

Astana Celebrates 18th Birthday with a Week of Arts, Sport, Craft Shows



By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – This year, the capital of Kazakhstan celebrated its 18th birthday. The official holiday is July 6, but the city celebrated for more than a week. Guests and residents could join the party by attending any of the numerous events throughout the city.

“A capital reflects the life of a particular state, concentrating everything that is best in any country. The capital is the backbone of every nation. Astana has become that metropolis in Kazakhstan,” said Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev during a July 5 reception dedicated to the Day of Capital, adding that he congratulates all the

people in Kazakhstan on the holiday and wishes them success, happiness and well-being. “The founding of the new capital is a golden page in the entire history of the independence of our Motherland. Astana for us is an inspiring symbol of unity, solidarity, faith in our own strength, incredible opportunities for our people.

The spirit of Astana weaves together ancient traditions; the wisdom and creativity of the people; the past, present and future of Kazakhstan. Our capital is like a mirror reflecting the dramatic changes that have occurred in our state, economy and society during the years of independence,” he added.

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Five Caspian Foreign Ministers Meet in Astana

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – The foreign ministers of five Caspian Sea states are set to meet in Astana July 13 to discuss the draft Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea and preparations for the fifth Caspian Summit to be held in Kazakhstan. The Caspian Summit is to be attended by the foreign ministers of the Caspian littoral states, includ-

ing Elmar Mammadyarov of Azerbaijan, Mohammad Javad Zarif of Iran, Sergey Lavrov of Russia and Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov. Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov is to host the meeting. Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan have been negotiating the legal status of the inland body of water since

the early 1990s, when the issue arose following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the appearance of four new states on its shores. During the negotiation process, Kazakhstan has followed a compromise approach that takes into account the interests of all riparian countries, according to its foreign ministry. For this reason, Kazakhstan’s position on the main aspects of the

legal status of the Caspian Sea was used as an official document of the United Nations (UN) in 1997 and to date remains consistent and unchanged. Kazakhstan’s approach is based on the need to establish the territorial waters, fishing zones and common water space in the Caspian Sea in accordance with the provisions of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to ensure the political and economic interests of the littoral countries. Concerning delimitation of the Caspian Sea bottom, Kazakhstan adheres to the position that it should be divided among the littoral states on the areas within which they have the sovereign right to conduct exploration and development of the natural resources of the Caspian shelf.

Earlier, Idrissov suggested it would be advantageous to carry out delimitation of the Caspian Sea in accordance with existing international methods and practices based on the agreement of neighbouring states, taking into account generally-recognised norms of international law. On July 12, Idrissov held bilateral talks with Lavrov. They discussed Kazakh-Russian cooperation in the political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres. The ministers paid particular attention to the interaction between the two countries in the international arena in the framework of Kazakhstan’s election to a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2017-2018. In this context, Idrissov and Lavrov discussed global and regional issues of mutual interest. The two also discussed cooperation within international organisations and integration associations. The Kazakh Foreign Ministry categorised the meeting as constructive and reaffirming the strategic and allied nature of Kazakh-Russian relations.

President Congratulates Nation on Winning Seat on UN Security Council

By Arnur Aubakirov

ASTANA – President Nursultan Nazarbayev called Kazakhstan’s election as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018 a “historic achievement.” “Kazakhstan’s election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council is a historic achievement. This is not only our country’s success but that of the entire sub region of Central Asia, which had never been represented in the body responsible for international peace and security. Kazakhstan was elected a member of the UN Security Council for the next two years. It will be a difficult period in international relations and it can be seen nowadays. In addition to long-standing conflicts,

the world has faced an unprecedented scale of new security threats. We will make a significant contribution to finding solutions to global problems. Stability and security in the world – that’s what we want for all our citizens,” Nazarbayev said in his televised statement on June 29. He also underlined that this is why Kazakhstan would take advantage of its chance to make the future more confident and prosperous for all. “We intend to draw the global community’s attention on our initiatives. They aim to build a world free from nuclear weapons and from the virus of war and conflicts. Kazakhstan will work to achieve this noble goal for the centenary of the United Nations in 2045.

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Chevron Approves \$36.8 billion Tengiz Field Expansion Project

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – A group of oil companies led by Chevron have approved a \$36.8 billion plan to boost production at Kazakhstan’s Tengiz oil field, the largest oil field in the world, Reuters.com reports. The field already accounts for more than a third of Kazakhstan’s total crude output. The first oil as a result of new expansion is expected in 2022. “The Future Growth and Well-head Pressure Management Project (FGP-WPMP) represents an excellent opportunity for the company. The project builds on a record of strong performance at Tengiz and will add value for Chevron and its stockholders,” said Chevron Chairman and CEO John Wat-

son, according to a July 5 Chevron press release. Tengizchevroil (TCO) began exploring expansion under a new Future Growth Project (FGP) in 2012 and the Tengiz expansion is the biggest final investment decision in the oil industry this year, the Chevron press release and Reuters.com state. The project’s cost breaks down to \$27.1 billion for facilities, \$3.5 billion for wells and \$6.2 billion for contingency and escalation. Tengizchevroil General Director Ted Etchison said the project would be financed by a combination of funds from the company, contributions from partners and borrowing, Reuters writes.

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Fitch Ratings Affirms KazMunayGas at ‘BBB’ with Stable Outlook

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – International rating agency Fitch Ratings has affirmed National Company KazMunayGas’s (NC KMG) Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at ‘BBB’ with a Stable Outlook, according to a June 30 press release. “We rate National Company KazMunayGas on a top-down basis one notch below Kazakhstan (BBB/Stable), reflecting its strong links to the Kazakh state. The support factored into this rating includes an expectation that, in addition to the funds provided for the company’s debt reduction

programme in 2015, the state will over the medium term run NC KMG with a financial profile that gives it some standalone resilience to shocks,” the Fitch Ratings press release stated. Fitch stressed that the rating approach is mainly based on the expectation that Kazakhstan “will provide sufficient and timely tangible support to the group when needed,” adding that “the absence of an explicit state guarantee for a significant portion of KazMunayGas’s debt prevents full rating alignment between Kazakhstan and NC KMG, despite their strong strategic and operational links.”

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NATION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Nazarbayev Visits Numerous Astana Facilities, Launches New Projects



Photo credit: kazpravda.kz

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – President Nursultan Nazarbayev visited June 30 and was introduced to the work at the capital’s transport and logistics hub, GLB home construction factory, Tulpar Talgo factory, Olympic Water Sports centre and Forte Bank’s new building. He launched a number of projects during a teleconference dedicated to the industrialisation outcome summary for the first half of 2016 on July 1.

The head of state began with the hub’s performance and simplified customs processing zone. He stressed the key role of the transport and logistics services market in the country’s industrial development.

“Representatives of foreign economic activity were previously issuing documents in three days, while this procedure is sim-

plified here, taking one to three hours. We have built a logistics centre on goods processing in Astana which is already loaded by 70 percent, the largest not just in Central Asia but also in Caucasus and Siberia. This is a big deal in our industrial and infrastructural development programme,” said Nazarbayev.

The President was introduced to the work at the rebar and forming plants and examined the exhibition pavilion at the GLB factory. He noted the need for broad use of the enterprise’s production capacities in implementing the state housing programme. He also commented on the plant’s social significance, as it provides jobs for about 1,200 people.

Nazarbayev was introduced to the work at Tulpar Talgo factory and examined one of the passenger wagons. He was updated on the growth rate of the railway mechan-

ical engineering sector and speed traffic development programme. The President noted the need to further increase domestic production for enhancing the efficiency of the country’s transport system.

“I have visited a number of Astana’s facilities created during the industrial development programme... Not only do we produce electric and diesel locomotives for the rail industry, but we also create modern cargo and passenger wagons. They are now used on passenger speed trains to various destinations. On the whole, the industrial park of Astana is developing very dynamically. We attract investment to this technology park and create conditions for the successful implementing of projects. Thanks to this, the city’s economy rises each year and the income to the budget increases,” said Nazarbayev.

The head of state concluded his

tour of the capital by stopping at the Olympic water sports centre in the multifunctional Ice Palace. Viewing the young athletes’ show on springboard, water polo and synchronised and speed swimming enabled him to fully assess the centre’s capabilities.

The President continued the conference by launching production of K5 ecological class motor fuel in Aksai, West Kazakhstan region, reported BNews.kz. He noted the project was implemented with the support of the Development Bank of Kazakhstan.

“We will be producing over 200,000 tonnes of high quality petrol, which will practically eliminate the region’s dependence on fuel and lubricants import,” he said.

Nazarbayev also launched several facilities in Ekibastuz including a modernised oil and fat factory, production facility for railway ax-

les and wheel sets and greenhouse complex raising Dutch roses.

“A factory for producing wheel sets is a completely new and necessary product that we have not produced in Kazakhstan. The main thing is that a very big percent of localisation, our metal and cast iron, is being used there and our developing railway industry plays an exceptional role. Kazakhstan is becoming an East to West transportation hub. I congratulate you!” he said, according to Zakon.kz.

Enterprise representatives noted the factory will produce up to 20,000 wheel pairs and 42,000 railway axles per year. The greenhouse created 70 jobs, with products to be exported to Russia, added the website.

The manufacturing capacity of the oil production complex is 120,000 tonnes of product per year, which will fully meet Kazakhstan’s demand in fats. The facility created 750 new jobs.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

The Ministry of Education and Science is planning to update Kazakh language textbooks, according to its press service. Kazakh will be taught on the basis of foreign language and the system will have several levels, from basic to advanced. The new methodology, tested as a pilot project in 40 national secondary schools, will be introduced in all schools in September. Professor and Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences Fauziya Orazbayeva said the textbooks proved their efficiency in all aspects. Students began to speak and even adults can learn the language. Teachers are reportedly pleased with the new method.

Astana hosted the first international biennale of artists, as Kazakhstan’s best masters of fine art met with their foreign colleagues, reported Kazakh TV. An exhibition of paintings by famous artists from France, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Russia and Switzerland was dedicated to the 25th anniversary of Kazakh independence and the upcoming EXPO 2017. City residents and guests had the opportunity to visit the exhibition and take part in the artists’ master classes. Astana Artists’ Union held an open-air event July 3 on the Yessil River bank close to Kenessary Khan Monument.

Kazakhstan will start production next year of various types of satellites. One of the world’s most up-to-date assembly and test centres, a design bureau and the national laboratory of space technology will be constructed on 30 hectares on Astana’s left bank. Five high-tech spacecrafts are initially expected to be produced annually. Kazakh Space Agency Chairman Marat Nurguzhin said the state has entered the top 30 countries which have their own space technology and will have advanced development of these systems in the future. In 2014, the country launched its own Kazeosat-1 remote sensing satellite and there are currently eight such devices in the Earth’s orbit. They provide full coverage not only of Kazakhstan, but the entire planet, and deliver high resolution satellite imagery. The launch of Kazeosat-2 and construction of ground-based satellite control has created a complete space system of remote sensing of the Earth.

The Kazakh National Choreography Academy will open Sept. 1 in Astana, reported Kazinform. Three of four campus buildings have already been commissioned and the main building will be operational in November. Approximately 1,600 children went through rigorous competition May 20-June 8, only 200 of whom were accepted. Director Gaukhar Aldamergenova said the selection panel paid special attention to talented children from vulnerable families and foster homes. There are plans for 118 students to pursue their bachelor’s degrees at the academy.

A kindergarten was built by Tengizchevroil in Atyrau under the Igilik charitable programme, according to Kazinform. The company cooperates closely with the Atyrau region administration. The kindergarten, commissioned in the region under the programme, is designed for 280 children. Regional Akim (Governor) Nurlan Nogayev said the kindergarten, with comfortable bedrooms and activity rooms, a playground, canteen, music hall and sports hall, is a great gift for Atyrau residents.

Prime Minister Karim Massimov assessed the quality of restoration works on the northern part of the Aral Sea during his business trip to Kyzylorda region, reported Pm.kz. He viewed implementation of the second stage of the project on regulation of the Syrdarya riverbed and preserving the northern part of the sea. Massimov took part in a meeting which also touched on restoration issues of the hydro-economic infrastructure.

Parliament Addresses Financial Sector, Citizens’ Issues

By Laura Tusupbekova

ASTANA – A joint meeting of the two chambers of Parliament took place June 30 under the chairmanship of Mazhilis speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin.

Summing up the outcomes of the sixth convocation of deputies, Nigmatulin noted the main priorities for their legislative work were defined by President Nursultan Nazarbayev in his state-of-the-nation address “Kazakhstan in the New Global Reality: Growth, Reform, Development” delivered Nov. 30, 2015.

The first meeting included three joint sessions of the chambers, 12 full sessions of the Mazhilis and six of the Senate. Forty-two draft bills were reviewed, 18 of which remained from the last convocation. Seven of the bills were initiated by the deputies.

By the end of the session, the Mazhilis approved 13 bills and forwarded them to the Senate. Parliament approved 12 bills and four have been already signed by the President and entered into force.

Nigmatulin mentioned the Law “On payments and payment systems,” as well as ratification of several international treaties that support the priorities of Kazakh foreign policy and are aimed at strengthening cooperation with foreign countries and international organisations in the financial sector, as well as regulating certain aspects in the framework of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries and Eurasian space. Certain realisation issues concerning the Nurlı Zhol state programme, along with developing the health care system, agrarian sector, local police and instituting private judicial enforcement, appeared to be the focus of the parliamentarians’ attention.

During the first session, the deputies devoted considerable time to addressing specific issues raised by the country’s population. Both chambers reviewed 115 deputy requests addressed to the government and other central government bodies. The appeals concerned a wide range of topics: the industrial-innovative development of the economy and finance; banking system; implementing state educational programmes; health and social pro-



tection and regional development and defence, law enforcement and information security, said Nigmatulin.

He also centred on the deputies’ work to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation, develop parliamentary diplomacy and promote the nation’s international initiatives.

“The fact that Kazakhstan was elected a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council proves the increasing authority and the role of our country in international relations. This event is a truly historic occasion. During the past 25 years, the country has evolved from the new member of this influential international organisation to the country that can participate in the work of its highest governing body. This decision was a sign of recognition of President Nazarbayev and his contribution to nuclear disarmament, dialogue between civilisations and cultures and support of trust between the countries and peoples of the world,” said Nigmatulin.

During the meeting, he added the head of state ordered the govern-

ment to develop a package of legislative initiatives in the next two months in the fields of combating terrorism and extremism, trafficking, sale and storage of weapons, control of migration and religious associations.

“We look forward to introducing these bills to the Parliament by the beginning of the next session. The members of both houses of Parliament are ready for coordinated work with the government in order to ensure the legal framework for the maintenance of national security, defence of peace and secure existence of our citizens,” said Nigmatulin.

The coming session will focus on effective legal support for the 100 Concrete Steps programme. Specific Mazhilis deputies will be appointed for all the adopted bills concerning implementation of the five institutional reforms. They will monitor the enactment process and, if necessary, proactively propose measures for further improvement. The general monitoring will be executed by the chairmen of the relevant Mazhilis committees.

The active participation of Mazhilis and Senate deputies to

raise awareness among the population concerning the need for laws aimed at the country’s sustainable development will be the most important part of the work, said Nigmatulin. He added they will provide a rigid, systematic and effective monitoring of compliance with the law to implement the President’s orders.

Speaking about cooperation with the government, the chairman said representatives of the executive branch are expected to take responsibility to beneficially cooperate with deputies and ensure the introduction of high-quality legislation.

In order to improve Parliament’s informational transparency, direct online broadcasting of Senate and Mazhilis sessions will resume in fall when the chambers return to work. They will be available on the Parliament website.

“The deputies of both chambers are ready for the dialogue, interested in contact with representatives of civil society and the media and are ready to discuss any topic, any issues of concern of our citizens today,” added Nigmatulin.

Changes aimed at strengthen-

ing the role of deputies and deputy groups in the legislative process will be also introduced to the Parliament’s order.

Talking about the current economic environment in the world, Nigmatulin emphasised the fact that the feature of Kazakhstan’s way means that even in the most difficult situations there is always a promise for new opportunities. By following a concrete plan of action, the nation can be led to success.

“During the previous 25 years, Kazakhstan was moving towards a better future in accordance with the strategic plan of the Kazakh President and the current period is no exception. Today, we have a comprehensive anti-crisis programme and a set of structural reforms which provide an adequate response to the challenges of the new global reality and will ensure sustainable growth of the national economy in the difficult geopolitical situation. As a result, we will not only overcome new challenges, but also become strong and more competitive after the crisis is over,” said Nigmatulin.

The parliamentary recess will last from July 1-Aug. 31.

EXTERNAL
NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan’s foreign trade turn-over amounted to \$18.23 billion in January–April 2016, 29.8 percent less than in the same period in 2015, Ranking.kz reports. Mutual trade with countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) dropped 1.4 times and accounted for \$3.62 billion during the period. Kazakhstan’s exports, of which 72 percent were fuel and energy products, decreased by 31.2 percent to \$11.03 billion for the period. The state’s exports have been affected by the record global decline in oil prices in early 2016. Kazakhstan’s imports decreased by 27.7 percent and reached \$7.21 billion in January–April 2016 in comparison with the same period in 2015.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev spoke with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan by phone July 5, the press service of the Akorda reports. The Turkish president congratulated Nazarbayev on the Oraz Ait Holiday and Astana Day. The presidents discussed the priority directions of Kazakh-Turkish cooperation and outlined ways to increase interaction in the trade, economic and investment spheres. Erdogan highlighted his readiness to continue dialogue and close joint work on expanding bilateral relations.

A book titled “The Words that Changed the World” was presented in Moscow, with Charge d’Affaires of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Russia Marat Syzdykov, President of the Russian State University for the Humanities Efim Pivovarov and Director General of TASS news agency Mikhail Gusman taking part in the event. The book includes speeches by 45 outstanding people from different epochs of history, from Confucius to George Washington to Andrei Sakharov. The first words of the book are dedicated to Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his decision to close the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site.

TV projects by the Khabar Agency were presented at MIP-COM, the largest TV market exhibition, Kazakh TV reports. The major television event in Cannes brought together major companies in the television industry, including the BBC, ABC, Canal+, Warner Bros., Discovery and others. First Deputy Chairwoman of Khabar Agency Almagyl Ahmetzhanova said the main task of the company is to present content from Kazakhstan and bring it to the international market. She is sure that the company has already succeeded in this. Khabar Agency presented top-rated television projects at the exhibition. Khabar’s Director of the Programme Directorate Sandugash Rakhimzhanova said that TV experts from Korean, Arab and European TV companies are interested in Kazakhstan’s culture and Kazakh TV content.

Kazakhstan has ratified a convention with Saudi Arabia on avoiding double taxation, Kazakh TV reports. The agreement will create additional conditions for investment as well. Trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia reached \$268 million in the past 10 years and amounted to \$16 million in 2015. Refined copper and copper alloys are Kazakhstan’s main export products to Saudi Arabia; Kazakhstan imports pharmaceuticals and plastic from the country.

The number of Chinese companies operating in Kazakhstan increased by 35 percent over the last three years, Kazinform reports. The chiefs of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies reported that the gross inflow of foreign investments to Kazakhstan from China totalled more than \$10 billion in 2010–2015. China ranks fourth in the ranking of states investing in Kazakhstan’s economy. In the beginning of 2016, 2,500 companies with Chinese participation were registered in Kazakhstan, according to Kazakhstan’s Ministry of National Economy. More than 500 of them are joint Kazakh-Chinese companies.

President Congratulates Nation on Winning Seat on UN Security Council

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We will deal with the promotion of anti-terrorism initiatives I put forward during the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in 2015. Kazakhstan will also give impetus to resolving the issues of water, energy and

food security. These are all vital issues that everyone is concerned about,” the President of Kazakhstan stressed.

Nazarbayev also noted that participation in resolving modern key problems provides Kazakhstan with opportunities to develop relationships with many countries and regions.

