wu after the closing ceremony.

Kazakhstan Boxing Federation Executive Director Bekzhan Bektenov noted the nation was pleased to have held the event.

"Kazakhstan is very proud of its history of boxing and was honored to host the AIBA Women's World Championship, which will go down in the history of our sport. I thank AIBA for entrusting us with confidence in our abilities and we look forward to continuing to work together in the future. Women's boxing now looks stronger than ever," he said.

Astana Arlans Fall in WSB Semifinal in London

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

ASTANA – Last season's champions of the AIBA World Boxing Series the Astana Arlans, part of the Astana Presidential Professional Sports Club, were defeated in this year's World Series Boxing (WSB) semifinals by the British Lionhearts by a score of 3:7. The two-day match took place in London May 26-27.

On the first day, Zhomart Yerzhan (49 kg) fell to Galal Yafai, 0:3; Nursultan Koshegulov (56 kg) was stronger than Peter McGrail, 2:1; Samat Bashenov (64 kg) gave way to Pat McCormack, 0:3; Meyirim

Nursultanov (75 kg) defeated Troy Williamson, 2:1; and Mukhamedzhan Erkin (91 kg) lost to Josip-Bepo Filipi, 0:3.

The Brits increased their advantage on the second day and eventually secured their victory. Azamat Isakulov (52 kg) lost to Koryun Soghomonyan, 0:3; Zakir Safullin (60 kg) lost to Luke McCormack, 0:3; Nurdaulet Zharmanov (81 kg) was defeated by Radoslav Pantaleev, 0:3, and Kamshybek Kunkabaev (+91 kg) was beaten by Frazer Clarke, 0:2. The only victory for the Kazakh boxers on the day came from Aslanbek Shymbergenov (69 kg), who defeated Joshua Kelly 2:1.

"All of the guys boxed well and fought to the end. Unfortunately, we could not win. Boxing in away matches is always twice as difficult as it is at home. The match in London proved this. The boys fought worthy fights and many Kazakhs living or studying in London gathered to support us. We are thankful to everyone who backed our team. We reached the semifinals; I think that the season as a whole was fairly good for our team," commented Astana Arlans Director General Serik Sapliyev.

In the WSB finals, the British Lionhearts will meet Cuba's Dromadores, who in the second semifinal eliminated the Uzbek Tigers, 10:0.



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 24 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.

For more information and a video on Kazakhstan's initiatives, please visit mfa.gov.kz.



WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016

Foreign Investors Council Focuses on Astana Int'l Financial Centre

By Yerbolat Uatkhano

ASTANA – The Foreign Investors Council devoted to the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC) took place in Astana on May 27. President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan along with European Bank for Reconstruction and Development President Sir Suma Chakrabarti, who co-chair the council, and numerous CEOs from some of the world's largest companies discussed the future of the AIFC as a financial centre in the heart of Eurasia.

"Thinking about the future we definitely want to see the Astana International Financial Centre attract investments, assets and innovations. It is called to become a financial gate for the entire Eurasia," the Kazakh President said, highlighting that Astana would develop as a business, cultural and scientific centre and have all up-to-date transport and logistics system. "We believe that the Astana International Financial Centre must serve as an anchor conducting reforms and developing the domestic financial sector. Some financial centres, like Dubai, decided to separate their activity from the in-



ternational financial sector. But we believe that the Astana International Financial Centre and domestic market must develop together and we will work on this together with you," Chakrabarti said.

President Nazarbayev noted the composition of the council, which includes top executives from diverse companies such as Chevron, ExxonMobil, Total, Anadolu Group, Sembol, METRO Cash&Carry, PolPharma, Cameco and Sberbank of Russia among others, has been expanded in recent years, which proves the interest of international business communities in Kazakhstan and the constant inflow of foreign in-

vestments in the state. He also emphasised that the EBRD has been a good partner for Kazakhstan for 20 years.

EBRD President Chakrabarti stated that the EBRD considers the Foreign Investors Council an effective mechanism to attract foreign investors and promote reforms in Kazakhstan and noted the high level of interaction in agriculture and food production. He emphasised the importance of creating the AIFC for EBRD's activities and expressed interest in the privatisation process in the state.

"Kazakhstan is our fourth largest market out of 36 we are working on. These investments, of

course, are provided under the reforms launched by President Nazarbayev," Chakrabarti said.

According to him, the EBRD will assist the AIFC in establishing regulation frameworks, strategies and other elements, as per the bilateral memorandum.