“The election to the UN Security Council is a deserved success of the people of Kazakhstan,” the President continued.

“We are grateful to all countries that voted for the candidacy of Kazakhstan as a responsible state capable of promoting common val-

ues of peace and cooperation. I am sure that our country would worthily fulfill the honourable mission of ensuring representation in the UN Security Council. This will be another historic step on the way to becoming one of the most developed countries of the world and

building a secure and prosperous future. I would like to congratulate the people of Kazakhstan on this important event in the year of the 25th anniversary of independence of our country. This is a worthy event to rejoice for our country,” he concluded.

FM Outlines Priorities Following Historic Election to UN Security Council for 2017-2018

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – Following Kazakhstan’s election to a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for a two-year term starting Jan. 1, 2017, Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov made comments to the media June 28 on the country’s priorities and goals.

The minister thanked all the delegations for their vote of confidence and rendered trust, as well as noted the Kazakh delegation is very proud to be the first Central Asian country to serve on the UNSC.

Regarding the contributions Kazakhstan is planning to make to UNSC discussions, Idrissov spoke about the four proprieties of Kazakhstan’s programme – energy security, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, water energy and food security.

Highlighting Kazakhstan’s role as a mediator in the Ukrainian conflict, Idrissov was asked if the nation is ready to continue its part, taking into account Ukraine and Russia are both members of the UNSC now.

“Kazakhstan has never tried to take a role of mediator in the Ukrainian conflict. Our country



has friendly relations with both Ukraine and Russia.

When we have been asked to give our advice, we have always been happy to give this advice. We fully support the Normandy format for Ukraine and believe that the only way to bring long-wanted peace to Ukraine is to meticulously implement the Minsk agreements. We took part in producing the Minsk One and Minsk Two agreements. When there is an opportunity to present ourselves, Kazakhstan will be

prepared to a play positive role to resolve this very complex crisis,” he said.

Idrissov underlined that Thailand, the competitor from the Asian-Pacific group, mounted an exemplary campaign and noted the country is a great neighbour of Kazakhstan in regional and global affairs.

The Central Asian region is a young one on the political map, but still has a great history, he added. The region has much to offer and Kazakhstan will bring its priorities to the UN agenda.

When asked what Kazakhstan will add to the UN discussion concerning the development of landlocked countries, Idrissov said the main feature is the expansion of connectivity lines through the huge Eurasian space.

“Kazakhstan contributed a lot in this direction. We fully support the connectivity initiatives of China. We are part of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which carries a lot of potential to develop Eurasian connectivity lines to the north, east, south and west. Therefore, we will be promoting this agenda to the UNSC in the context of our developmental efforts,” he said.

Since June 2010, Kazakh diplomats have made consistent efforts

to bring practical information and the advantages of the country’s bid to the international community in order to obtain support from the widest possible range of UN member states.

Under the UN Charter, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for international peace and security, with all UN member states required to comply with council decisions, according to the UN News Centre. The council’s 10 non-permanent seats are allocated according to a rotation pattern set by the assembly in 1963 to ensure a proportionate representation over time from the different parts of the world: five from African and Asian states, one from Eastern European states, two from Latin American states and two from Western European and other states.

The General Assembly members voted by secret ballot June 28 for five seats divided by geographic grouping – three from Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, one from Eastern Europe and one from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Bolivia and Ethiopia, neither facing competition, were chosen by their regional groups. Kazakhstan was selected over Thailand for the seat reserved for Asia Pacific, while Italy, the Netherlands

and Sweden vied for two seats from Western Europe. Sweden was elected, while the Netherlands and Italy decided to split the seat and sit on it for one year each as none was able to win in the five rounds of voting.

The newly-elected countries will replace Angola, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain and Venezuela.

The Security Council has 15 members. The five permanent members, each with the power of veto, are China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The other current non-permanent members are Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay.

The Security Council is responsible for determining the existence of a threat against peace and responding to an act of aggression. It is charged with finding peaceful means to settle a conflict or dispute between states. In some cases, the council can resort to sanctions or even authorise the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The Security Council also makes recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the appointment of the Secretary-General and admission of new UN members, according to un.org.

Peaceful Foreign, Domestic Policy Led to Kazakhstan’s Election to UN Security Council, Minister Says

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov answered questions at the Central Communication Service (CCS) briefing July 5 devoted to Kazakhstan’s non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2017–2018.

“I firmly believe that the main reason of our victory links closely with a number of deep and meaningful global and regional initiatives of President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, as well as the objective recognition of the country’s achievements in socio-economic development and the implementation of a constructive internal and external policy,” the minister said.

He noted Kazakhstan’s activities in the Security Council during 2017-2018 will be based on priorities such as realising Nazarbayev’s anti-nuclear and anti-terrorist initiatives announced at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly and reflected in his manifesto “The World. The 21st Century.” The post will also provide the opportunity to focus on seeking solutions to the existing problems between the major powers and long-standing conflicts, primarily in Eurasia, Idrissov said.

Another important premise of Kazakhstan’s position is promoting global partnership for food, water, energy and nuclear security in the various regions of the world.

The involvement of the international community in solving Central Asian problems in the fields of regional security, combating terrorism and extremism as well as urgent economic and environmental issues are also among the country’s main priorities.



Photo credit: orcom.kz

Idrissov emphasised while membership in the Security Council is designed to address key issues of peace and security, it also provides new opportunities to develop Kazakhstan’s cooperation with the council’s permanent and non-permanent members to strengthen cooperation with traditional foreign partners and cultivate relationships with new partners in Oceania, sub-equatorial Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

When questioned about the impact of the election on the country’s national prestige, the Minister stated the image component was not the leading aim of the Kazakh bid. The UNSC is the most powerful and influential body in the UN with the responsibility of protecting world peace and security. He noted sitting on the Security Council will enable Kazakhstan to shape the agenda and decisions for

the best impact on the country and region.

Idrissov was also asked about the Nagorno Karabakh issue.

“The problem is complicated. The UN and the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe) approved relevant resolutions and efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict such as the Minsk group, co-chaired by France, the Russian Federation and the United States. I think there is no need to search for new mediators in resolving the conflict. The main challenge is to provide a clear implementation of these arrangements,” he said.

He also responded to a query about the recent terror attacks in Medina and Istanbul and the influence of those terrible events on tourism.

“Terrorism is a global threat with global effects that impact

on tourism. Due to the warming of Russian-Turkish relations, the tourism flow will be rehabilitated; however, we are preparing an official statement regarding security of our people abroad and will provide recommendations on visiting some countries,” he said.

The minister further shared that the Senate of the Kazakh Parliament, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), will present the conference “Building a Nuclear Weapon-Free World” Aug. 28-29 in Astana.

“President Nazarbayev has an audacious dream to make the world nuclear-free by the 100th anniversary of the UN (in 2045). This is a tremendously difficult task. Nevertheless, we know his unique ability to achieve goals. We hope that we will actively pro-

mote this ambition. In this regard, we invite leading parliamentarians and prominent politicians, as well as religious leaders and civil society representatives from around the world, to the conference to discuss further steps mankind needs to take to advance meaningfully towards global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament,” he said.

Michael Moller, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations and Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) and other influential figures have confirmed their desire to participate in the conference. It is expected also that The ATOM Project and its honorary ambassador Karipbek Kuyukov will participate in the event.

The last question was about a technical part of Kazakhstan’s membership, specifically regarding staff members who will serve in New York and at the ministry.

“Two years ago we created a special group, a so-called ‘task force,’ that consists of well-prepared and well-educated diplomats. However, we will provide training for our diplomats in cooperation with the UN to teach them all aspects of the work within the organisation,” Idrissov said.

Kazakhstan will join Bolivia, Ethiopia and Sweden for a two-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2017, becoming the first Central Asian country to be elected to the Security Council. Election to the UNSC is a vote of confidence in Kazakhstan, showing the international community the country is a good and stable partner, experts both in the country and outside have said.

ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Kazakhstan to Expand Export of Cars to Russia, Central Asia

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Kazakhstan plans to begin exporting cars to Russia and Central Asian countries over the next several years. Car production in the country will be localised by 50 percent, meaning at least 50 percent of their components will be produced locally, in the next three to four years, said Kazakh Minister of Investment and Development Zhenis Kassymbek during a July 1 meeting on the outcomes of industrialisation for the first half of the year.

Russian expert Sergei Mochalov points out the automotive industry in Kazakhstan was hit hard last year due to the global economic crisis. Factories had to revise operating formats and modes, however, production figures are recovering and enterprises are working with the same load, according to Ispf.ru.

The fluctuating tenge rate only complicated the situation, suggesting the need to reduce the dependence of car production on the currency rate by developing the industry and attracting new investors, the website says.

“No lesser than 200,000 units production by 2025 is being planned in car manufacturing,



Photo credit: Kapital.kz

achieving 50 percent localisation in the nearest three or four years

and the start of car exports to Russia and Central Asia. You now saw

at an exhibition that first export deliveries will begin this year,” said

Kassymbek, according to Kapital.kz.

Over five months, 2,636 vehicle units totaling 16.9 billion tenge (US\$50.1 million) were produced in the country, according to KazAvtoProm, Kazakhstan’s automotive industry union. About 1,199 automobiles (including freight transport and bus appliances) totalling 5.3 billion tenge (US\$15.7 million) were produced in May 2016, the news website writes.

Based on the results of May this year, output volume of passenger cars has almost doubled relative to April 2016 figures, amounting to 1,072 units and showing growth of 95 percent, the Kapital.kz report says.

Thus amidst the respective indicator of 2015, the production of passenger cars increased by 6.3 percent in May 2016. The production of lorries at Kazakhstan’s enterprises has grown by 35 percent relative to last year’s figures and amounted to 556 units over five months from the beginning of the year, according to the news report.

Mochalov expressed confidence that exporting Lada Kalina and Lada Granta cars assembled in Kazakhstan to Mongolia, Russia and Central Asia will have positive economic and integration outcomes, Ispf.ru reports.

Inflation Rate for First Half of 2016 was 4.6 Percent

Staff Report

ASTANA – The inflation rate in Kazakhstan for the first six months of 2016 was 4.6 percent, according to the press service of the Kazakh Ministry of National Economy.

Food prices increased 5 percent, non-food items 4.7 percent and paid services 4.1 percent. Since the beginning of the year, prices have increased for potatoes by 34.9 percent, cereals by 24.4 percent, black tea by 18 percent, sugar by 13.6 percent, bread by 11.6 percent, processed vegetables and cans by 9.3 percent.

Prices for fresh fruit increased 8.9 percent, for confectionery products 8.8 percent, for soft drinks 8.6 percent and for sun-

flower oil 8.1 percent. Prices for bakeries and flour products have increased 5.3 percent and for the poultry 4.5 percent.

Egg prices decreased 15.8 percent, raw milk got cheaper by 6.5 percent and fresh vegetables by 6 percent.

The increase in prices for pharmaceutical products was 12.9 percent, household appliances 7.9 percent, glass and ceramic products – 7.2 percent, goods of personal use 7 percent, detergents 6.8 percent. Prices for textiles increased 5.6 percent, cars 5.4 percent, clothing and footwear 4.6 percent, and furniture and household goods 2.9 percent.

The price level for healthcare services rose 7.3 percent, for kin-

dergartens 6.3 percent, restaurants and hotels 3.6 percent. In the area of recreation, entertainment and culture they rose 3.5 percent, hair-

dressing and personal institutions services 2.3 percent.

Prices for travelling by air transport increased 14.6 percent, by rail

for long distances 12.8 percent and tickets for busses got 6.2 percent more expensive.

In the sphere of housing and communal services, tariffs for sewers increased 19.8 percent, garbage collection 11.8 percent, cold water 8 percent, central heating 7.2, electricity – 4.9, gas transported through the distribution networks 4.8 and hot water 4.3 percent.

Kazakhtelecom Announces New Major Shareholder Ahead of Possible IPO



Staff Report

ASTANA – Sobrio Limited has bought a 24.47 percent stake in national telecom operator Kazakhtelecom, the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange (KASE) reported.

“Sobrio Limited became a new major shareholder of Kazakhtelecom as a result of the transaction made within the same group and acquired a stake from its affiliates – companies including Bodam B.V. and Deran Services B.V. from the Netherlands. Alexander Klebanov is the owner of these three companies,” said a KASE statement.

The deal was made “in order to improve the transparency and ownership structure of Kazakhtelecom in preparation for a possible IPO.”

At the end of 2015, Klebanov was 28th on Kazakhstan’s Forbes list of the 50 wealthiest business people in the country. He owns a third of the Central-Asian Power-Energy Company (CAPEC), 33 percent of the CAPEC Investment Group, 24.7 percent of Kazgipronefttrans Holding, 19.2 percent of the Investment Fund of Risky Investments CAPEC Invest, STV channel, the Tengrinews news portal, the Alash Ainas newspaper, the Tengri FM and Zhuldyz FM radio channels and part of KazAir Jet. In 2016, Klebanov sold the Seven TV channel to Kenes Rakishev, a prominent investor and fellow member of the Forbes list.



ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan’s agricultural output for the first quarter of 2016 totalled 193 billion tenge (US\$574 million), reported EnergyProm.kz. The physical volume index grew by 2.9 percent, which is considered to be a positive signal in the current economic situation. By the end of the quarter, the agricultural share of the total GDP reached 2.1 percent. In the first quarter of 2015, that share was only 1.9 percent. The growth output in the agricultural sector has significantly outpaced last year’s growth. The first rate reached 4.1 percent year to year, while the second accounted for 1.2 percent year to year. The sector’s share of the GDP grew accordingly, from 4.2 percent in 2014 to 4.7 percent in 2015.

Kazakhstan occupies 77th place this year among 160 countries of the world, according to the Logistics Performance Index, a ranking calculated by the World Bank. The position is 11 spots higher compared to 2014, reported the Ministry for Investment and Development press service. The nation is ahead of such Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries as Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan. The indicator measures the efficiency of supply chains in international trade and is assessed every two years.

The Kazakh construction sector has retained its investment attractiveness, according to Kazakh TV. The average investment growth rate in fixed assets reached 8.1 percent from 2011-2015. Investments in construction and installation works rose by 12.8 percent reaching 3.6 trillion tenge (US\$10.7 billion) in 2015, while in 2011 the amount reached only 2.2 trillion tenge (US\$6.5 billion). The highest investment growth rate in construction was recorded in 2014 and amounted to 20.5 percent. In the previous year, it totalled 7.4 percent. Growth rate in the spring was 29.3 percent.

The average solvency level in the Kazakh banking sector is growing, reported Kazakh TV. The share of liquid assets, including money, precious metals, correspondent accounts, deposits in other banks, requirements for the central bank and securities, reached 21 percent in April. The amount of liquid assets in second-tier banks (STBs) total assets decreased to 15-16 percent during the last five years. The share of Kazakhstan’s ten largest banks also increased in the last year in the liquid assets sector. In the beginning of 2016, the share of the top ten banks in volume of STB liquid assets accounted for 67 percent against 54 percent a year earlier.

Kazakhstan’s large and medium processing enterprises are seeing growth, reported Khabar TV. Industrial companies increased the amount of tax payments, which reached 188 billion tenge (US\$559 million) from January-March. The number is almost three times higher than the same period in the previous year. In monetary terms, the increase amounted to 40 billion tenge (US\$119 million). Experts noted the large manufacturing sector showed a slowdown in tax collection last year, as 56 billion tenge (US\$167 million) less was paid to the budget.

First Credit Bureau presented an analysis of the mortgage market in the state in the first half of the year, according to kursiv.kz. Since the beginning of 2016, the total outstanding debt related to mortgage loans decreased by 0.7 percent and amounted to 1.34 trillion tenge (US\$4 billion). The average debt per borrower at the end of May reached 6.6 million tenge (US\$19,620), a 3.3 percent reduction compared to the beginning of the year. The average loan size for the period also decreased by 4.6 percent, accounting for 6.2 million tenge (US\$18,430). The ratio of loans to the number of borrowers has increased slightly during the period and amounted to 1.06. The credit load per borrower rose slightly compared to the results of 2015. By the end of May, outstanding debt on mortgage loans in foreign currency amounted to 380 billion tenge (US\$1.1 billion) and decreased by 7.9 percent compared to the beginning of the year.

BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

The number of ATM networks in the state decreased by almost 5 percent from January-May compared to the same period last year, reported ranking.kz. Half of the ATMs are concentrated in four areas: Almaty (19.3 percent), Astana (10.7 percent), Karaganda (8 percent) and East Kazakhstan region (7.8 percent). In May, approximately 15 million credit cards were in circulation and the number of bank card holders totalled 13.9 million. The volume of transactions in May increased by 22.8 percent to 827.9 billion tenge (US\$2.5 billion) compared to the same period last year.

The mobile banking market in Kazakhstan has become more and more popular and experts predict within a few years the growth in this financial services field will be in the range of 30-40 percent, reported Kazakh TV. Experts think Kazakh citizens' passion for high-tech gadgets, a growing confidence in online commerce and cashless payments are among the main trends boosting this market. Capital Bank Kazakhstan Chairman Gani Uzbekov said the state is among the top eight countries in the number of active SIM cards per 100 people. Kazakhstan ranks first in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and has entered the top three in mobile broadband Internet distribution. The level of cashless payments increased from 10 to 15 percent.

In May, the volume of investments in the communication services sector totalled 19.5 billion tenge (US\$58 million), 36.4 percent lower than the previous year, reported energyprom.kz. Experts say there is currently a fierce competition between mobile operators for consumer preferences due to saturation of the communication services market. Kazakhtelecom and Tele2 Group agreed to merge their mobile operator subsidiaries. A joint statement noted the action will strengthen the market position of both companies and provide consumers with new opportunities for improved mobile services.

The Kazakh banking sector hit a new record in equity capital, reaching 2.6 trillion tenge (US\$7.7 billion) at the end of April, according to Ranking.kz. After a slight decrease of 44 billion tenge in June 2015, the total equity capital of Kazakh banks has increased monthly by an average of 32 billion tenge (US\$95 million). The increase of equity capital provides consistent growth for Kazakhstan's banking sector. A sharp increase was recorded in the second half of 2015 and in August the volume of second-tier banks' assets increased by 11 percent, or 1.2 trillion tenge (US\$3.6 billion).

The Damu Fund and Almaty city mayor's office will assist local food producers by providing loans at subsidised rates, reported Kazakh TV. The fund and the office will provide one billion tenge (US\$3 million), which will be allocated for small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) engaged in the food industry under the Damu Onim programme. The funds will be allocated through second-tier banks. Loans with interest rates of 8.5 percent per year will be given to modernise and purchase new equipment and for capital replenishment. The maximum loan amount is 100 million tenge (US\$300,000), with a grace period of no longer than 18 months on principal loan repayment.

Atyrau Refinery exported 300 tonnes of benzol to Russia's Tula region for the first time, reported the refinery's press service. A test batch of benzol was produced in July 2015. To date, 1,000 tonnes of benzol have been produced at the refinery and there are plans to produce 500 tonnes of the product per month. A further increase in benzol production at the refinery will be possible after the complex is commissioned to produce aromatic hydrocarbons. Construction of the complex is complete. Benzol production at Atyrau Refinery also reduces the benzol content in gasoline, thereby decreasing the toxicity of car exhaust and reducing environmental pollution.

Fitch Ratings Affirms KazMunayGas at 'BBB' with Stable Outlook

Continued from Page A1

"NC KMG's 2015 performance in upstream, downstream and pipeline transportation was weak, mainly due to sharply lower Brent, high costs and lower dividends from joint ventures. The company's Fitch-calculated EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) dropped by 65 percent and dividends from joint ventures by about 40 percent, resulting in negative free cash flow (FCF) of 261 billion tenge (US\$1.2 billion) in 2015."

Fitch forecasts that the company's upstream EBITDA will start

growing only from 2017 due to Brent prices rising to \$45 per barrel in 2017 and \$55 per barrel in 2018.

The acquisition of KazMunayGas's 50 percent stake in Kashagan BV by the Samruk Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund was assessed by Fitch as "evidence of the tangible state support already incorporated into NC KMG's ratings."

Fitch also forecasts that in 2016-2017, the company's "funds from operations (FFO)-adjusted gross leverage will be above 10x, and if this is sustained we would expect to widen the notching down from the sovereign. We expect management to take clear steps to reduce

this leverage over the next year. If by the middle of 2017 there is no clear path to deleveraging towards 5x then negative rating action - an Outlook revision or downgrade - would be likely."

In 2016-2017, lower payouts from Tengizchevroil (TCO) and other joint ventures are expected due to lower Brent, weaker cash generation and TCO's multi-billion dollar expansion plans. "We forecast no dividends from Kashagan over the rating period as NC KMG will start repaying its debt related to the Kashagan acquisition after the project starts commercial oil production, which



Photo credit: Kapital.kz

we assume will occur in 2017," said the press release.

Fitch's key assumptions regarding the rating include that Brent oil prices will be \$35 per barrel in 2016, \$45 in 2017, \$55 in 2018 and \$65 thereafter; that the exchange

rate will be 360 tenge per dollar in 2016, 340 tenge in 2017, 320 tenge in 2018 and 300 thereafter; as well as stagnant oil and gas production, no dividends from Kashagan in 2017-2019 and no significant asset disposals in 2016-2019.

New Local Plant Produces Pipes to Last Forever

By Azamat Syzdykbayev

ASTANA - Kazakhstan has established a large-scale production of plastic pipes used for water supply, as pressure pipes for hydroelectric power plants, and in pumping stations, aqueducts and other irrigation systems.

According to Amitech Astana LLP Director General Ulan Sarsenkulov, the company has created more than 900 kilometres of pipes of different diameters. The plant supplies not only the domestic market but also exports pipes to neighbouring countries like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

"This year, our company has produced more than seven kilometres of pipes worth over \$5 million. Our company is a domestic commodity producer, which started operating in 2005. The project received financial support under the State Programme for Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development through the Kazakh Development Bank," said Sarsenkulov.



The bank has allocated more than \$10 million to run the company, and the debt owed to the bank was entirely paid off in 2010. In 2011, the company received the Altyn Sapa Presidential award in the nomination "The Best Enterprise for Production Purposes."

"The enterprise is part of the Amiantit holding, which includes 35 plants. Our work is based on Norwegian Flowtite technology. The raw materials are purchased only from companies accredited in our main office in Norway. The tar is imported from Poland and the fibreglass from

China. However, the domestic product share in general production composes 87 percent. The number includes labour force and silica sand extracted in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, all tangible and intangible assets of our company are also domestic," said Sarsenkulov.

The management of the enterprise is planning to begin exporting products to Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Seventy percent of the company's products are allocated for export and 30 percent for the domestic market.

"In Kazakhstan, we have re-

cently introduced new directions of supplies like Aktobe, Aktau and Kyzylorda," explained head of Amitech's Implementation Department Nariman Sharafutdinov.

Moletech Astana LLP is another manufacturer of PVC pipes and supplies Kazakhstan and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). These pipes are made of the same material used to produce plastic windows.

"Our pipes are made of polyvinyl chloride [PVC] based on molecular orientation technology brought to us from Spain. This technology was invented in 2010. The pipes are used for water supply and drainage. The pipes are 90 to 315 millimetres," said director of the plant Aibek Omuraliyev.

Half the plant's production is oriented toward external markets and half to domestic needs. The main export destinations are Central Siberia and the Central Asian region. It is also planned to expand exports to the northern regions of the Caucasus and China.

Omuraliyev also stressed the

main competitive advantages of their pipes, including their low cost, high quality and key physical and mechanical properties.

"We recycle 3,000 tonnes of PVC annually, which is equal to 6,000 polyethylene pipes. Our main clients are Gorvodokanal and production companies," said Omuraliyev.

Due to the heat treatment of the material, the PVC molecules are converted to a specific grid with very strong physical and mechanical properties. Common sewer pipes are very fragile, while it is impossible to break new pipes down. There is no expiration date for these pipes: while the seals and erasers need to be changed every 100 years, the pipes themselves will continue serving.

Omuraliyev also mentioned that raw materials are supplied by the Russian Rusvinil company. The plant is cooperating with a Russian partner because of the cost benefit, as it is profitable to do that given the exchange rate among the national currencies of Kazakhstan and Russia.

Kazzinc: Human Capital as Key Competitive Advantage

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA - Kazzinc is a major fully integrated zinc producer with considerable copper, precious metals and lead credits and a manufacturer of 23 types of finished products. The company Management states that a key competitive advantage is well-skilled, mobile and motivated human capital, with the company's focus on continuous improvement and innovation stipulated in its development strategy and policy.

"Yes, the situation in the global mining and metals industry is very complicated because of the decline in economic activity and metal prices, but due to the efforts taken by the Government and the company's Management, Kazzinc is overcoming the current difficult economic period with minimal losses," said a representative of the company's PR in an interview with The Astana Times.

The company employs more than 21,000 people in mining, processing, metallurgy, energy generation, etc. The range of products includes Zinc (304,500 t produced

in 2015), refined Lead (119,805 t), refined Gold (520,364 toz.), refined Silver (approximately 3.7 M toz), Copper Cathode (62,236 t) and related products.

History

In November 1996, the Kazakh Government had faced the fact that the nonferrous metallurgy enterprises it owned in East Kazakhstan region had been in decline.

Over the past 10 years, these companies had no money for reconstruction and upgrading and had not been able to maintain a cost-effective and balanced mine, concentrator and smelter operation.

As a result, the company was established in 1997 through the merger of three main non-ferrous metal companies in East Kazakhstan region to form Kazzinc. Glencore International AG, a world leader in production and sales of metals, minerals and energy and agricultural products, became the company's main investor.

Kazzinc began its operation as an integrated production company on February 1, 1997. With good financial support, Kazzinc consolidated

the efforts of hundreds of teams and thousands of people and became a major company in the region.

The Kazzinc Management emphasises the importance of the State Programme for Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development established and promoted by the Kazakhstan Government based on which the favourable investment climate is being established, the transparent tax system is under development that results in harmonised state-business relations.

Social Programmes

The company takes part in the economic and social development of Kokshetau, Kurchatov, Ridder, Serebryansk, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Zhyryanovsk and other towns and regions, contributing to education, health, sports and culture projects, facilitates the development of infrastructure and provides support to socially-vulnerable groups. In Ridder and Zhyryanovsk, Kazzinc has arranged shelters for children, provides assistance to orphanages and boarding schools and implements programmes to assist orphans and disabled people in East

Kazakhstan region. A joint project with the region's administration helped more than 150 children to find new families.

Kazzinc also supported the initiative of local authorities to provide 48 orphans with housing and decent professions, regularly transferring money to their accounts so that they would be able to buy an apartment when of lawful age. The company is committed to training the young people leaving orphanages in various specialties in its training centre and offering subsequent employment.

Local Content Development

In 2012, Kazzinc created a special department to develop local content under the memorandum of cooperation signed by the East Kazakhstan Region Administration, Damu Entrepreneurship Development Fund, the National Agency for the Development of Local Content, Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs and Nur Otan Party. Two years later, the company was recognised as a leader in

the acquisition of domestic goods and services and received the "Leader of Local Content" award at the Golden Hephaestus National Industry Competition.

Since 2013, the company has signed 63 memorandums with domestic producers for KZT 125 Bln (US\$370.6 M). In 2015, Kazzinc and the East Kazakhstan region administration inked a document on the acquisition of goods, works and services from regional companies for KZT 59 Bln (US\$175 M).

Investments in Science and New Technologies

Kazzinc cooperates with scientific centres in Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Russia and other countries to improve the existing technologies and develop new ones.

Along with cooperation with external research organisations, the company strives to develop and improve mining and metallurgical industry technology and environment using its research centres and laboratories which are outfitted with the up-to-date equipment.

Chevron Approves \$36.8 billion Tengiz Field Expansion Project

Continued from Page A1

"This project builds on the successes of prior expansions at Tengiz and is ready to move forward. ... It has undergone extensive engineering and construction planning reviews and is well-timed to take advantage of lower costs of oil industry goods and services," said Chevron Executive Vice President of Upstream Jay Johnson, according to the Chevron press release.

Sour gas injection technology that will help increase output to 850,000 barrels per day, 39 million tonnes a year, by 2022 is about to be applied, according to a joint statement made July 5 by the Kazakh Ministry of Energy and its foreign partners. With production peak rates, this index will exceed 900,000 barrels per day, as per the TCO press service.

"The future expansion project

of Tengizchevroil is indeed the biggest gift for the country. ... The investment amount is about \$37 billion. This covers creating 20,000 new jobs and increasing the volume of oil extraction by 12 million per year. And these are extra billions of dollars of income for our country," said Kazakh Minister of Energy Kanat Bozumbayev, Tengrinews.kz reports.

The consortium managing the

Tengiz oil field, Tengizchevroil, is a joint venture in which Kazakhstan holds a 20 percent stake via the KazMunayGas state oil and gas firm, Chevron owns 50 percent, ExxonMobil has 25 percent and LukArco the remaining 5 percent. TCO was formed by Kazakhstan's government and the Chevron Corporation in April 1993.

"This decision made by major international companies

re-affirms that Kazakhstan is a country with a favourable business climate where long-term investments can be made with confidence," Bozumbayev said, according to a TCO press release.

FGP-WPMP has completed the front-end engineering and design phase and 52 percent of the detailed engineering design and is currently engaged in early construction works onsite in Tengiz, the TCO press release reported.

EDITORIAL&OPINION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Kazakhstan Celebrates Historic Moment as UNSC Seat Secured

It is no understatement to say that the news that Kazakhstan had been successful in its bid to attain a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council was one of the defining moments in our recent history. Over the last 25 years, our country has transformed into a regional leader, serving as a source of stability in Central Asia as well as leading on important issues, such as nuclear non-proliferation. The six-year campaign to win the seat tested Kazakhstan’s diplomatic prowess, requiring Astana to deliver substantive examples of its commitment to global security and international cooperation. The work by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to build on Kazakhstan’s multi-vector foreign policy by reaching out to new allies and supporting old friends deserves a sincere commendation. Without their efforts, the bid would never have taken off. As Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted, participation in resolving modern issues gives our nation the opportunity to develop relationships with many countries and regions. The benefits of this activity are clear to see. Global power is no longer defined by the ability of countries to coerce each other into favourable courses of action, but to attract and inspire networks of allies for the benefit of all. Through its skilful campaign, Astana has built bridges around the world that will allow the country to work together to achieve a better future for our children. Stability and prosperity are the twin pillars on which this brighter future is based. Both cannot exist whilst conflict still rages around the world. President Nazarbayev’s dedication to ending the scourge of war was laid out in his recent Manifesto to “The World. The 21st Century.” The principles contained within it, along with the anti-terrorism initiatives that he put forward during the 70th

session of the UN General Assembly in 2015, are what our representatives will seek to draw the global community’s attention to over the course of our tenure. When speaking to media about Kazakhstan’s goals for the UNSC term, Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov wisely said, “The Central Asian region is a young one on the political map, but still has a great history.” As the first representative from Central Asia to sit on the Council, Kazakhs have a duty to raise the important issues that affect the entire region, but also to use hard-won experience to address the issues that concern the whole world. Namely food, water, energy and nuclear security. One of the defining characteristics of Kazakhstan has been our belief in dialogue over conflict and partnerships over division. Our multicultural society is in many ways the reason for this approach, which runs to the very core of our national psyche and is one of the reasons why we believed we deserved a seat at the top table of international security. However, we also understand the need to protect our citizens and interests at home and abroad. As recent events have shown from Aktobe to Istanbul and from Baghdad to Orlando, all countries must be prepared to stand against tyranny and terror wherever they emerge. The United Nations Security Council stands as the world’s foremost body capable of achieving global peace. International relations may be under strain at this moment in history, but it is through international cooperation that we will overcome these threats. Kazakh citizens can be rightly proud that their country will soon work shoulder to shoulder with the permanent members of the Council to help lead the world through this testing time.

Decision by Chevron, Partners to Expand Tengiz Is Sign of Hope for Oil Industry

By any measure, the global economy is in a fragile state. Growth and confidence were already weak before the decision by the UK to withdraw from the European Union, which added to the uncertainty. This shock has increased instability in markets far beyond Europe. Investment decisions across the world are being delayed, which, in turn, may have a further damaging impact on long-term growth. It is against this sombre background that the decision July 5 to go ahead with the \$37 billion expansion of Kazakhstan’s Tengiz oilfield was such good news. It was a remarkable vote of confidence by U.S. oil giants Chevron, ExxonMobil and their Kazakh partners in the oil industry, in our country and in the global economy. When you talk about the scale of the decision, you quickly run out of superlatives. It is the largest investment by private sector oil companies this decade. When fully operating, its 260,000 barrels a day will be the equivalent of Libya’s entire oil production. Taken together with the oil expected from the giant Kashagan offshore field due to come on line later this year, it will boost Kazakhstan’s daily output to two million barrels pushing the country up the list of main producers. The development, which is expected to see the first additional commercial oil in 2022, will be a massive operation. Accommodation for thousands of construction workers and engineers is already being put in place. It is investment which will give a big boost to the Kazakh economy immediately in terms of jobs and work for local suppliers. As the Wall Street Journal put it, the decision is also a powerful indication that “oil’s deep freeze might be thawing.” It has been made despite a dramatic slump in crude prices which remain less than half what they were two years ago. The collapse in prices and demand has forced the industry – including Chevron itself – to slash capital spending severely. Analysts say the industry’s expected spending between 2014 and 2020 has been cut by around \$1 trillion. The go-ahead for expansion at Tengiz bucks this trend but suggests that the industry believes it is not all dark times ahead. It certainly demonstrates, too, how central Kazakhstan is seen to the future of the global industry. Kazakhstan already accounts for nearly a fifth of the global crude that Chevron, America’s second largest oil company, produces. It is pushing ahead not only because it believes overall demand will rebound but because it knows the oil, which is high quality and rich in gasoline, will find willing buyers. This makes it economic to develop even at current low prices. Expansion at Tengiz will in the years ahead provide a major boost to Kazakhstan’s public finances. Not only does KazMunayGas own a 20 percent stake in the company developing the field but Energy Minister Kanat Bozumbayev has predicted that the extra oil would provide \$120 billion in additional tax payments by 2033. It underlines the huge benefits from the way the country opened itself to inward investment and partnership from its earliest days of independence. Chevron signed the agreement to create the joint company to first develop Tengiz as far back as 1993. As well as providing billions of dollars in tax revenues and a huge boost to the economy through contracts with local suppliers, nearly nine out of ten of its employees are Kazakh citizens. The oil industry will remain, as the Tengiz investment shows, crucial for Kazakhstan’s future for decades to come. But the revenue, as well as the high-tech firms it helps develop, are also vital to ensure the economy continues to be modernised and diversified. Continued investment in improving transport infrastructure so Kazakhstan can make the most of its position as a route between East and West and North and South is vital. So, too, is the drive to harness the country’s rich potential for developing sustainable energy and to build a genuinely high-skilled knowledge economy. Achieving these goals will ensure Kazakhstan remains strong and prosperous even when the world no longer runs on fossil fuels. It is why the announcement of this huge investment is so important for Kazakhstan’s short and long-term future and for the global economy as a whole.

Global Leaders Need to Heed Calls for Peace in Nazarbayev’s Manifesto

By Talbak Nazarov

At the beginning of June 2016, I got acquainted with “The World. The 21st Century,” the manifesto of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev. The presented manifesto is unique. It is small in size, but very rich in content and scope of the most important concerns of the peoples of the world. Nazarbayev declared his manifesto on March 31, 2016 in Washington, one of the key centres of contemporary global policy. Describing key concerns of the current global situation in the context of growing tension, the time of proclaiming the manifesto is appropriate. In view of this situation and analysing different factors that cause tension in the world, Nazarbayev appeals to the leaders of the world powers with anxiety to prevent further imbalance in the existing world order and take effective measures to strengthen international security. Nazarbayev proceeds from the assumption that the new millennium was “rich” in the most significant political, military and humanitarian events which clearly displayed the new reality and global and regional changes that threaten the world order on our planet. According to Nazarbayev, the existing threats to international peace and security in their capabilities and actions are more dangerous than ever. In the 21st century, these problems are globalised and have many dangerous segments. Given this situation, the author of the manifesto proposes adequate steps to ensure peace and international security through global cooperation. Nazarbayev reminds the global community that the Earth’s civilisation has survived over 15,000 wars, i.e. three wars each year. In this case, [the question is] whether today’s generation of global leaders can prevent new devastating wars on a global scale. In essence, Nazarbayev sees danger to peace and stability in spreading militarism, terrorism, devastation in the minds of the generation and devaluation of morals and values. Against this background, there is a process of strengthening confrontations, narrowing the field of convergence of interests between the nations and decreased interest in international security cooperation. According to the manifesto, these processes are associated with the fact that “the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is not fulfilling its mission.” Turning to the terrorism problem, Nazarbayev shows the sinister character of this phenomenon as a major factor undermining international and local security. Having stemmed from a national scale, terrorism has now become an international occurrence. Terrorists are now able to expand the geography of their actions and pursue not only mercantile goals but also political ones. It is due to modern communication equipment and technology. It has the latest weapons of destruction of cities and extermination. Taking into account existing threats to peace and security, in the manifesto Nazarbayev proposes to avoid escalating conflict between the major powers and reduce the degree of confrontation between them. In this context, the President considers it necessary that in the 21st century mankind makes decisive steps towards self-demilitarisation. Otherwise, in his opinion our planet could “turn into a huge deserted dump of radioactive materials.” After very convincing statements

about the state of the modern world, the manifesto puts forward three important tasks for international security. First, future global war will not and cannot have winners, so everybody will lose. Secondly, according to the manifesto the new war will inevitably use weapons of mass destruction – nuclear, chemical and biological ones. If this happens, death of all mankind seems inevitable. This anxiety in the manifesto is presented as a warning to the present generation of leaders of major powers and humanity as a whole. Moreover, the manifesto defines the main focus areas to achieve peace and steps to form a world free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The author reminds the international community of Kazakhstan’s contribution to the nuclear disarmament decision. In this regard, Nazarbayev puts forward a number of initiatives of implementing these initiatives, Nazarbayev points attention to the leaders of the nuclear powers and the United Nations. Concerning the next focus area, the President speaks about six nuclear weapon-free zones. At the same time, he sets the task to further intensify international efforts of creating a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This idea corresponds to other initiatives of Kazakhstan put forward in 1992 in the framework of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). Incidentally, the CICA has once found huge resonance and broad support from many leaders. In the manifesto, Nazarbayev shows his rejection of the militarisation and block system. In his opinion, the block structure of states is not free of potential security threats. The military blocks include, he said, different states which are not always aware of their responsibility for peace and security. In this regard, the manifesto makes specific conclusions on contrasting military blocks with the global coalition of the nations for peace, stability, trust and security under the auspices of the UN. In this context, Nazarbayev sees the prospects of future development of the world through disarmament. Considering the different facets of the peace process, the manifesto essentially offers a plan to address the root causes of war and conflict. These and other live issues of the modern world were likewise covered in detail in Nazarbayev’s speech at the 70th UN General Assembly, Global Strategic Initiative 2045. Nazarbayev proposes to realise his recommendations and initiatives by the 100th anniversary of the United Nations. Summing up the recommendations of the manifesto, Nazarbayev emphasises the responsibility of national leaders



for the future of the entire mankind. They should listen to reason and in any way prevent the proliferation of tensions, which is usually a harbinger of war. In connection with the above, I want to emphasise that over the years in power Nazarbayev has indeed become an idea giver. He proposed ideas in various areas of international and regional problems. His initiatives are always deeply reasoned and meet the pressing demands of life; for example, his fully-justified proposals related to the integration processes in the post-Soviet space. Nazarbayev is by nature a peace-making person. He is not indifferent to the events taking place both globally and especially in the post-Soviet space. When civil war broke out in Tajikistan, he was one of those leaders who directly participated in establishing peace and national accord in Tajikistan. In conclusion, I want to emphasise that the vigorous activity of Nazarbayev is not confined to problem formulation. He always strives to ensure that his proposals and recommendations are turned into reality. Taking into account existing threats to peace and security, in the manifesto Nazarbayev proposes to avoid escalating conflict between the major powers and reduce the degree of confrontation between them. In this context, the President considers it necessary that in the 21st century mankind makes decisive steps towards self-demilitarisation. Otherwise, in his opinion our planet could “turn into a huge deserted dump of radioactive materials.” A politician with the highest level of knowledge, he has a clear vision of the future. As already noted, all of Nazarbayev’s initiatives are seen from the perspective of the current military political situation in view of its multifaceted development. Such a systematic, integrated approach enables the author of the manifesto to see and feel the picture of the modern world with its strengths and shortcomings. As an experienced statesman of global scale, Nazarbayev always subtly feels the pulse of international events, seeks to further analyse a situation and gain insight into its details. He is one of the most influential public figures who can rightly be regarded as a patriarch of the international policy of the 21st century. People like Nursultan Nazarbayev make history. The author was Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan (1994-2006) and is Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Astana Is Flagship of Kazakhstan’s Green Future

By Gulshara Abdulkalikova

Today we live in the age of modernity characterised by the triumph of a carbon economy. Like German green politician and publicist Ralph Fuecks predicted, the era of solar energy is going to come in order to establish the basis for renewable energy sources. This will affect the society, which is constantly subjected to change. Whether these changes will be for good or not depends on world leaders. In this case, Kazakhstan is in good hands.