"This memorandum will help us establish adequate regulation frameworks in such sectors as capital market, currency market and corporate management. Our experts have already held seminars with the AIFC on development of stock exchange and capital markets. Half of our financing procedures in Kazakhstan are carried out in national currency," highlighted the EBRD president.

Chakrabarti assured that a team of EBRD experts would move to the EXPO 2017 facilities, where the AIFC is to be set up, as soon as possible.

"We know such centres as Tokyo, London and New York. We do not have to think about comparing us to these centres, yet. First of all, we have to conquer our region that lacks such centres and then show our potential to other regions. We create unprecedented conditions with nothing close anywhere in the post-Soviet space for attract-

ing international participants to the financial sector," the Kazakh President said, expressing his hope that Astana will rightly become the hub in the chain of world financial centres.

"The key task for Kazakhstan over the nearest future is forming the new model of economic development, which will allow to join the top 30 developed countries of the world. We have to take the right measures now, and this is exactly what we are doing, and will be doing in future," he added.

"I invite you, members of the Foreign Investors Council, to take an active part in the creation and work of the centre and promote it abroad. Being friends of Kazakhstan and heads of the world's largest companies, you can spread the word in your countries about this important initiative on the territory of the Eurasian continent," President Nazarbayev said.

"Kazakhstan is ready to consider and support all your proposals on partnership within the framework of the centre. I am sure that our cooperation will facilitate the sustainable, social and economic development of Kazakhstan and the entire region," he added.

Baker & McKenzie Global Executive Committee member Erik Scheer is a strong supporter of the project. He said, "One of the key elements for the AIFC will be the new court and new arbitration centre for financial and investment disputes. They are critical to

the success of the financial centre, because if we doubt the independence and transparency of the judicial system to [decide] our disputes fairly by qualified and impartial judges with decisions coming in force both inside and outside of Kazakhstan, investors may be reluctant to participate in the Astana Financial Centre. And the centre may fail to live up to its potential."

According to experts, the total cumulative effect from the creation of the centre, its regional expansion could reach about \$40 billion over the next 10 years.

The new financial centre will be at the site of the EXPO 2017 international exhibition, which means all facilities built as part of the expo will be used to generate income under the new project. Participants of the centre and its staff will be exempt from paying taxes. They will also benefit from a simplified visa and labour regime. The independent court will guarantee the protection of investors' rights.

President Nazarbayev proposed to have the theme of the next council called "New Energy" and hold it right on the territory of the exhibition within the framework of the opening of the expo.

The Foreign Investors Council was established in 1998 to ensure dialogue between the Kazakh government and foreign investors and discuss issues investors face. The council has 38 members from among foreign companies and top Kazakh officials.

Business Centre Head: I Love Astana, I Miss Astana, This Is My Problem

By Yerbolat Uatkhano

ASTANA – Kaskad Business Centre head Huseyin Sahin is a prominent representative of the city's medium-sized businesses. The high level of corporate activity in the Kazakh capital attracts businesspeople throughout the world and renting commercial space is considered quite profitable.

"I studied in Turkey. My specialty is economy, but my background is hotel business. Also, I studied in the USA, attending general manager programmes. I came to Kazakhstan as a member of the Intercontinental [Hotel] opening team in 1998. I can say that my business comes from the hotel field. Of course, you can say what is the connection between hotels and the business centre. Actually, I think that our business is a kind of a hotel, but hotel guests move quickly. Our guests move much more slowly. But we actually provide almost the same services here," he said.

Kaskad Business Centre is considered one of the best in the city and Sahin noted the most important thing is how its administration solves clients' problems and takes action: on time or not. Using his experience from the hospitality sector, he emphasised it is crucial to know whether a client is satisfied.

"As for me, the most important subject is a guest. It doesn't matter, hotel guest or business centre guest.

All our staff members are constantly trained. We have weekly trainings and monthly trainings," he said.

Sahin, who hails from Istanbul, has been living in Kazakhstan for 18 years. He has no problem residing in his adopted nation.

"Actually when I go to my country I have problems, because I am missing Kazakhstan. This is a problem. My home city is Istanbul, where almost 20 million people live and move. When I come to Astana, I feel that I am on vacation. I have enough free time for myself after work. I go to a gym after 6 p.m. and spend time with my children. The situation is absolutely opposite in a big city, where you have to organise your time very properly. You have to make a choice to go somewhere to spend time with your family. I love Astana. I miss Astana. This is my problem," he said.



Huseyin Sahin

When they arrived in June 1998 Sahin and his team experienced many universal issues, beginning with being a local or an expat.