One of the brightest achievements of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev is the establishment of the capital, the city of Astana. Our Eurasian Palmyra is actually a real, modern city. The idea of the metropolis and its urban development meet the requirements of the current century. Previously, some of our fellow citizens believed at heart that Kazakh towns couldn’t compete with foreign cities on beauty, elegance and technological solutions. The situation has changed, however, as people recognise the beauty of Astana, which grew up in the middle of the steppe.

The city showcases almost all styles of world architecture. Every day we can contemplate the symbol of the Oriental circle, embodied in the semantics of such buildings and monuments as Baiterek, Khan Shatyr and the Library of the First President. We can also marvel at the sun rays watching with pride on the skyscrapers of the capital, which remind us of those in New York, Dubai or Shanghai. Next to them we can find classical style buildings like Astana Opera House, the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor General’s Office. The bridges across Yessil River



connect two banks of the rapidly-growing futuristic agglomeration. Astana city celebrates its adulthood being in great intellectual form, following the global trend of advanced innovative urbanism. Contemporary cities used to turn into centres of growth and inclusive development and Astana is no exception. A few years ago, the Kazakh capital was included in the top 21 smart cities in the world, which proved that the city was developing in the right direction.

President Nazarbayev, realising the strategic course, consistently and pragmatically leads the nation towards the country’s transformation. With the help of green reforms, we need to increase the GDP rate by 3 percent, create more than 500,000 new jobs and new industries and secure high living standards that are comparable with indicators of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The goal is to solve the problem of water supply, improve the energy efficiency by 50 percent and increase the share of alternative energy sources in electricity production up to 50 percent and the proportion of recycled waste up to 50 percent by 2050. As we can see, the ecological transit is one of

the most important components of sustainable development. Our main goal to enter the 30 most developed countries of the world is inseparable from the objectives of green economy.

The speed with which new inventions and leading innovations appear that give rise to new directions in science and industry is growing. Countries seek to increase the rate of economic growth due to the introduction of high technologies. Electric power became one of the most important industries in the structure of the economy. The production share of solar, wind and other renewable sources of energy globally composes around 5 percent. The undisputed leader in the field of renewable energy is China, followed by the United States, Germany and Spain.

The separate trend appeared to be the promotion of the place and the role of cities in global development. Today, more than half of the world’s population lives in cities. It is expected that by 2050 this figure will reach 80 percent.

World experts have predicted the likely types of cities which could appear over the next 50 years:

- 1) high-tech city, which creates conditions for high mobility of the population to support further globalisation of the city’s economy and to complete the transition to alternative energy sources;
- 2) digital city, which reduces the physical movement of people on the basis of digital technologies;
- 3) city of comfortable living, which sharply reduces carbon impact, provides the transition to alternative energy sources and forms a green community;
- 4) fortress city, which develops closed communities where the rich part of the population dissoci-

ates itself from the poor by creating armed buffer zones.

In view of the major trends of global urban discourse, as per the 2014 instructions of the President of Kazakhstan, it was decided to adopt the concept of promoting the capital to enter the top 10 best cities in the world by 2050. In order to achieve this goal the following tasks should be realised:

- 1) to make Astana a world city, an economic centre of the Eurasian continent;
- 2) to provide an international division of labour (the centre of educational and medical services, centres for innovative development and development of a green economy);
- 3) to develop the city as a centre of Astana agglomeration; and
- 4) to implement the Safe City Project.

The work to turn Astana into a world class, innovative and technologically advanced city has found international recognition. Next year, Astana hosts EXPO 2017. The theme of the exhibition is energy of the future and it is dedicated to the study of strategies and technologies to support sustainable energy sources and improve the reliability and efficiency of energy supply. The exhibition organically corresponds to the philosophy of Astana, a city that has already implemented the concept of the city of the future. Once, American journalist Lincoln Steffens said that he had seen the future and it worked. I think these words fully express the spirit and reality of Astana. EXPO 2017 is a victory of the political course of President Nazarbayev and the triumph of the young Kazakh nation, which is building a better future. It is obvious that the progressive policy of the President is recognised globally. To date, 91 countries and 15 international or-

ganisations have already confirmed their participation in the expo. It is expected that EXPO 2017 to be held from June 10 to September 10 will receive two million visits. Most of the tourists are expected to come from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Europe and China.

We look forward to becoming familiar with the world’s best developments in alternative energy sources and green technologies. Of course, we are waiting for the opening ceremony of the national pavilion of Kazakhstan. We still can’t talk about what we will present at the exhibition. However, we can definitely say that our vision of the pavilion is that the energy of the future is the human himself. The main idea of the pavilion is to develop the intellectual potential of the Kazakh nation.

The expo incorporates strong momentum to promote a green revolution in Kazakhstan and around the world. The expo can give a dynamic acceleration to the system of economic diversification, the technological modernisation of production and the scientific and research sectors as a whole.

It is symbolic that the exhibition will be opened in Astana. Our city has received considerable attention from the world community in recent years. Astana has become a centre in Eurasia, a platform for international dialogue and one of the icons of urbanism.

We must unequivocally support the efforts of the President to transform the Great Steppe, supporting the development of the Astana agglomeration. While flying to Astana, I was surprised to discover young forests appearing around the city. This is not only good protection from the harsh chilly winds so common here; it is also the creation of “lungs” for the city. A green

Astana is a flagship of the green future of Kazakhstan. It is also a dream of our President to convert the steppe into a forested, marvelous, and therefore, happy country. I think that all the country’s towns and villages and all Kazakh citizens should be actively involved in the creation of the green belt, which will merge into a single majestic green space in the future.

Astana is a lodestar of independent Kazakhstan and will always be, as it is a bright and unique creation. The city is committed to becoming a green capital of Eurasia. I think Astana should be on par with such cities as London, Paris and New York.

Astana has everything it needs to achieve this, including the spirit of creativity, human capital and necessary resources. While preparing this article, good news came from overseas: Kazakhstan was elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. This is a first for the Central Asian region. As the President said, it is a well-deserved success for all the people of Kazakhstan.

It is symbolic that this victory happened as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of independence. I would like to congratulate all Kazakhstan’s people with the Day of the Capital, which has come into being thanks to our President.

Astana today is the first of seven unshakable foundations of the Mangilik El, and the Mangilik El means independence and Astana. We will be faithful to the great historical mission to strengthen our independence. We will always be proud of Astana as a vivid symbol of the prosperity and strength of our people.

The author is the Secretary of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Seven Stars of Kanat Saudabayev

By Kairat Sarybay

Recently, Kazakhstan celebrated quite a significant event – the election to the United Nations Security Council, one of the most important statutory bodies responsible for global peace and security. This is undoubtedly yet another international acknowledgement of the consistent and constructive foreign policy of President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in a crucially important moment for development of international politics in the context of instability in ensuring global peace and security.

Furthermore, this is an important achievement of Kazakhstan’s Foreign Service, which just celebrated its professional holiday on a high note. Being elected to the UN Security Council is undoubtedly an international success and reflects the very essence of the incremental establishment and development of our diplomacy. They may say that any Kazakh is a born diplomat who instinctively knows his place at any celebration or gathering, and the star spangled skies always show him or her the right spatial orientation in the vast terrain. Nevertheless, the allegory does not fully define professional diplomatic service.

In this regard, I think, it will be interesting to look back on our quarter-century history of independence and examine some interesting facts from the life of the brilliant luminary of the Kazakh diplomatic establishment, whose professional fate is closely linked to the history of international relations of sovereign Kazakhstan. I’m talking about the first Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kanat Saudabayev.

My first acquaintance with Kanat Saudabayev happened back in December 1990, when I received a telegram from Almaty with an offer to work as a translator for visiting Special Envoy of President Turgut Ozal, Turkey’s Minister of Culture Namik Kemal Zeybek. For a research assistant of the Leningrad Institute of Linguistics, it would be a rewarding



President Nursultan Nazarbayev (second from right) is met at the Istanbul airport by Turkey’s President Turgut Ozal (right) and Prime Minister Suleiman Demirel (second from left) in the early 1990s. Kanat Saudabayev, then Kazakhstan’s ambassador to Turkey, is seated left, while Kairat Sarybay is seated in the middle and is interpreting.

experience. Moreover, for a young family with a one-year-old baby it would be a source of additional income. After deliberating with my wife, I flew to Kazakhstan to a meeting, which, as it turned out, would later change a great deal in my life.

The Turkish special envoy was received at the highest level – President Nazarbayev gave an exciting talk, while a luxurious reception with the participation of well-known cultural figures of Kazakhstan was organised on behalf of the government. So started the budding relationship with the future strategic partner of Turkey, with the active participation of Kanat Saudabayev, head of the cultural office of the Kazakh SSR.

Ankara has played a significant role in the diplomatic career of Kanat Saudabayev. By agreement of President Nazarbayev with Mikhail Gorbachev, Saudabayev was appointed ambassador of the USSR to Turkey in the autumn of 1991. However, a weathered pro, Albert Chernyshev, Soviet Am-

bassador in Ankara at that time, literally put the note verbal under the carpet and waited for the collapse of the Soviet Union, retaining his post in Ankara for a few more years.

Nevertheless, already in May 1992 Saudabayev became the first ever Kazakhstan’s ambassador abroad, appointed by President Nazarbayev, the first President of independent Kazakhstan, and the assignment was to ... Ankara. I remember that the two ambassadors of Kazakhstan and Russia during their repeated meetings in Ankara recalled with a smile some “diplomatic tricks.”

I think Ankara and the current state of Kazakh-Turkish relations is an important first star in Kanat Saudabayev’s diplomatic career. It gives me great pleasure to recall the pioneering spirit of the work next to this very energetic person, who, in fact, was learning on the go, and was my first teacher in diplomacy.

Later, Kanat Saudabayev obtained more stars and new heights in his career – the first appoint-

ment to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan in 1994, which due to domestic circumstances was short in time but rich in content. The pace of diplomatic change at the time was tremendous. Kazakhstan joined the Partnership for Peace programme with NATO and there was an unforgettable marathon tour of South and Southeast Asia (six days of official visits to New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Islamabad, and technical landing in Bangkok and Calcutta), the first change of the Soviet political elite –Leonid Kuchma’s election in Ukraine – and more.

Kanat Saudabayev was always favoured by the heavens as he was one to offer President Nazarbayev to cut the ribbon of our Embassy in London in autumn 1996 which was then on Cromwell Road, opposite the Victoria and Albert Museum . The establishment of British investments and a large circle of friends of Kazakhstan in the UK are an important part of Kanat Saudabayev’s legacy.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, he had to endure difficult years in Washington D.C., building a strategic dialogue between Kazakhstan and the United States, especially during the active phase of the fight against international terrorism after the events of Sept. 11, 2001. Sustained and confidential political dialogue at the highest level of cooperation on the global agenda of security, significant investment projects of major U.S. companies, as well as a wide circle of friends of Kazakhstan among senators, congressmen, governors and ordinary Americans are just a few of the high notes of Ambassador Kanat Saudabayev’s impressive career.

I was fortunate enough to work closely with my mentor during his energetic years as chairman-in-office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010 and he is remembered by many in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok for his role. The informal ministerial meeting in Almaty in July 2010 was an important component in the development of the OSCE Summit, which was to come in December and which was enthusiastically and painstakingly managed personally by President Nazarbayev. As Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev has made an important contribution in this landmark project for Kazakhstan’s diplomacy, which has really become a national project for all Kazakhstan. Saudabayev’s ability to communicate, persuade and inspire others with ideas was in high demand as the OSCE chair-in-office. And his contribution to the eventual triumph of the foreign policy of Kazakhstan was highly appreciated by President Nazarbayev. In 2011, he became a cavalier of the distinctive high state award, the Order of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The portrait of Kanat Saudabayev would be incomplete without mentioning his talents as a mentor. In the East, the wise men are called ustaz, because wisdom is not only the addition of knowledge and experience, but also the ability to convey it to successors. A large cohort of prominent Ka-

zakhstan diplomats worked with Kanat Saudabayev in different years and in different countries. Just the first composition of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Ankara at the beginning of the 1990s including Abutalip Akhmetov, Omirtai Bitimov, Bekzhasar Narbayev, Dulat Kuanyshev, Zhanselt Tuymebayev, and Talgat Kaliyev later became Kazakh ambassadors abroad and took on other important government posts. This series of diplomats rightly can be considered the stellar constellation of Kanat Saudabayev.

At the same time, the main guiding star for Kanat Saudabayev has always been his family. In the early stages of my professional and personal development, my teacher taught me an important commandment – to take care of the family, because the family is the starting point. The world, my own country, hometown or village all originated from the family. The way Kanat Saudabayev takes care of his children and grandchildren has always been touching. Moreover, the way he protects his family from his everyday business is exemplary, without involving family members in his work, but stealing time for his family in his dynamic work schedule. Of course, it would be unfair not to mention a reliable family backbone – Kulyaikhan, a faithful companion of the hero of our story and the real wife-companion. Wherever in the world Saudabayev’s diplomatic career took him, she was always there as a beautiful and regal Kazakh lady and a caring and loving wife and mother.

It remains for me to wish Kanat Saudabayev, who turns 70 on July 18 and who has been the faithful and reliable conductor of the President of Kazakhstan’s policy and his close associate as well as an outstanding personality and a star of the first magnitude in the sky of the Kazakh diplomacy, further heights and new stars in his nomadic journey. I would be pleased to write something new about this unique person in about ten years, and I am sure it will be something exciting again.

The author is the ambassador of Kazakhstan to Austria and to international organisations based in Vienna.

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Dutch Ambassador Sees Long Term Cooperation in Energy, Agriculture, Space Observation

By Zhazira Dyussembekova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan’s real natural resource to depend on in the future is its atmosphere of tolerance, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kazakhstan Hans Driesser told The Astana Times in a July 7 interview.

His country shares some experiences with Kazakhstan, and has achieved the same atmosphere, he said. “For centuries, our two countries have developed a culture of tolerance between different ethnic groups inside and peaceful coexistence with strong neighbouring countries outside. This has been the most remarkable discovery for me, after three years,” said Driesser, whose mission will end in August, but who will be coming back to Kazakhstan as the Dutch commissioner for EXPO 2017.

“I congratulate the Kazakh government on the fact that you have been elected for two years to the United Nations Security Council. We [the Netherlands] have been elected for 2018; we have split the term with Italy,” said Driesser.

“It opens avenues in our bilateral relationship for cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, which is already strong, but also in regional and global security, as well as development,” he noted.

In an interview with this newspaper more than two years ago, Driesser discussed the priorities for his term in Kazakhstan. One was to double the number of Dutch businesses in Kazakhstan.

“The number hasn’t been doubled for a number of reasons.



Hans Driesser

There are economic challenges; the oil price is lower than it was in 2013. We have to take it into account, but we have to take a longer view on investments, the number of businesses and export. And the longer view is a rather positive one,” he said.

“First of all, it is not about the quantity of the Dutch firms here, but the quality. I see more businesses in the energy field. Kashagan [Kazakhstan’s massive but delayed oil project, in which Shell is a partner] hopefully will be on stream in fall; production will start again and that means also more bilateral businesses – supplies and consultancy. That is for the coming 20–30 years,” he noted.

The ambassador mentioned that Shell has taken over British Gas’s participation in the Karachaganak field. “That is also an enormous trigger for Dutch-Kazakh business in the long term,” he said.

Another promising field is agriculture, said Driesser. “The number of projects in that field is booming, especially greenhouses in Aktoke [and the] Almaty region and all over the country. Dutch greenhouses have come to Kazakhstan and that also means investments in the long term.”

The greenhouses also come with management and training for Kazakh farmers, which creates jobs for the local population.

Driesser also noted that through the Eurasian Economic Union, Kazakhstan now has easier access to Siberia’s market. “From the Dutch greenhouses, roses and vegetables are produced and directly exported to Siberia. That’s a fast growing market,” he added.

“There is a potential for cooperation in the field of space technology. Dutch space technology companies can offer high tech, innovative solutions for environment and water management in Kazakhstan,” said Driesser. The Kazakh-Dutch Business Council also connects the two countries, and the ambassador reported that Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov has been invited to the Netherlands to discuss further cooperation through the business forum.

Another priority was increasing the number of Kazakh students in Holland.

“I have visited many universities in Astana, Almaty, Atyrau, Shymkent and Kyzylorda. So I travelled around and I see a growing interest among Kazakh students to come to Europe, including the Netherlands. I hope that Kazakh students will be

more often coming to the Netherlands to study agriculture. It is a very important sector containing a lot of potential for bilateral cooperation between our two countries. For example, just recently a delegation of professionals in dairy farming from Kazakhstan travelled to the Netherlands for a study tour. I hope in future in this specific field there will be more opportunities for young Kazakh agricultural students who come to the Netherlands,” the ambassador noted.

The Netherlands has confirmed its participation in EXPO 2017 and Driesser was assigned the role of national commissioner last December.

“We have a medium-sized pavilion. Last week I met with Chairman of Astana Expo 2017 Akhmetzhan Yessimov and his team. We were both very satisfied with the results. We are in the process of deciding what will be the narrative, the storyline of our pavilion,” said Driesser. He added that the National Day of the Netherlands at EXPO 2017 is likely to be June 22 next year.

In May, Royal Dutch Airlines KLM launched flights to Astana. “It tells me KLM believes that there is a growing market for tourism to Kazakhstan and from Kazakhstan. EXPO is a trigger for having direct flights. Personally, I am happy because it is a big boost for our relationships and it is only a six-hour flight.”

The developing bicycle infrastructure of the Kazakh capital has also become a topic of conversation.

“In [the Netherlands], there are more bicycles than people. The population is 17 million people like in Kazakhstan, but I think there are more than 20 million bicycles. Using a bicycle has three big advantages: it is good for your health, good for traffic and good for the environment,” said Driesser.

According to him, Astana is made for bicycles, since it is flat and spacious. “I’m happy to see more and more bicycles over these three years. And Samruk Kazyna [Kazakhstan’s sovereign wealth fund] started the rent-a-bike industry. It’s great, but not enough.”

“[My wife and I cycle] during the summer. We start in April when the snow is gone [and ride] until the beginning of November, every weekend. And we are using not sport bicycles, but city bicycles. ... It is ideal. If I were an entrepreneur, I would sell city bicycles,” stated Driesser.

The infrastructure is improving, he said, but the main problem is sidewalk barriers. The left bank is much more adapted for bicycles than the right one.

“There’s room for improvement. It costs money but it will pay off. I know the city administration is working on that and if they want advice from the Netherlands on how to plan, how to do that, we are happy to do that. If there is anything our embassy can do to give advice, we are ready,” he offered.

“Astana will have a beautiful future [for cycling], but it needs more investments and infrastructure,” said Driesser. He also said Atyrau and Aktau can also become

great places for cycling, and that Astana can become an example for the whole country.

The ambassador shared his first impressions of Kazakhstan and how they have changed.

“I had never been to Central Asia before I came here in 2013. I saw the steppe and saw Astana. I was deeply impressed with the modern city, and that [is true for] every visitor from abroad. The reputation of Astana and the reality is different. Many people think about Astana during wintertime and associate it with extremely cold weather. So many people are discovering the beauty of Kazakhstan and Astana,” he said.

He admitted that he will miss winter days in Astana, which he says surprises people. “I live near the Yessil River and it is such a beautiful sight when it is cold and there is sunshine. That’s a big secret of Astana. Many other cities in Eastern Europe are dark in winter. Astana is light.”

“Kazakh people are wonderful: nice and hospitable, as well as friendly and open. I feel it as an Ambassador and I hear many Dutch tourists and business people also saying that they enjoy the atmosphere of hospitality here. People here are kind, nice, always interested in you, eager to learn about our country,” he noted.

“I will miss my job. It is the nicest job I have ever had. It is hard, but I have seen relations between my country and Kazakhstan growing. I am absolutely fascinated to see how this country is developing,” ended Driesser.

CSTO Foreign Ministers Discuss International Security

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov participated July 4 in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) Foreign Ministers Council held in Yerevan, Armenia.

The main objective of the meeting was to prepare the agenda for the CSTO Collective Security Council session involving the organisation’s heads of member states, which will take place in October.

The foreign ministers discussed topical issues of international and regional security and matters of combating terrorism and extremism, as well as the interaction of CSTO member states in the current world situation.



Photo credit: mfa.kz

Idrissov emphasised the spread of terrorism has become a common challenge for all countries.

“We believe that the CSTO can become a catalyst for the formation of a common approach to combating terrorism and extremism at both the regional and global level,” he said.

He proposed implementing a number of specific actions in the framework of the organisation focused on forming the global anti-terrorist coalition (network) under United Nations auspices.

Idrissov thanked the members for their support of Kazakhstan’s

candidacy to the UN Security Council. He assured them the nation will use its membership to promote issues of global and regional security, as well as expressed hope for the joint implementation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s international initiatives announced at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly, including the collective efforts to counter terrorism and extremism.

The foreign ministers considered the CSTO draft strategy for the period up to 2025, as well as the interim results of decisions executed following council’s adoption in December.

The parties approved statements on the situation in and around Syria, settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the list of joint statements for 2016. A foreign

policy consultation plan on security and defence was also signed for the second half of 2016 and the first half of 2017.

Following the session, Idrissov held talks with Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian. The sides discussed a range of issues on Kazakh-Armenian cooperation and exchanged views on key regional and international issues. Idrissov and Nalbandian agreed to actively collaborate on further progressive development of friendly relations and seek new opportunities to raise economic and trade cooperation.

CSTO is composed of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. The fundamental objective of the organisation is to continue strengthening close and comprehensive relations

in the foreign policy, military and military-technical spheres and coordinate joint efforts in combating international terrorism and other security threats, according to the organisation’s website.

Its key objectives are provision of national and collective security; intensive military-political cooperation and integration; foreign policy coordination on international and regional security issues; establishing multilateral cooperation mechanisms, including a military component; developing cooperation to counteract modern challenges and security threats, such as international terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, transnational organised crime, information and cyber security as well as promoting military-technical cooperation.

Local and Foreign Experts Say Industrial Digitalisation Key for Continued Diversified Growth

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – The challenges and implementation of the industrial Internet were the main topics of discussion June 28 during a conference at the Nazarbayev Centre. The conference, titled “At the crossroads – the role of digitalisation in the energy sector and its importance for the economic transformation of Kazakhstan”, allowed participants to learn about current trends in the development of digital technologies in the energy sector and consider the ways and possibilities of using renewable energy sources in the country.

Konrad Adenauer Foundation resident representative Thomas Helm touched on the beneficial aspects of Industry 4.0 or industrial Internet.

“Industry 4.0 opens new horizons in such diverse fields as collection and processing of big data generated by industrial machinery, automation and robotics, digitally-driven manufacturing techniques and supply chains and distribution

channels. The fourth revolution is especially relevant in the context of Kazakhstan’s development efforts and the country-specific challenges that are coming with it. It is a purpose of politics to create an environment in which industry gets developed most beneficially under the circumstances of Industry 4.0 and, as far as possible, to avoid social damages at the same time,” he said.

Helm added huge public investments and basic infrastructure, notably power, transportation and digital communications in Germany and Kazakhstan, are required to fully benefit from the fourth industrial revolution.

“The Kazakh government has already started to address these needs through the implementation of the Information Kazakhstan 2020 programme. Its main goal is to make information and communication infrastructure available to all citizens. A suitable platform is to facilitate exchange between the relevant stake holders and address the complex challenges as well as immense opportunities to its coming with the fourth industrial revolution

in the context of Kazakhstan’s energy sector,” he said.

General Electric (GE) Governmental Relations Director Wolfgang Dierker presented the company’s strategy for the industrial Internet, noting heavy metal and machines are increasingly equipped with sensors to become smart devices in various sectors across the economy. Starting with street lights, he noted 10 billion light boxes will eventually be intelligent, providing additional capabilities to make city traffic “smart.” One hundred and fifty million cars and 10 billion devices, such as machines, motors and wind turbines, will be digitised by 2020.

“The trend that we believe we need to have as a reaction, we have an answer that is conquering with this piece of digitalisation. The second trend is that everything in terms of digital devices becomes cheaper. It becomes easier to store the data and it becomes easier to assemble a larger amount of data and be able to use this data again. The same goes for processing data... Things are getting cheaper,

but the one thing that is not getting cheaper is software coding. This is something that is increasingly a really valuable part of this chain of digitalisation,” he said.

Dierker added GE must be in the software business to be at the crossroads of ever-cheaper equipment and the actual machines that are used to assemble and analyse data.

“In the past 20 years, we had industrial productivity growth of around 4 percent in the western world. We have increasingly made more machines more efficient... Now this is changing. In the past couple of years, we have productivity growth at around 1 percent. And the reason is that we believe more machines are becoming even more efficient and it’s difficult to get the same efficiency again. Productivity gains result from optimising machines. The real productivity gains increasingly do not lie in optimising the machine alone; they lie in digitalisation. They lie in collecting and analysing the data and rendering information on how to better and more effectively run these machines,” he said.

Sanzhar Kettebekov, General Director of the Autonomous Foundation Cluster Fund Park of Innovative Technologies, presented Industry 4.0 as innovative industrial development strategy. It is part of the Information Kazakhstan programme, with funding totalling \$100 million.

Kettebekov indicated today’s economy is the driver of the industrial Internet, with a world market totalling \$1 trillion. The park of innovative technologies has launched several pilot projects, including a competence centre of mining and metallurgical complex.

“Industry 4.0 is based on the analysis. The concept of the industrial Internet leads to a factor that we have to change our views and mentality on how we can use the data. The surface mining and enriching factory are fully computerised and a series of sensors are located there. We have two projects in surface mining with the ERG and Polymetal companies, where big data is collected and the entire process is analysed virtually. The mining and metallurgical complex

has a great potential for the Industry 4.0 introduction and any improvements in this sector will lead to a huge effect,” he said.

He also noted why it is necessary to implement Industry 4.0 and attract investment.

“According to the data, the top companies who are seriously engaged in the industrial Internet spend 29 percent of the total cost on this subject and get about 30 percent of the profits from these directions. These are primarily productivity, cost reduction and an increase in cost,” he said.

The global economic crisis and fall in oil prices, the main factors of the country’s economic transformation, have provided the impetus for technology development. Digital technology development plays a key role in the domestic economy recovery process, said Kettebekov.

The conference attendees also discussed issues related to improving the reliability and efficiency of energy supply, developing energy-efficient production and efficiently using energy resources.

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Golovkin to Fight Briton Kell Brook in London September 10



Photo from: gggboxing.com

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

The world middleweight champion in the WBA (Super), IBO, WBC and IBF, Kazakh boxer Gennady Golovkin have agreed to fight Kell Brook September 10 at London’s O2 arena. Golovkin and promoter Eddie Hearn announced the news in a tweet. For 34-year-old Golovkin, also known as GGG, this fight will be the 36th of his career. In the previous 35 matches, he scored 35 wins

(32 by knockout). Thirty-year-old Brooke remains undefeated too, with 25 of his 36 wins secured by knockout. He fights in the welterweight (147 pounds or 66.7 kilograms) and holds the IBF championship belt. “It is hard to say [what it will show], Brooke in a dual with the master of the ring Golovkin. I believe that Gennady will win, without meeting any particular difficulties,” said Kazakh Olympic boxing champion Serik Sapiev. “Kell is the only one who fi-

nally came out against Golovkin. We tried to arrange a fight with Carl Froch (former super middleweight title holder). We were associated with Billy Joe Saunders on the unification bout. We said we were ready to go to England and he (Saunders) would have received the biggest purse in his career but he declined. Then we negotiated with Chris Eubank, and now we have Kell Brook,” said GGG’s promoter Tom Loeffler. In turn, Brook said he was not afraid of Golovkin and quickly ac-

cepted an offer from the team of the Kazakh boxer. “You get fighters who say they want to fight the best but they don’t step up to the plate,” he said. “Eddie Hearn [promoter] put this fight to me on Thursday and I said yes straight away.” “Everyone is running away from GGG – I’m running towards him. “I want these big fights and like Sugar Ray Robinson did, I’m jumping up to middleweight to become a two weight world champion,” Brooke is quoted by The Star.

Winners of Third Contest Among Int’l Journalists Reporting on Kazakhstan Announced



By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – The Kazakh Foreign Ministry and Kazakhstan’s Chief Editors Club announced the winners of their third international journalism contest, “Kazakhstan through the Eyes of Foreign Media.” According to the Ministry’s press release from July 12, the contest attracted 60 entries from 29 countries, with five regional prizes awarded to journalists representing the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Europe,

the Americas, Asia and Oceania and the Middle East and Africa. The winners are awarded a trip to Kazakhstan in September, which includes visits to Astana, Almaty and the Borovoye resort area, as well as an extensive cultural programme. Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov noted the quality of the applications this year and continued growing interest in Kazakhstan’s dynamic development and upcoming major events, such as the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017 in Astana and Winter Universiade in Almaty. Continued on Page B5

Ardana Botay – Nation’s Female Military Pilot

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Ardana Botay, a senior pilot and flight navigator at Kazakhstan National Guard’s 3656 military base, is one of few women in the country who decided to tie her life to military aviation. In an interview with The Astana Times, she talked about why it is easier to be on a team with men, her childhood dream and the path to achieving it. Botay completed training at the state aviation centre when she was in 10th grade and has been on a male team since she was a teenager, which she admits was easier for her than being with females. “Communication with each other and about work was more straightforward, clear and without surpluses and hints/intimation [she laughed] and probably at that moment I started liking it. Work atmosphere, clarity and a grasp of everything you have to do or pass on. I simply was in that ambience and I love it,” she said. Becoming a fighter pilot was



Photo from: Inform.kz

her childhood dream. While moving towards it, Botay was very confident she would be studying at the air force’s military institute. She was rejected, however,

because it was an urgent military service where only boys were allowed. Not wanting to give up the field so easily, Botay applied to the

civil aviation academy. Later, she received an opportunity to study at the professional Patria Pilot Training and Flight School in Helsinki. She had 40 hours of flight at the state aviation centre and 200 hours during her internship in Finland. She flew single engine, double engine, civil and training planes. She subsequently had her first experience with big planes. “After completing the academy in March this year, the national guard of our country accepted me for a job there despite the fact that I am a woman. I work where I really like working,” she said. Botay is the first among her relatives and loved ones to work in the aviation field. Her father has been working at law enforcement agencies for a long time. “Subconsciously a desire to become military personnel was probably because of my father, because I saw how he was going up his career rank. I was interested in kind of outrunning him on this rank,” she says. Continued on Page B2

Newborn Figures in Astana History

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – A capital couple recently welcomed more than just a daughter into their lives. Saida Mukhamedyarova, born 1 am, July 4 in the city’s perinatal centre No. 1, became the capital’s millionth resident. Her parents, 24-year old electrician Olzhas Mukhamedyarov and 22-year old kindergarten teacher Arailym Mukhamedyarova, were happy not only to become parents for the first time, but also to be congratulated by Akim (Mayor) Aset Issekeshev and receive an apartment as a gift. Her birth coincided with the start of the Astana Day celebrations and the President’s birthday on July 6. This year marks the 18th anniversary of the city becoming the national government centre. “This is the age of majority; it is the time when big tops have already been conquered and new perspectives are seen from them and at the same time everything is still to come. Born by the independence, Astana is growing rapidly, becoming better. The city



Photo credit: Ashat Niyazov

is in the forefront of the country, integrating it and inspiring it to new achievements,” said President Nursultan Nazarbayev. The mayor congratulated the couple on the birth of their daughter and gave them the keys to their new home. Continued on Page B8

Street Artist Draws Attention to Social and Environmental Issues

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Kazakh social networks exploded in June from the reposts, comments and likes for a video posted by Kazakh street artist Pasha Cas. The video presents his new work, “This is Silence,” the young man’s manifesto. “This is Silence” is a giant reproduction of Edvard Munch’s “Scream” series character on one of the objects at Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site. The video starts with the artist painting dates connected to Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Semipalatinsk Test Site. At the same time a narrator, who is the artist himself, relates the horrifying numbers in the history of nuclear tests.

“Since 1949, 616 nuclear bombs were detonated at the Semipalatinsk Test Site and 1.5 million people were affected. In the 21st century, Kazakhstan turned into a nuclear waste dump. The state continued to experiment on people. It is Silence. Horror. Crime. Despair,” says Cas in the video. “This is Silence” draws people’s attention to the problem of nuclear waste disposal on the Kazakh territory, said the video’s description. Under law, Kazakhstan is prohibited from importing any foreign nuclear waste, and what the video refers to is the residual effects of Soviet nuclear weapon testing conducted at the test site in 1949-1989.

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THINGS TO WATCH & PLACES TO GO

ASTANA OPERA

July 16 at 6 p.m.	Gala Concert
July 20 at 7 p.m.	Return of Orpheus, Concert
July 30 at 6 p.m.	Double Inspiration, Piano Concert

ASTANA ARENA

July 16 at 5 p.m.	FC Astana – FC Atyrau match
July 20 at 8 p.m.	FC Astana – FC Žalgiris

DAULET SPORTS COMPLEX

July 25-31 at 11 a.m.	President’s Cup (tennis)
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Photographer Karla Nur: Theatre Positively Changing Way We Think

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – An appearance at the Astana Opera House has both national and international significance. Its productions amaze theatre goers of all ages and its marvelous building astonishes guests of the city. There is only one person who chronicles the artists’ daily routine and offers insight into a theatre environment.

Theatre photographer Karla Nur, a designer by trade, mastered her art at Leonid Kuzminski School and won numerous awards in various contests. She worked for three years as a Vox Populi journalist and wrote 143 articles that made her famous as the first social reporter.

“Social journalism is special to me and I still work in this direction. Then I was invited to collaborate with an opera house; it was something really different for me. But when I came here, I understood the importance of my role in making a theatre’s history and collecting the archive. I started to work here from its opening and I am still incredibly delighted to be a part of its history. I am not just a photographer. I am here as a person who cares about her country and its destiny, as attending theatre contributes to education and culture as a whole,” said Nur in a recent interview with The Astana Times.

Preparations for a premiere,



Karla Nur. Photo credit: Karla Nur

including scenery construction, drawing sketches, costume fitting and final rehearsal, are the most joyful moments. She believes her colleagues feel the same way.

“I’m always looking for a new angle in photography; due to this the play never becomes boring. I take photos behind the scenes,

from the top and do portrait photos. To me, shooting here is a work and creative process at the same time. One man said to me ‘Who will do routine work?’ I consider those people doing the ‘invisible’ routine are part of the entire work, the results of which the viewer sees,” she said.

This season, the Astana Opera House staged 295 productions and four premieres including Zhubanov and Khamidi’s “Abai” and Puccini’s “Madame Butterfly” operas and Minkus’ “La Bayadere” and Jarre’s “Notre-Dame de Paris” ballets.

“A great advantage of my activities is an opportunity to meet and collaborate with such eminent maestros and well-known personalities as Pier Luigi Pizzi, Valery Gergiev, Yuri Grigorovich, Vladimir Spivakov, Anna Netrebko, Vittorio Grigolo and others. I am proud when they admire our country’s achievements and our artistic troupe. Our team is doing colossal work and the next generation will bear the fruits of this work. Those soloists who worked with such masters of performing arts will hone their skills and have their own vision of the play and this is important for the audience, too. The audience will listen to music and learn to distinguish perfect voices and understand classical music,” said Nur.

She admitted she never misses the productions and is madly in love with “The Nutcracker” ballet.

“Also, I would like to highlight the collaboration with Astana Opera Ballet Company Artistic Director Altyнай Asylmuratova. I knew her before as a celebrated prima ballerina from Kazakhstan and I think how lucky I am to work with

her. When we worked on the production of ‘Notre-Dame de Paris,’ it seemed that I also went through a training process together with the dancers. It was an immense experience,” she said.

Nur explained the nuances of her work.

“We have strict rules concerning theatre shooting. When I enter the auditorium, I wear silent shoes and turn off the phone. While shooting, I never use a flash. I take photos mostly during the final rehearsals and when the orchestra performs a loud music. People come to enjoy the play and we have no right to disturb them. The main requirement of our choreographers is that images should be not only artistic, but also be truly ballet photography. It is necessary to learn to take dance photos. I was even invited to take part in ballet classes to comprehend the ballet technique.”

“I adore the costumes made by Oscar Best Costume Design Award winner Franca Squarciapino. She is a person of great talent. I am not a professional in stage fashion, but I just see how the colours fit together and it is incredibly beautiful. For instance, Azhar’s costume from the ‘Abai’ opera is exactly the outfit of that era and style. She studied the history of Kazakhstan and literally created the magnificent masterpieces. My favourite opera in terms of settings and costume design is renowned

set designer Franco Zeffirelli’s production of ‘Aida,’” she said.

Through the camera lens, Nur witnesses how the spectators’ behaviour and situation in society has changed with the new theatre’s opening.

“I see only positive changes among the audience. But to me, the best viewer is my mother. She never misses a single premiere and watched the productions of other theatres via the Internet. She began to understand the music and is fascinated by opera. We have a lot of people who have music education, but most of our team has no music background, like stage workers, for example. But they see every play behind the scenes and it contributes to their education and development, too,” she said.

An exhibit of Nur’s photographs is scheduled in the theatre’s hall and the stunning images are available on the theatre’s social media accounts.

“I would like to do an exhibition in 10 or 20 years. After all those years, it will be a great collection of the rare and unique pictures from that period. As photojournalists say, a good story cannot be made in three days. Creating an interesting photo essay or writing a story may take years. The best moments and pictures are revealed within a one-year period. In this case, the display will be exceptional,” she said.