"In the beginning we had a language problem, as we didn't know Russian and only few staff members spoke English. That is why I am here. I am here to solve problems. The best thing in my work is to see how my staff members grow and get better and better positions. The most important thing for me is to also witness how they get promoted to high positions," he said.

Sahin originally found the capital to be a small city with two ma-

is a great place for many types of activities and a client can spend 24 hours in it. The team showed their guest that a hotel is an enjoyable place," he added.

He noted Kazakhstan was a "brilliant market" for businessmen in 1990s, as President Nursultan Nazarbayev opened the nation's doors to all businesspeople.

"As of today, EXPO 2017 is brilliant for businessmen. Businesspeople come to the country and every year you can see that business activity is growing," said Sahin.

He stressed the significance of providing superior service for his clients.

"I don't think it is hard to compete with other business centres in Astana. The most important thing for me isn't to sign a rent agreement. The most important thing is to furnish services after the signing of the agreement. There is a big difference in how you provide services: properly or not, in full or not," he said.

While Turkey is his motherland, Sahin considers Kazakhstan to be his second home.

SAHIN: "Kazakhstan was a 'brilliant market' for businessmen in 1990s, as President Nursultan Nazarbayev opened the nation's doors to all businesspeople."

major streets, Abai and the Republic Avenue, and with nothing on the left bank. The Intercontinental, then the tallest building, was the only one visible from the Astana airport.

"Now you can't see it. I came for two years and I was sure that I would go back after my contract expired, but I have now lived here for 18 years," he said.

He added he has seen a remarkable evolution in the capital.

"Now in 2016 I can't say 100 percent, I say 300 percent change in the city, because the population grew up and education greatly improved. People became more educated and highly skilled. They know much more about the world, because they travel and understand what Kazakhstan is and what it means for the world," he said.

The Intercontinental was the city's first five-star hotel.

"People in Astana thought a hotel was just a sleeping place, but my team had to show that a hotel

"My wife is from Kazakhstan. My kids were born in Astana and all of them have Kazakh passports. We are Kazakh already. I would like to call Kazakhstan people to be more mobile and contributing to their state. I would like to call them to think how they can develop their country, make it better and improve our economy," he said.

"Also, I want to show our Kazakhstan culture to all visitors of EXPO 2017. People from dozens of states will arrive and we should show them the highest level of services in airports, hotels and restaurants. We should show what Kazakhstan is. Actually, all details are very important. Foreigners will come and they will see our culture, our food and facilities. All of us, I am speaking as a Kazakh, should show who we are and show our positive attitude and the world should see that our state handled EXPO very well and the state and its economy is ready to handle any big function," he said.

Uber Launches Service in the Capital

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Uber has big plans for Kazakhstan and took its first step June 10 launching service in the capital.

According to Deputy Akim (Mayor) Malika Bekturova, the Kazakh authorities have been negotiating with the company for quite some time. Uber's non-cash payment method fits with the government's payment transparency policy.

"The transparency of Uber will aid in the further development of small and medium-sized business, bring revenue to the state budget and introduce one more world brand to the market," she told local media.

"Our start-up is dynamically developing and growing," said Uber General Manager in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Alexei Stakh.

"We [operate] in over 400 cities and 70 countries around the world. We are very glad to enter the Kazakhstan [market] starting with the capital. ... Today we see how the government welcomes innovations that improve the existing scope. We will undertake all measures so Kazakhs would receive the service they expect," he added.

Uber can be downloaded from either the Apple Store or Google Play Market while the affordable

uberX, with vehicles of comfort class, will be the first service for the residents of the capital; these include such makes of cars as Toyota Camry, Hyundai Accent and Kia Rio in excellent condition and no older than 7 years.

According to forbes.kz, it will cost 170 tenge (US\$0.51) to call

Mall would cost around 400 tenge (US\$1.2). The trip from the shopping center Duman to the Astana Mall on the right bank would cost about 500 tenge (US\$1.5). From the Palace of Peace and Harmony to the train station a trip can be estimated at around 650 tenge (US\$2).



a cab, 40 tenge (US\$0.12) per one kilometre and five tenge (US\$0.01) per minute, where the kilometres and the timing are summed up at the end of the trip.

So the trip from the House of the Ministries to the Khan Shatyr

After each trip, drivers can be evaluated by customers on a scale of one to five, where one is terrible and five is excellent. Uber monitors drivers with bad reviews and suspends unsatisfactory performers.