Radio Host Receives Prestigious Award in Moscow

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Kazakh radio host Mukhamedali Bukharbayev was awarded the “Oscar for the Radio Hosts” at the international competition in Moscow. The event, known as “We Speak as Levitan,” was devoted to the 75th anniversary of the Soviet Information Bureau.

“My wife learned about the competition surfing the Internet and told me about it. I decided to take part because I consider that the competition is like the Oscar. I was afraid because of my accent or wrong tone, but eventually I made a final decision to participate. I translated the speech into Kazakh, recorded versions in two languages (Russian and Kazakh) and sent the records with an application on the last day,” said Bukharbayev, reported Tengrinews.kz.

He noted the late Yuriy Levitan is a great model for radio hosts, because he is considered to be a genius and giant. Bukharbayev feels present radio and television announcers continue his work.

“In the Internet age we are all



Photo: kankle

small Levitans and we try to continue his work with dignity. After the victory I will face new challenges, achievements and prospects,” said the Kazakh radio host.

The participants recorded one of Levitan’s historic speeches delivered by the Soviet Information Bureau in spring 1945. Bukharbayev, the only entrant to submit samples in two languages, received a special diploma for his work. He said the competition’s jury chairman noted when he heard the Kazakh version that he had no doubt the submission would receive a distinct honour.

The event attracted 109 radio hosts from more than 10 states including Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. The winners were determined by a jury composed of leading representatives of the mass media, artists and media experts. The panel included professionals such as television and Union Radio host Anna Shatilova, National Association of Broadcasters President Eduard Sagalyaev, Orpheus CEO and Artistic Director Irina Gerasimova and International Academy of Television and Radio academician Viktor Samarin.

The competition aims to support new radio journalists. The work of Rossiya TV host Evgeniy Streltsov from Moscow was recognised with first place honours. He was presented with a statuette designed as a stylised, two-dimensional image of the retro microphone Levitan used during World War II. Evgeniy Prokhorov from Arzamas and Alexey Petrov from Sochi were awarded second and third places, respectively. All the winners also received cash prizes.

Ardana Botay – Nation’s Female Military Pilot

Continued from Page B1

Those working as flight attendants and in human resources, finance and on the medical team are female. Botay is the only woman in a flight team.

“It doesn’t matter whether you are a girl or a guy or what age you are. Everyone should move towards their dream which then develops into a goal. Be flexible, appreciate what one has in life and develop everything you gain in life,” said Botay to youth.

Regarding the service, Botay noted knowing many girl group mates who graduated with her and studying well was always a priority. Math, physics and other subjects are essential for a technical specialty.

“First of all, learning everything, loving and moving forward. There are no limitations; especially nowadays, taking action is an important thing,” she added.

Botay said she wasn’t scared when she had her first flight experience, but derived pleasure and a positive sensation from it. Fear arises in specific situations, which pilots try to suppress.



One should be afraid on the land, but can’t be scared in the sky, Botay added. She is often asked whether the feeling is frightening, to which she replies that she just loves it.

“Everyone who experienced their own flight and felt the way the whole process goes will agree with me that it is hard to leave this feeling, a constant desire to rise up into the sky, go to an airport or air field, to be near an airplane, exploring it and of course flying. It is an addiction.

“Difficulties are always there; it is not always easy to move towards something. Generally, there is no success without a fall. These are the two components of life which need to be accepted. Not to be disappointed but to rejoice, take care of yourself and love your family are the most important things we have in our lives,” she said.

BOTAY: “It doesn’t matter whether you are a girl or a guy or what age you are. Everyone should move towards their dream.”

Botay wishes for young people not to be disappointed in Kazakhstan, but know that the country is developing and moving forward. All the difficulties people are experiencing is a normal process, without which the future cannot come easily.



CULTURE

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

“Broadway Bound” Leaves Audience Fascinated



By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – Audiences were dazzled by two shows presented in conjunction with Capital Day. The Dance Summit, featuring more than 50 Kazakh dancers and choreographers under the supervision of the Company E ballet troupe masters, was held June 20-July 1. “Broadway Bound,” a musical dedicated to the 25th anniversary of relations between the United States and Kazakhstan, was staged July 4 and 6 near the Baiterek Monument and at the Palace of Peace and Harmony. The events were organised by the U.S. Embassy in cooperation with the Kazakh Ministry of Culture and Sport, Akimat (city administration) and National University of Arts. The Astana Times spoke exclusively with U.S. Embassy Assis-

tant Cultural Affairs Officer Matt Wilson and Company E Executive Director Paul Emerson to learn about the master classes and production. The major purpose of the summit is to give the local performers the technique and teaching methods for subsequent transfer to their students, said Wilson. “We were thinking over the past couple of years how to take this to the next level and progress things forward, because many people asked about holding such an event here. It takes many years of sending memorandums. In a short period of time, we were able to accomplish bringing everybody together and giving them the skills and sending them back out to the regions to be able to teach these skills. We were able to put it together with the University of Arts. We are very thankful for their help

and Paul Emerson and his team,” said Wilson. The U.S. Embassy is interested in developing the Kazakh artists, so that eventually they will be able to put on a Broadway show. “We are just now at the very beginning of this and I am looking for possibilities for future collaboration. If there are parties interested in developing the Broadway musical in Kazakhstan with the hope of training people in dance, singing and acting, as well as set design and technical staff, so that if a group wants to have a show, they will have the tools, people and ability to put on a musical,” said Wilson. Emerson and the Washington, D.C.-based Company E worked with the actors, singers and musicians during the week and studied the parts from “West Side Story,” “Chicago,” “A Chorus Line” and

other musicals to present the joint performance. “Broadway is our folk music. It’s our own storytelling style. These are our own ways of communicating things which are important to us and serve as important kinds of dreams and aspirations. To be able to share Broadway is not just the chance for us to share music that we love, choreography that we love, ideas and design, but it’s also kind of a little window into something that’s very much about the U.S.,” he said. Emerson noted working together with local artists is a very rich and very different kind of experience than just doing a show. “This was very challenging; one of the strange things about the challenge was that everybody knew how little time they had and so they were much more focused. Everybody’s attention was very



Paul Emerson, Company E Executive Director.

sharp and everybody was on top of their assignments. One of the things that was strange even if that’s stressful is that the lack of time sometimes makes you more focused,” he added. The musical, headlining five American artists and almost 75 local dancers, received standing ovations both nights. “One thing I adored, there were a lot of little children last night,” said Emerson after the opening performance. “They were small and could not see what was happening, but the music made them all dance the whole time, so they didn’t have to see it to be a part of it. It’s just an amazingly wonderful thing to watch how the music took children from wherever they were and took them to a completely new place. They didn’t understand the words and they couldn’t see the show and it didn’t matter. They could hear it and could feel it and that’s incredible. Even if you can’t see the audience, you can feel the people behind you. That stage becomes one life and it’s a dream moment for artists and that’s what last night was like.” “Our dance company does contemporary dance in pure form. We do concert dance but we also do these kinds of collaborative programmes and more and more as

the years go along we are drawn into a collaboration as a way of expressing what we care about. Doing just a concert is interesting, but to do a collaborative programme speaks to your spirit and speaks to your humanity. These kinds of programmes are powerful,” he added. This was not Emerson’s first visit to Kazakhstan, as he previously toured Aktobe, Shymkent, Pavlodar, Karaganda, Astana and Almaty and since 2010 has taught performers all over the country. He and the U.S. Embassy were involved in discussions for almost two years to create the dance summit. “There are an incredible number of talented dancers in your country. One of the things that we really appreciate was they started to ask about running a business. Many people want to have dance schools or they already have dance schools and they asked how we are doing enrollments, how we find students, what we charge for tuition and other questions. The great part about it was not just the teaching; it was that all these people who came from all over the country got to meet each other, so now they are a network. So when they have questions, they can chat with us and reach out to each other. Then you build a culture of collaboration across all of these dancers,” he said.

Kazakh Director’s Film to Be Shown at International Film Festival in Peru

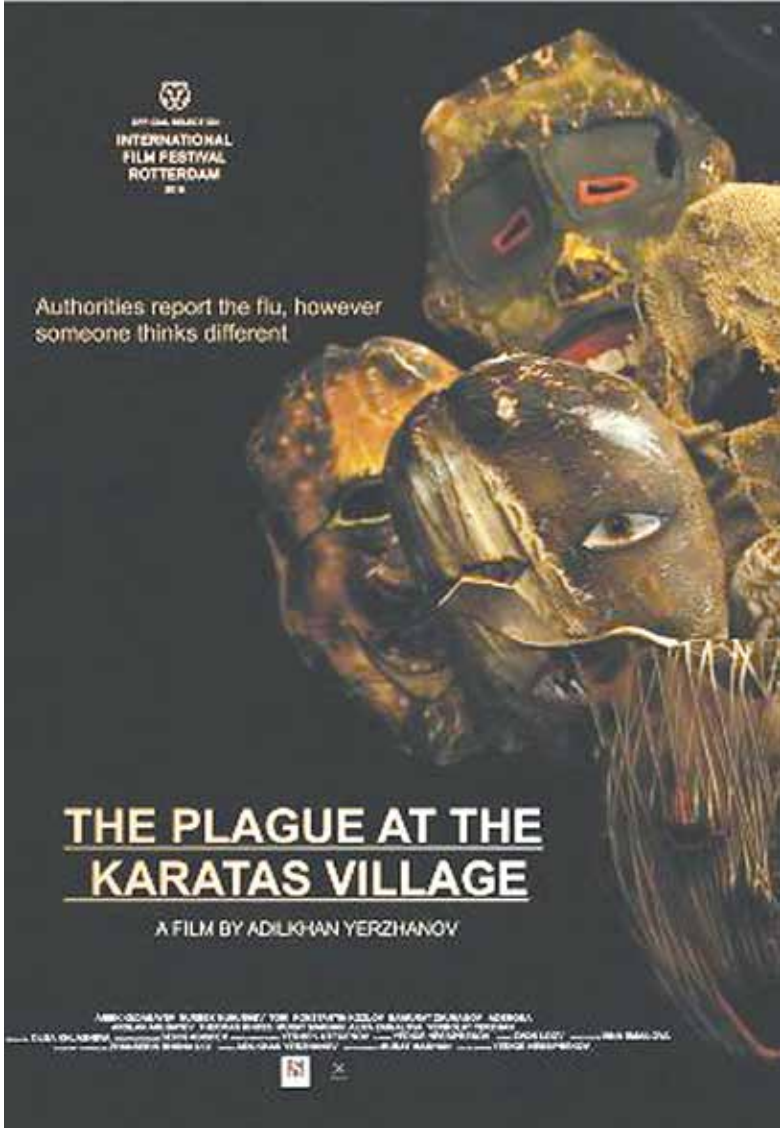
By Zhazira Dyussembekova

ASTANA – “The Plague at the Karatas Village,” a Kazakh film directed by Adilkhan Yerzhanov, will be shown at the Lima Independent International Film Festival in Peru. The festival will finish on July 9. “It is not surprising that this year they have chosen ‘The Plague at the Karatas Village,’ to participate in the main competition. Peruvians’ mental-

“The Plague at the Karatas Village” received the NETPAC Award as the best Asian feature film during the International Film Festival in Rotterdam.

ity brings them closer,” said Yerzhanov, according to Tengrines.

In the film’s storyline, a new mayor comes to the village from the city and tries to change the situation in the place by introducing his own reforms and rules. In addition, he finds a large part of the population is ill and suspects that they suffer from the plague. At the same time, local authorities officially say it is the flu, which tortures locals, and introduce vaccination programmes that are useless. “The newly-appointed mayor resists at first, but is slowly dragged down into a morass of corruption and abuse of power,” according to ifft.com. This year, “The Plague at the Karatas Village” received the NETPAC Award as the best Asian feature film during the International Film Festival in Rotterdam. The Calvert Journal also included the film into the list of new East films to look out for in 2016 by saying, “The unsettling, theatrical parable takes place in a timeless night-time of strange shadows, its dark and surreal atmosphere peopled by masked figures. The film’s modern-day resonance is clear.” “Lima Independent International Film Festival is the most important Festival in Peru for personal and innovative cinema around the world,” he said on film-festivallife.com.



Director of Gorky Russian Drama Theatre Talks Past Achievements and Demand for Theatres

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Honoured Art Worker of Kazakhstan and director of Astana’s Gorky State Academic Russian Drama Theatre Erkin Kassenov discussed the Central Asian nation’s theatre audience; past achievements, including wrapping up their 115th jubilee season recently; and the theatre’s busy schedule of current and future activities. According to him, Kazakhstan’s theatre scene is different from other nations’ in that it contains a variety of multi-ethnic theatre traditions, like Korean, Uzbek, German and Uyghur. “Multi-ethnicity has always been a point of pride for us. Our President pays special attention to it and the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan unites all ethnic communities. Nowadays, Kazakh dramaturgy is staged at Russian theatres: for instance, we have a Kazakh classic, [plays by] Oralkhan Bokeyev, [and] Adilbek Orazbekov’s “Odinokaya Yablonya” (“A Lonely Apple Tree”) translated into Russian and being performed to great success,” the director explained. Kassenov says the Gorky Theatre works with administrations, halls and higher education institutions to draw audiences. “It starts when children go to theatres at an early age. Theatre is not a screen on gadgets but a special kind of art, a live dialogue that gives a certain ambience. Emotions are conveyed from stage. The theatre culture was always there. It is there now and will be present in the future. People will always go to theatres,” he stressed. According to him, some plays are less attended than others, and once in a while someone leaves during a performance. Kassenov says that does not mean the play



is bad, but that the viewer arrived unprepared, having different expectations. “Being prepared is essential. One should know where he or she is going. It is not a concert. Some people come and look for ways to relax. Someone looks for a comedy but ends up going to a tragedy. We always set the highest standards. If not, we lose meaning, credibility and our theatrical charm,” he says. In recent years, the theatre has travelled to Spain, to festivals in Russia’s Black Sea and the Northern Caucasus regions and received a diploma at the Raduga (Rainbow) international theatrical festival, which drew 14 participant countries including the U.K., Poland and Iran. “The 115th jubilee season that we closed on July 1 was very vivid. We accompanied all our artists on a red carpet, talking about each one of them, who they were, their merits. So many guests and people on the street were applauding,” he recalled. Kazakh Secretary of State Gulshara Abdykalikova opened the theatrical season. Artists have prepared a theatrical lineup of “Tot, Mayor Y Drugie,” (“The

One, Mayor and Others”), “Dikar,” (“Wildman”), “Yazichniki,” (“Pagans”) “Tomiris,” “Chyorniy Monah” (“Black Monk”), “Chaos,” “Probuzhdenie” (“Awakening”) and other plays beloved by the public over the last five years. As Kassenov emphasised, “Yazichniki” is one of the theatre’s best works. They have taken this staging to the Raduga festival in Saint Petersburg and the Otkoveniye (Revelation) festival in Almaty. “Probuzhdeniye” participated in Sahnadan Salem (Hello from the Stage). The theatre plans to open their 116th season in October with “Alpamys,” which Kassenov is currently working on. “I have already invited a Kyrgyz national artist for this play and I am confident audiences will be watching it with pleasure,” he said. Other upcoming projects include staging fairy tales, holding matinees, conducting concert tours in Southern Kazakhstan, attending a festival in Belarus, participating in Kazakh Culture Days, and visiting Saint Petersburg and Moscow. Another project being kept tightly under wraps involves the story of a Swedish composer who was in Kazakhstan in the beginning of the 20th century.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Roadside Businesses Succeeding in Akmola Region

Staff Report

ASTANA – As national highways pass through the Akmola region, as well as dozens of regional and district roads, Kazakhstan business people have begun to develop roadside businesses.

Zukhrab Veliyev started a roadside business 12 years ago along the Astana – Petropavlovsk highway. He started with one small trailer, where only three people were able to work. Now he owns a large roadside complex and employs 160 people.

Government helped him achieve such results with a soft loan. Every day, 12 cooks work in his cafes, 11 more cooks prepare excellent barbecues. His roadside



services include not only a café and hotel, but car service as well. The entrepreneur plans to enlarge his business and increase the number of employees up to 300 people.

“I think that this is a small result. We still have to work even more. I think, who wants to establish a business in our state, who wants to work, there is always a place here, there is always support from the state. Construction of the highway is a big deal,” Veliyev said.

“I travel a lot and use many highways, but I can say that not every highway has such high level of service. It is quiet here. It is comfortable to stay here, to eat and wash or repair a car. I really like delicious meals here,” said regu-

lar customer Valeriy Afonin from Russia.

First-time entrepreneur from Atbasar Evgeniya Tokareva is sure that the Almaty – Ekaterinburg highway needs modern facilities and amenities. Therefore, her family invested 10 million tenge (US\$30,000) in the development of a business.

“Even our clients asked us to enlarge our café. That is why we plan to construct a hotel and canteen. We have already increased the number of dishes on our menu,” Tokareva said.

In the Akmola region, 420 roadside businesses operate. Experts predict that the number will be sufficiently increased after all the highways are repaired.

Street Artist Draws Attention to Social and Environmental Issues

Continued from Page B1

President Nursultan Nazarbayev officially closed the test site on Aug. 29, 1991, and the Kazakh government has since worked to eliminate the consequences of nuclear testing.

For the past several months, Cas’ name has been all over the news in Kazakhstan. His controversial works, mainly dedicated to social and environmental issues, do not leave anyone indifferent.

In early June, the artist created another statement on a house in Pavlodar. The work shows red smoke coming from the plant pipes and a giant mutant bird-fish in a gas mask flying above it. The art was completed to highlight the region’s environmental issues and the harm caused by the facilities.

“The city has four of the most

powerful factories – aluminium, chemical, petrochemical and electrolysis. Who owns these factories? It seems to me these plants

tal plant, also received a giant artwork on one of its buildings. Henri Matisse’s famous “Dance” painting inspired a mural showing

For the past several months, Cas’ name has been all over the news in Kazakhstan. His controversial works do not leave anyone indifferent.

do not belong to the people, they belong to robots. They are destroying everything that is alive – water, air, land and most importantly – people. The city with a population of 300,000 has 2,000 new cancer diseases annually. And it is official statistics. People die in bunches,” wrote Cas.

In April, Temirtau, known for its ecological issues due to production at the Arcelor Mit-

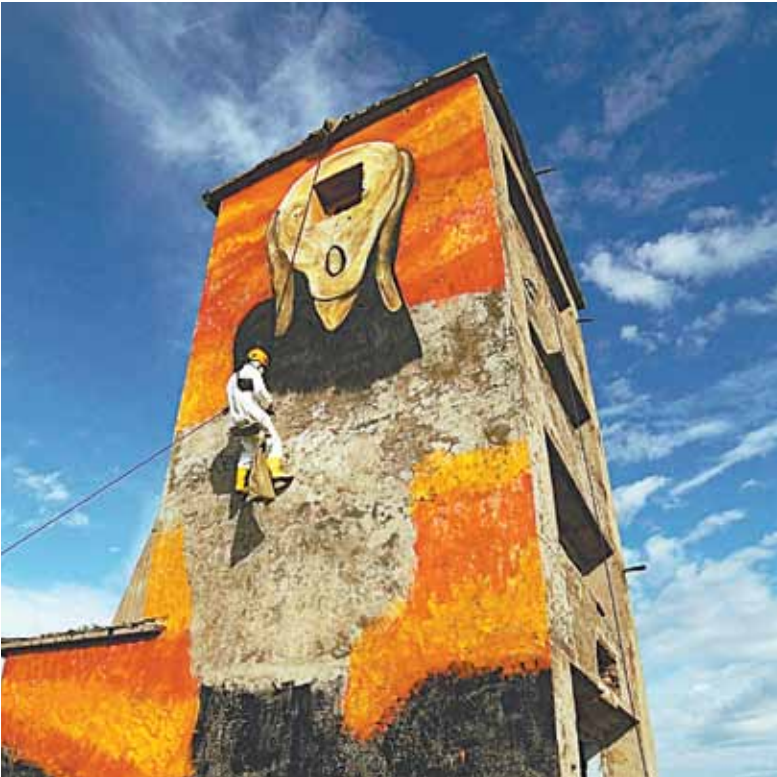
people dancing around the steaming pipe.

Unlike many street artists, Cas does not hide his face under a mask. He was born in Almaty and educated to be an architect. He started with graffiti in 2010, but soon transferred to street art. The genre has a conceptual and meaningful part, while graffiti is more about advancing painting technique, he said.

One of Cas’ most famous early works was the “No One Cares” billboard, where he noted how many people in Kazakhstan died from suicide in 2012 and wrote “no one cares” in a rude manner on the giant placard. He also hung a mannequin dressed in human clothes on the billboard in an effort to attract attention to the problem of suicide in the country. At the time, that act was shocking for people.

Last year, on one of the old houses which was supposed to be demolished, Cas created a banner reading “Are you sure you want to delete that item?” The message was in personal desktop computer style with the buttons “Yes,” “No” and “Cancel.”

Cas’ name has been discussed this year in the Russian media. He often visits Saint Petersburg and



Pasha Cas working on “This is Silence.”

in February painted Mona Lisa disguised as a street janitor.

“I wanted to show people that they should look for something

good in every person. For example, in Saint Petersburg’s janitor,” said Cas in an interview with a Russian TV channel.

Almaty Bike System to be Launched in September

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – The Almaty Bike automated system is scheduled to launch Sept.12, said Velocity.kz Public Fund President Almagul Kassymova.

The rental price is expected to be the same as Astana Bike started two years ago, according to Kapital.kz. The bike is free for the first half hour. The fee from 31 minutes-one hour is 100 tenge (US\$ 0.29); one-two hours, 250 tenge (US\$ 0.74); two-three hours, 500 tenge (US\$ 1.47) and more than three hours, 1,000 tenge (US\$ 2.95).

“You can use the free bike rental if you change bikes at various stations within the allotted time. The installation of the automated bike rental stations in Almaty will be implemented in three stages. In the first stage, there are plans to launch 50 stations with 270 bikes. One hundred and fifty stations with 1,460 bikes will be installed in the second stage. Then, the last stage is 100 stations with 680 bikes. At present, the preliminary map of the bike station placement has been developed. They will be

located in the centre of Almaty near the metro stations,” said Kassymova.

according to the Samruk Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund.

“The bike rental season can be

BAIBEK: “Almaty is the city of sports, tourism, medicine and the city of our intellectuals and we should pay more attention to the sport.”

Almaty Akim (Mayor) Bauryzhan Baibek, who recently began biking, supports the project.

“Almaty is the city of sports, tourism, medicine and the city of our intellectuals and we should pay more attention to the sport. It is important that our city must be convenient for the people, not for the cars, as part of the Almaty 2020 initiative and this is our motto. Today, we are going to reduce the space for private cars. Currently, there are 570,000 registered cars and, in addition, 200,000 cars come to the city daily from the Almaty region,” he said.

The capital bike rental season lasts from April 15-November 1 due to weather conditions, ac-

year-round in Almaty, as a bicycle system with anti-vandal fixing can withstand temperatures from minus 25 to plus 40 degrees,” said a statement released by the fund.

A bike’s weight of 24 kilogrammes not only offers the necessary mechanical properties, but also protects against vandalism. All bicycle components are made in France and cannot be removed and installed on any other bike.

The Astana Bike project does not require a connection with the city communications, as it works on solar energy. The first stage was composed of 40 stations with 200 bikes. Last year, an additional 110 rental stations were opened and a bike park has increased to 1,000 units.

“There was a fundamental breakthrough from 20,000 trips per month last year to 88,554 trips in a month this year. Last year, 85 percent of trips were made for free lasting less than 30 minutes and 15 percent paid in excess of a half hour. This trend can also be seen this year,” according to the statement.

Due to the heavy workload, the card registration was suspended in July to avoid the inconvenience caused by a lack of bikes. Access to bike rental, bike use and activation of user cards registered last year has continued via SMS, available to all who wish to join the capital cycling community.

A similar project, Shymkent City Bike, was unveiled July 9.



Nation’s first bike rental was launched in Astana 2014.

Photo credit: Kapital.kz

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Kazakhstan Jumps Seven Positions on Social Progress Index

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan placed 76th in the 2016 Social Progress Index, improving its position from last year’s 83rd position. The country remains in the lower middle tier, according to Social Progress Imperative website. The Social Progress Index measures the extent to which countries provide for the social and environmental needs of their population. The index is made by Social Progress Imperative and includes Basic Human Needs, Foundations of



Well-Being and Opportunity. Each dimension has four components, which are each composed of three to five indicators. “In the Basic Human Needs dimension, Kazakhstan performs best on Nutrition and Basic Medical Care and has the most opportunity to improve on the Personal Safety component. In the Foundations of Well-being dimension, Kazakhstan scores highest on Access to Basic Knowledge but lags on the Health and Wellness component. In the Opportunity dimension, Kazakhstan is strongest on Access to Advanced Edu-

cation and has the most room to improve on Personal Rights,” according to the report. In the Personal Safety Component, Kazakhstan performs poorly in Homicide Rate, Political Terror and Traffic Death. Out of all the components, the Health and Wellness and Personal Rights need to be improved the most, according to survey. But Kazakhstan scored high in Nutrition and Basic Medical Care, including Maternal Mortality Rate, Deaths from Infectious Diseases and Undernourishment, which means rates of those indicators are small. The Water

and Sanitation component also showed good results. Also, Kazakhstan performs well in the Access to Basic Knowledge components with the high level of adult literacy rate and gender parity in secondary school enrolment. In total, Kazakhstan has collected 63.86 points. First Place went to Finland with 90.03 points, second to Canada (89.49 points) and Denmark is the third with 89.39 points. Chad, Afghanistan and Central African Republic are last on the list. Russia takes 75th place, Kyrgyzstan is 79th and Uzbekistan is 91st.

Winners of Third Contest Among Int’l Journalists Announced

Continued from Page B1

“This year we were pleased to note an increase in numbers and most importantly, quality of applications coming from all over the world. We are witnessing the constantly growing interest from foreign media in the socio-economic and political development of Kazakhstan and its international relations. I firmly believe that this is a result of the open policies that our nation has pursued under the leadership of President Nursultan Nazarbayev,” he said, according to the press release. Marina Nabatnikova, a journalist with the Russian newspaper Argumenty i Fakty, was selected as the winner among CIS journalists

for her article “Doomed to Growth – About our Trade Relations with Kazakhstan.” The story revealed issues of trade-economic and cultural cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia by using the latest statistics through the prism of the former’s strategic programmes. Pauline Gavrillov of France, who writes for HuffingtonPost.fr, won among European journalists for her story “Astana 2017: What will be the Future Energy?” “Kazakhstan has a long-term energy vision and it is definitely based on solid ground! By 2016, Kashagan oil field in the Caspian Sea has the potential to become the world’s third-largest producing reservoirs. Its subsoil contains 99

of the 110 components of Mendeleev’s periodic table. However, the country also wants to be a major stakeholder along the renewable energy transition,” read the article. “Kazakhstan intends to take part in the development of sustainable energy solutions and to play its geopolitical stabilising role.” Among entrants from the Americas, Douglas Burton, who writes for The Washington Times, won for his article “Kazakh Studying Abroad in Ambitious ‘Future’ Programme Aims to Lift Former Soviet Republic.” He wrote about Bolashak Presidential Scholarship Programme student Shalkar Nursetov, who studied at George Washington University to pursue a Master’s degree in media and

public affairs. The author chose an interesting approach for his article, because the Bolashak programme is a source of pride for the nation. The winner among Middle Eastern and African entries, Mohammad Ghazal, published his article “Jordan, Kazakhstan Shares Vision of World Peace” in The Jordan Times. “Diplomats, officials and law experts say Jordan and Kazakhstan share a common vision about global issues and are key players in initiatives and efforts to push for a world free of nuclear weapons. The two countries have also led initiatives to protect the image of Islam amid attempts by terrorist groups to tarnish the image of the religion,” it read. Kürşad Zorlu of Turkey, repre-

senting YeniCag newspaper, took the top spot among Asian journalists for his article “The Key of Eurasia is the Development and Stability of Kazakhstan.” “Kazakhstan demonstrates the multi-faceted and peaceful approach to foreign policy. Kazakhstan, which has about a 14,000-kilometre border with Russia, China and other neighbours, has strategic relationships with those countries and is gradually strengthening its ties with the United States, European countries and the Islamic world,” he wrote. Last year’s winners, journalists from Argentina, Egypt, Indonesia, Poland and Uzbekistan, toured the same areas the 2016 winners will visit.

“A combination of fresh air and an outstanding view of the forest make me feel incredibly happy and relaxed,” said Egyptian Ahmed Abdu Tarabeik. In addition to the winners, authors with outstanding publications will receive certificates of gratitude on behalf of the jury. The contest was made possible through partnerships with Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, the Kazakh National Olympic Committee, Rixos President Astana and Rixos Borovoye hotels and Argymak Transport Company, as well as the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines which, as the Foreign Ministry’s press release reminded, presented its brand new four-times-a-week Amsterdam – Astana connection earlier in May this year.

Almaty Dombra Player Speaks About Historic Ties with Kazakhs, Interest in Instrument



Andrey Fendrikov

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Creative dombra player Andrey Fendrikov’s ties with Kazakh culture and people have been emerging for generations, as he traces his interest in the instrument to his grandmother. The Almaty resident might not be the most professional dombra musician, but he certainly is an exceptional one. “As a child I used to go out and old folks used to meet me at a courtyard, give their blessings, wish me happiness and pile me up with candies. This is my first impression from childhood and a touch of Kazakh culture,” he said in a recent interview for this story. “Psychologists say that a child separates himself from the rest of the world at a certain moment, while I didn’t have it. I didn’t distance myself like that and this was laid on my subconscious.” Fendrikov learned to play dombra at school. It seemed normal to him, because he always perceived it as he would a guitar which he was

learning to play as well. Both were instruments with their own traits and both required special attention. The musician cannot consider himself a stranger to Kazakhstan, as his ancestors lived on its land for generations. “It is not foreign to me, even if I don’t perfectly know the Kazakh language or some of the customs. My great-grandfather used to speak Kazakh purely,” he said. His great-grandfather was chief of the transport links, not the kind of chief who sat in the office, but who went to auyls (villages) and inspected the activities. “Seeing how people in villages were in need, my great-grandfather would leave a mattress, a pillow, everything he took with himself and return empty handed from a trip, telling his wife they would still be able to earn while people in villages were in a bigger need,” said Fendrikov. His grandmother was a head physician at Matai station, a rural town in Almaty region where everyone

spoke Kazakh. She adopted the language and loved dombra and Kazakh music. When she was young, the radio in the kitchen was set to a Kazakh station. “When I learned to play and sing, I always tried to visit my grandmother with a dombra and she would be aggrieved if I would come without the instrument,” said Fendrikov. As his mother grew, she spent her childhood and holidays among the Kazakhs in Matai. When Fendrikov had an opportunity to play dombra, he did so on his mother’s advice and in appreciation of the people who impressed him. “Then I had this learning myself. Can’t say I’m a profound connois-

seur, but it is very interesting and I think that the role of dombra and its meaning is not disclosed on a world scale... I tell everything about dombra with pleasure, if, for instance, a performance is not in a strict format,” he noted. Foreigners frequently expressed their interest in the dombra, often wishing to purchase and even play it. Fendrikov feels it is not just a plain instrument with two strings like some people say. “I consider it silly judging an instrument according to the amount of its strings, because if the violin has four strings, it can’t be compared to how many the harp has. Nevertheless, the violin is a worldwide musical instrument used by all

composers. It’s the same with dombra, which has its own tone quality,” he said. The more he involves himself, said Fendrikov, the more he understands that to comprehend the instrument, he needs to try and work harder. He feels those who learn to play at a conservatory, holding the dombra in their hands since childhood and almost never letting go, are certainly professional musicians who have a different level of technique. Fendrikov has his own advantages, however, like trying to play more emotionally and using some show elements and surprises during his performances. “For me, the biggest praise is

someone telling me that when their eyes are closed, it is as if some Kazakh guy is playing. Also after a performance, an adult comes and says that thanks to me, his children or grandchildren will surely be playing dombra, asking whether I teach, et cetera, and which course I am very happy about,” he noted. Fendrikov was once invited to an artistic evening in Almaty. He thought it would be quite hard to talk about the dombra to economy, finance and similar students. Yet he found the nearly 200 people were all anxious to hear about the instrument when he began to speak. Fendrikov realised he wanted to continue and now plans to create an educational show or concert and narrative for students and school children. “It is not important what you play when you do. It seems to me that music is unique by the fact that it diverts a person from some social matters and status and combines feelings, which is same as when a person loves...” he said.



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The Astana Times

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2016

Holiday Inn Express to Open in Astana

By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – A Holiday Inn Express will open in Astana in 2018, the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) announced. The hotel will be the sixth object under the IHG brand in Kazakhstan and the first Holiday Inn Express in the Central Asian region. It will operate under a franchise agreement with Fido Estate, IHG reported in its statement.

The 232-room hotel will be located on Turan Avenue of the Yessil district, which connects downtown Astana with the international airport. Major attractions such as the Baiterek Monument and Khan Shatyr shopping mall, as well as governmental and administrative buildings including the Palace of Independence and House of Ministries, are easily accessible from the hotel by car.



“Holiday Inn Express is our fastest growing brand in the world and we are pleased to present it in Astana. We are confident that Holiday Inn Express, the leader in the field of ordinary and reasonable travel for everyone, will be in

great demand in Astana,” said IHG Development Director in Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Baltics and Scandinavia Alexey Korobkin.

The hotel will also feature a restaurant, a lobby bar, a small con-



ference room for business meetings and a parking garage.

“The demand from business travellers and tourists in Astana is growing, but the local hospitality market is underdeveloped. So we decided to introduce the famous

Holiday Inn Express brand in the capital of Kazakhstan,” said Fido Estate representative Nurzhan Urazakov.

Holiday Inn Express Astana will offer its visitors the Holiday Inn Express’s Next Generation guest

experience, taking into account the evolving needs of the modern traveller, who stops for a short time and prefers functional, clever design combined with efficient service.

The Holiday Inn Express brand appeared on the market in 1991. Today, it is one of the biggest brands in the world, distinguished by conveniently located hotels in more than 70 countries: more than 3,000 hotels have already been launched and 892 are scheduled to open. Twenty three hotels under this brand are operating in Russia, Georgia and the CIS and 22 more are planned.

IHG hotels operate in nearly 100 countries around the world. All IHG accommodations participate in the IHG Rewards Club programme, the first and largest loyalty programme in the hotel industry, with more than 94 million members around the world.

Kazakhstan’s Caspian Coastline Offers Various Vacation Options



Aktau

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – The Caspian Sea may not be filled with beach resorts or be entirely suitable for recreational use, but entertainment, recreation and health facilities are available to provide essential amenities for a comfortable rest and leisure.

Located on the Caspian shores, Aktau (“a white mountain”) is among Kazakhstan’s popular resort spots for water-oriented vacations.

Summers can be hot, with the average temperature in July reaching 27 degrees Celsius. The holiday season starts at the end of May and lasts until the end of August, when the average water temperature is 18 degrees, according to a review on prazdniki-na-nosu.com. The temperature can reach 24-26 degrees and in some places even 32 degrees.

Getting There

Most people fly to Aktau Airport. Direct domestic flights include Atyrau and Almaty with SCAT (the cheapest) and Air Astana. Ground transportation to the city should be planned in advance.

All trains arrive and depart from Mangystau station, about 12 kilometres from town. A regular daily train to and from Atyrau and two and three-day train trips from Astana and Almaty are other available options.

What to See and Do

Aktau is the capital of Mangystau Region, despite the city being young and lacking sufficient history. The region is home to Sufi pilgrimage sites such as Beket-Ata, Masat-Ata, Shakpak-Ata and Shopan-Ata, minor but beautiful natural attractions like Otpantau (Fire Mountain), Saura and Tamshaly oases, radon hot springs and mud baths.

The city is renowned for its unique underground constructions and mosques with ancient ornamental patterns and Sufi poems on the walls.

Pool and bowling on good-quality alleys are quite popular in modern Aktau. Theatres, cinemas, many cafes, restaurants and night-clubs are at one’s service, too.

Beach volleyball is available in the summer. Manila, Nur Plaza and one of the largest Dostar beaches are located in the central part of the city.

Many embankments and beach-

es were recently developed, however not all of them may actually be suitable for recreational activities and services may not always be top level. Most hotels and recreation facilities try to cre-

ate convenient arrangements for vacationers, noted prazdniki-na-nosu.com.

Hotel Stay

Grand Hotel Victory, Holiday Inn Aktau and Renaissance Aktau are among the city’s fine hotels with a price range of 24,795-49,392 tenge (about US\$73.30-\$146) per night.

The five-star Grand Hotel Victory, about 500 metres from the Caspian seacoast, offers a spa centre with pool and gym and a bar with panoramic views, according to booking.com.

About a five-minute walk from a bus stop and one kilometre from the Aktau Lighthouse, the downtown Holiday Inn hotel has international dining, a lounge and a 24/7 gym.

The downtown Renaissance, a seven-minute walk from the beach and 10 minute stroll from the Mangystau Regional Museum of Local History, features indoor and outdoor pools, a fitness room and international dining, notes the website.

Recreation Facilities and Health Resorts

Vacationers can settle at a post-Soviet Stigl recreational complex on the seaside about 18 kilometres from Aktau. The complex is a cheaper option compared to a hotel and offers a swimming pool, gym, bathhouse, billiard hall, restaurants and spa centre.

A two-storey bungalow with deluxe/semi-deluxe rooms overlooking the sea, a semi-deluxe hotel complex and Teremki economy

class hotel are also available within the complex.

The Kendirli resort beaches are in a gulf of the Caspian Sea. The climate of the region is quite congenial for treating and preventing a wide array of medical conditions, according to votpusk.ru.

“A warm current, clean sandy beach, long summer with clear dry weather, clean sea air, swimming pool, sports, recreation facilities and comfortable hotel rooms create exceptional conditions for a full and comfortable rest,” notes touring.kz.

Vacationers can stay in cozy one- and two-storey cottages for youth or a hotel. A sun deck, winter garden, sauna, indoor/outdoor swimming pools, gym, video hall, football, volleyball, tennis courts, yachts and water bicycles are available, it adds.



Photo from: youtube.com

Air Astana Introduces New Flight to Tehran



Staff Report

The Air Astana national carrier introduced a new direct flight from Almaty to Tehran on June 30, reported the press service of the company.

The flights will be available three times per week: on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and will use Embraer 190 aircraft. The plane offers 88 seats in economy class and nine seats in business class. According to the schedule, departure time from Almaty is 10:55 am and the plane arrives in Tehran at 1:20 pm. The flight back from Tehran starts at 2:20 pm and the landing time in Almaty is 7:05 pm (local time).

The average duration of the flight to Tehran will be three hours and 55 minutes and back to Almaty, three hours and 30 minutes. One round-trip ticket

for economy class, including all taxes, except for service charge is 97,867 tenge (US\$290) and for business class 315,070 tenge (US\$932).

“I am sure that our Iranian guests will be interested in the history and culture of Kazakhstan. Especially, Almaty, the city which offers beautiful ski resorts, a wide range of various cultural events throughout the year, as well as fine dining at reasonable prices and good quality, which can be interesting for tourists. Furthermore, the new flight will provide convenient connections for the Air Astana network of routes throughout Asia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including the city of Beijing and Urumqi,” explained the Senior Vice-President of Air Astana for sales and marketing Ibrahim Zhanlyel.

Almaty Ice Palace Completed

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Construction of the 12,000-seat Ice Palace, the main venue of the 2017 Winter Universiade to be held in Almaty, has been completed.

Despite trimming the budget from 32 to 17 billion tenge (US\$94.7 million to 50.3 million), the venue was commissioned three months ahead of schedule. Currently, pre-commissioning activities are being conducted at the venue. According to Almaty Akim (Mayor) Bauyrzhan Baibek, the share of the state funds exceeded by 60 percent.

The Ice Palace has three sections: a large, multifunctional ice rink with seats for 12,000 spectators, designed for holding sporting events and training sessions for ice hockey, figure skating and short track



Ice Palace in Almaty.

as well as cultural events and mass skating for the public; a training rink plus a fitness and

health complex; and a swimming pool.

Landscaping of the venue has

been completed and trees, flowers and lawns have been planted. The site next to the venue has

also been improved following a unified concept for improving the city based on the national

character of the country. Thus, small architectural forms, litter bins and benches have been decorated with ethnic ornamental patterns. At a February meeting about the Universiade, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev emphasised that hosting such an important event has to give a new impetus to the development of the city by improving its architecture as well as hotel, restaurant and transport services. He added that venues for the competition have to be accessible to the public.

An Athletes' Village with a capacity of 5,000 and an ice arena with a capacity of 3,000 are under construction.

More than 2,000 athletes from approximately 60 countries will take part in the World University Games, which will be held from Jan. 29 to Feb. 8, 2017 and include 12 sport disciplines.

Photo: almaty2017.com

Kazakh Clubs Start Campaigns in UEFA Europa League Qualifications

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

ASTANA – For Kazakh football clubs, the time has come again to test themselves in the qualifying rounds of the European club tournaments.

Unfortunately, the beginning of the 2016-2018 season turned out quite poorly. Last week, three Kazakh clubs played the return legs of their Europa League rivalries. FK Aktobe tied at home 1-1 but lost to Hungary's MTK 0-2 in an away game. FC Ordabasy Shymkent gave way to Serbia's FC Cukaricki 3-0 at an away game and 3:3 at home.

Only FC Kairat Almaty made it to the next round of the tournament without any problems. In the second leg of Europa League's first qualifying round, Kairat trounced Albania's Teuta Durres, 5:0. A week earlier, the Kazakh club won in Albania thanks to the only goal scored by Andrey Arshavin. Therefore, in the return game, Kairat, which considerably strengthened its lineup before the start of the European season, looked to be an undisputed favourite.

In the early minutes of the match in Almaty, the Albanian team tried to keep the ball. While they may have succeeded in this way, they failed in attempts to create danger in front of Vladimir Plotnikov's goal.

Kairat responded with more efficiency. Shpëtim Moçka reacted to a pass from Islambek Kuat in the

penalty area, then Isael and Arshavin tested Teuta's goalkeeper from a distance. In the 27th minute, Mikhail Bakayev ran into the penalty area and played a beautiful combination with Gerard Gohou, rolling the ball to the Ivorian who calmly sent it into an empty net for a 1:0 score.

A few minutes later, Arshavin and Isael wasted good chances to increase the score. The former, beating several defenders, struck towards the goal that was blocked by defenders, while the latter's strike was neutralised by the goalkeeper. The remaining time of the first half passed in constant attacks by Kairat, with only the goalkeeper saving them. In the second minute of the added time, however, Bakaev effectively completed an attack combination through the middle of the penalty area and struck the goal from Arshavin's assist to make it 2-0.

After the break, the Kairat players continued their pressure on the guests and kept breaking through the opponent's defences. In the 61st minute Bauyrzhan Islamkhan assisted Gohou, helping him score his second goal of the night for a score of 3-0. The striker was soon substituted by Léandre Tawamba and the Cameroonian extended the lead to four goals following a corner kick. Arshavin was then replaced by Bauyrzhan Turysbek. This change also brought its fruits, as minutes after entering the pitch he took Tawamba's strike into the Mochka's net, making the final score 5-0.

The Almaty club prevailed with a combined score of 6-0, the largest margin of victory for any Kazakh club in Europe, and confidently moved into the next qualification round. Maccabi Tel Aviv, one of Israel's strongest clubs, will be Kairat's next opponent.

"Before the match, of course, we had our concerns. Still 1-0 was a slippery advantage. We heard a statement [from their coach] that the Albanian team arrived pursuing only a victory. We tuned in for the match and I think that we won deservedly today. True, there were a few unused opportunities. Unfortunately, this is our problem. [Luckily] the opponents did not surprise us. In fact, we saw on the field what we expected from them. They played with the same lineup. As for the next opponent, their team is well staffed. The club's level of play fits the Champions League better and indeed the club is fighting for a champion's title in their country. We will be well prepared to match [anyone]," said Kairat's veteran Ukrainian midfielder Anatoly Tymoshchuk after the game.

"First of all many thanks to our excellent fans – it is unbelievable. Thank you for something that is always with us! I am grateful to the players that did not disappoint us. We were leading 1-0 and occasionally kept losing the ball, but then we took full control of the situation," said manager Kakhber Tskhadadze following the final match.

Beibit Ystybayev Wins Kazakhstan Barysy Tournament

By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Beibit Ystybayev won the National Tournament of the "Kazakh Kures" or Kazakh wrestling called "Kazakhstan Barysy" for the third time on July 3 at the capital's Saryarka Velodrome.

He won not only the Taituyak gold trophy, but also 25 million tenge (US\$74,326) and an apartment in Astana. In the final, he defeated Zhumanazar Yersultanov, who was the heaviest participant of the championship.

"To become a winner of this tournament, you have to be ready one hundred percent, otherwise the goal cannot be achieved. In

Kazakhstan, there are a number of qualified wrestlers; competition is huge," said Ystybayev, according to sports.kz.

Kazakh wrestling is a form of martial arts in a standing position. The athletes, usually called baluans, can use legs and grab the opponent's belt or uniform forcing him to trip, but without touching the legs of the opponent.

Kazakhstan Barysy has a special prize for the best technique of wrestling. This year, a brand new SUV car JAC S3 went to Alexander Kachayev. His fight with Yerbol Igilik was recognised as an absolute victory in few seconds.

The Audience Award, which is sponsored by the Assembly of the

People of Kazakhstan and amounts to 1 million tenge (US\$2,973), went to Viktor Demyanenko, who has been winning in that nomination since before 2013, when he participated in the tournament for the first time. Being also a judoka, Demyanenko has participated in several Kazakh wrestling tournaments as well during those years.

The tournament has a tradition that not only the athletes get cash prizes, but the coaches too. "It is like an assessment of their contribution to the work with baluans," said the press release.

Another tradition the tournament follows is the raffle among audience. A guest from South Kazakhstan region won a new JAC S3.



Beibit Ystybayev

Kazakhstan's Olympic Team Seeks New Successes in Rio

By Anuar Abdrakhmanov

ASTANA – More than 100 athletes will represent Kazakhstan at the Summer Olympics in Rio, and will participate in 26 of the 38 Olympic sports.

At a meeting with the Olympic team July 4, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev reiterated that the country expects good results from them.

"Today, Kazakhstan has strong athletic potential. The results of performances at pre-Olympic competitions show that we have been able to train our athletes, showing good results," he said.

The President noted that in the country's 25 years of independence, Kazakhstan has raised a cohort of talented athletes, world champions who can carry the country's flag at the most prestigious competitions.

"All of them are simple folks, many originally from villages. Thanks to their efforts, they achieved their goals and found their way forward," he said. Kazakhstan now has 17 Olympic champions, the President continued. "Today, you face the chal-

lenge: to once again prove to the world the potential of our sport in Kazakhstan."

At the meeting with the President it was announced that taekwondo fighter Ruslan Japarov would carry Kazakhstan's flag at the opening ceremony.

Kazakhstan's boxers carry with them high hopes of maintaining the country's high boxing standards.

The main contenders are boxing team captain Daniyar Yeleussinov and Ivan Dychko.

Yeleussinov was the world champion in 2015 and came in second place in 2016. He will fight in the up to 69 kilogrammes weight category. This will be Yeleussinov's second Olympics – he lost in the quarter-finals in 2012 to the Italian Vincenzo Mandzhakapre. In Rio, fans will be expecting a medal, preferably gold. Since changing his weight category (in London, he fought in the up to 64 kg category), the Kazakh fighter has won almost every tournament he's taken part in, including the world tournament in Almaty, two Asian championships, the Asian Games and the Cup of Kazakhstan. He made mis-

steps in the Boxing World Cup in Qatar and in the Grand Prix in the Czech Republic in 2013, however.

Yeleussinov understands the expectations placed upon him. "I look forward to higher achievement: to win gold. ... I want to win the Olympic gold to bring happiness to the people of Kazakhstan, to my family and to myself," he said. Dychko, a bronze medalist at the London Olympics, reached the finals of the last two world championships, but lost in the decisive matches. He believes those defeats have made him even stronger and allowed him to work on his weaknesses.

"Major competitions are always an important experience that makes you stronger. It is a great honour to represent my country in the Olympic Games. I will do everything in my power to win the gold medal," he said.

Also on the team are Birzhan Zhakypov, who will be making his third Olympic appearance; Abylai-khan Zhussupov, the youngest on the team; and Vasily Levit, who earned his place with his performance at the AIBA – World Series Boxing WSB boxers, and each of

them has a good chance to win an Olympic medal.

In athletics, Kazakhstan is pinning its hopes on London Olympic triple-jump-winner Olga Rypakova. After her triumph in London, Rypakova paused her career to have a child, but this season she is shining again among the winners of major international competitions. She has won three medals in Diamond League competitions this year, including gold in Birmingham, and has inspired hope in Kazakh fans for another successful performance in Rio. This Olympic Games will be her third.

The mood now is one of hard work and planning, Rypakova said. "The Olympics are a celebration of sport, but at the same time, they're a lot of pressure and responsibility. ... I understand that it will be much harder than in London. Defending a title is always more difficult than winning one.," she said.

In swimming, Kazakhstan has three-time winner of the Asian Games Dmitry Balandin. In Incheon in 2014, he caused a sensation by winning in the 50, 100 and 200- metre breaststroke. The following year, he won the

100-metre breaststroke at the Universiade in Gwangju. Rio will be the 21-year-old's Olympic debut.

Kazakhstan earned three places for Greco-Roman wrestlers, and Almaty Kebispayev (up to 59 kg), Doszhan Kartik (up to 75 kg) and Nurmakhan Tynaliyev (heavyweight) will represent their country on the mat. Kebispayev and Tynaliyev have Olympic experience: Kebispayev made it to the quarterfinals in London. Now, he is determined to do more. Bronze medalist of the 2012 Olympics Guzel Manyurova will wrestle for Kazakhstan on the women's side.

Kazakhstan is sending Alexey Lutsenko and Bakhtiar Kozhatayev to the road cycling competition. Lutsenko, 23, has won the World Championship road race in Anderson (2012), the Asian Games (2014) and the Kazakhstan Championship as an individual racer (2015). He was also twice a winner of the Tour of Almaty (2014-15), won the individual time trial in the Tour of Denmark and has won race stages in the Pro Tour of Switzerland and the famous Paris - Nice. Kozhatayev, 24, was one of the top three in the general classifica-

tion of the Heydar Aliyev Anniversary Tour and won Best Mountain Rider in 2012. He took third in the Tour of Azerbaijan (2013) and won the Best Young Rider jersey. This year, he made his debut in the Grand Tour, playing a key role in the victory of Astana Pro Team captain Vincenzo Nibali in the Giro d'Italia 2016.

For the first time since 2004, Kazakhstan will be represented at the Olympic Games in track, with Artyom Zakharov.

"For athletes to win an Olympic license is a great achievement. Our athletes are now on the verge of international recognition. Support for Kazakhstan, cohesion, unity and the desire to win will help our Olympians compete and succeed against the best in the world," said President of the National Olympic Committee of Kazakhstan Timur Kulibayev.

Other athletes representing Kazakhstan include judo world champion Eldos Smet, weightlifting world champions Alexander Bunnies and Nijat Rahimov, and many others.

The games in Rio will be held from Aug. 5 to 21.

Horseback Riding in Astana Expands



By Zhanna Shayakhmetova

ASTANA – Summer weekends are perfect for spending time with family and savouring great outdoor activities like horseback riding. Contact with the horse has a calming effect and serves as an antidote to chronic stress. Local sports centres with their facilities and infrastructures offer pleasurable riding for all visitors.

The Tulpar Sport Club has outdoor and indoor arenas and provides riding classes for adults and children. Classical riding and show jumping courses are 40,000 tenge (US\$118) per month and

free for children from age 10. The instructors are candidates for the country’s and international class master of sports.

Horseback riding costs 3,000 tenge (US\$9) for an hour. The facility also has an enclosure for training and schooling sport horses, a cosy restaurant and paintball park.

The club is located at 18 Yenlik Kebek Street. The contact number is +7 7172 300140.

Located in the suburbs, Altyn Tulpar Equestrian Centre provides private and group riding lessons for adults and children from age 12. A monthly programme costs approximately 40,000 tenge (US\$118).

A one-hour ride is 3,000 tenge (US\$9). A winter carriage or sleigh ride costs 15,000 tenge (US\$44) for an hour, 7,000 tenge (US\$21) for a half hour. There are also ponies for children.

“We have a fenced area covered with sand and a closed arena of 113 metres in length and 20 metres in width with heat. Our sport horses are good. But the most essential thing is our developed infrastructure. There is a children’s playground, restaurant and swimming pool for children and adults,” said centre head Berik Orazaliyev.

The club also organises shows such as the traditional kyz kuu national game, jumping and fan-

cy riding. The programme costs 35,000 tenge (US\$104).

“We hosted the national competitions on equestrian sport and overcoming obstacles with participants from Astana, Almaty and Shymkent organised by the Kazakhstan Equestrian Federation on July 15, 16 and 17. It indicated that we are able to arrange sports events and activities at the global level,” he said.

The centre is located in Michurino Village. The contact number is +7 701 707 0771.

Kulager, an amazing place for a family vacation, is just a 15-minute drive from the city. In addition to horseback riding, there are three

houses with a Finnish sauna and a small house with an infrared sauna, a pool table, children’s playground and paintball area. Visitors also may enjoy time in a traditional Kazakh yurt.

An hour ride costs 3,000 tenge (US\$9), pony rides for children are 500 tenge (US\$1.50) and carriage rides are 3,000 tenge (US\$9). Riding lessons with 12 classes in a month are offered for 40,000 tenge (US\$118).

The centre is located in Internationalnyoe Village, 84 Zhagashai Street. The contact numbers are +7 7172 628873 and + 7 707 987 9876.

Zolotoi Fazan (Golden Pheasant) is one of the largest recreation centres near the capital and a unique all-season destination for its residents. The complex includes a small hotel, cottage houses, cozy log cabins on a lake and traditional yurts and a restaurant featuring European and Asian cuisines.

There are also stables with beautiful Arabian horses imported from Russia, a mini zoo and a pony named Pai. An hour ride under the guidance of professional instructors is 7,000 tenge (US\$21).

The centre is located in Koyandy Village. The contact numbers are +7 777 533 2947 and +7 777 077 7050 or visit www.fazan.kz.

Astana Celebrates 18th Birthday with a Week of Arts, Sport, Craft Shows

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Nazarbayev noted that over the years, Astana has hosted major international events, contributing to the further development of the city.

“Astana hosted the first OSCE [Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Summit in the new millennia, and became the capital [for EXPO 2017]. Also, it hosted a conference of leaders of 57 Islamic countries and many other international forums, which have made Kazakhstan famous. This is an indicator of the high recognition of our capital by the international community. Today, Astana looks to the future. Rapid growth makes it an example of the new standards of quality of life, the urbanisation model of innovative development for the whole of

Eurasia. Here, new productions are being introduced, small and medium businesses are developing, urban infrastructure is improving, new objects of culture and leisure are being opened,” he added.

He also said that despite current economic difficulties, the capital is not slowing down and continues to support the regions, charging the whole nation with its energy.

“During this time, we have come a long way. A lot has been done, but a lot still remains to do. We are ready for it; we have all the possibilities and desire. Astana has become the living embodiment of our independence, the spirit of freedom, innovation and development. For the people of Kazakhstan, the new capital is the attractive centre of our country, which is close to the heart,” said Nazarbayev.

The city administration has created a website, www.astanaday.kz, with detailed information on the events throughout the city.

The Sahnadan Salem International Theatrical Festival on June 20 was the first event dedicated to the city’s birthday. On the same day, Zhastar Palace hosted the “Mozart” musical, with other productions following.

Several sport events were dedicated to Capital Day as well. On June 26, the Astana Duathlon started at the Baiterek monument. On June 28, the second International Festival of Martial Arts kicked off in the Daulet sport complex. On July 1, an event dedicated to football began at Munaitpasov Stadium.

A more intense programme started July 2. The Ayalagan Astana International Biennale of

Artists, a music contest for children, the International Festival of Circus Art ‘Echo of Asia,’ the Humour Festival and many others took place.

This year, the famous ballet “La Bayadere” was shown under the sky in front of the Kazakh Eli Monument July 2.

The open space in front of Astana Arena has become a meeting point for music lovers. On July 3, Hip-Hop Fest welcomed its visitors. The next day there was a rock fest with the participation of Kazakh and Russian bands. On July 5, electronic music found its way to people through DJ Fest. Kazakh and Russian disc jockeys and famous French DJ David Vendetta made young people dance for about five hours.

One of the most visited places was Nurly Zhol Boulevard, which

held the Astana Art Fest and activities and performances taking place within it. Nearby at Baiterek Monument, local live bands were performing. On July 4, the United States’ Independence Day, people were able to see a Broadway Bound musical there, a performance which was dedicated to the 25th anniversary of relations between two countries.

An interactive 3D entertainment programme, “Arkaiym – the City of the Sun,” was held in the square in front of the Kazakh Eli Monument.

Astana has a lot of parks and this year every one of them participated in a festival called “Astana Park Land.”

The Festival of Nomadic Civilisation near Khan Shatyr Entertainment Centre has attracted a lot of people with its presentation of

traditional Kazakh culture. Hand-made jewellery, carpets, blankets and pillows, musical instruments and much more could be bought. Yurts, horses with riders, batyrs (warriors) and traditional music, games and contests totally transformed the place.

The third International Kite Festival was also organised July 5-6. About 70 foreign guests from France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and Russia took part in the event, according to the city administration.

Along with all of these events, the city hosted different concerts, master classes, karaoke and singing contests, festivals and championships.

The celebrations finished with fireworks displays throughout the city.

Newborn Figures in Astana History

Continued from Page B1

“The young family lives with their parents, so a gift on the day of the birth of her daughter was a real surprise,” reported the Astana administration press service.

“Today is a double celebration for me – the birthday of my daughter and birthday of my father. Now we are even more pleased – an apartment was presented to my family. We would like to thank the head of state for the life conditions which were created and due to which we have such a healthy daughter. I wish every month, every year the population of our country be increased and I wish everyone to learn the joy of motherhood and fatherhood,” said the happy father.

During the last 18 years, the birth rate in the capital has grown two times and maternal and infant mortality reduced more than five times. Last year, 26,110 babies were born and 13,740 infants have entered the world in the first half of 2016.

The decision to move the capital from Almaty to Akmola was made by the Kazakh Supreme Council on July 6, 1994. The official transfer



Olzhas and Arailym Mukhamedyarovs was made Dec. 10, 1997, and by a presidential decree dated May 6, 1998, Akmola was renamed Astana, with the international presentation of the new capital held June 10, 1998. The following year, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) awarded Astana the title “City of Peace.” Kazakhstan’s main metropolis has been a member of the International Assembly of Capitals and Cities since 2000.

The tradition of celebrating the birth of the millionth child is quite popular worldwide. In 2012, a Russian couple gave birth to St. Petersburg’s five millionth child and the family was presented with an apartment, too.

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