



## President Urges Country to Use “Window of Opportunity” of Next 15 Years

By George D. Gleboff

ASTANA – In his widely anticipated State-of-the-Nation address on Jan. 17, President Nursultan Nazarbayev outlined in detail his vision of how Kazakhstan, a country only 22 years old, could become one of the world’s 30 most developed and competitive nations by 2050. To catch up with the developed world, he said, Kazakhstan will need to run twice as fast.

Addressing the 1,200 officials, including members of both houses of Parliament, ministers and selected guests from social, political, economic and cultural circles, who gathered at the Palace of Independence for the speech, Nazarbayev said the next 15-17 years will present a “window of opportunity” for Kazakhstan to reach a major breakthrough in its development.

“During this period we will have a favourable external environment, the growth of demand for resources, including energy and food, and the maturing of the Third Industrial Revolution. We should use this time,” he said in the speech called “Kazakhstan’s Way 2050: Common Aim, Common Interests, Common Future.”

According to the head of state, following his unveiling of the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy in December 2012, the government developed a concept for how the country would achieve its goal of joining the 30 most developed nations by 2050.

Among the specific goals to be achieved by 2050 were at least a 4 percent annual growth in gross domestic product (GDP), an increase in investment from the current 18 percent to 30 percent of the



President Nazarbayev delivers his state-of-the-nation address on Jan. 17 at the Palace of Independence.

total GDP, increasing the share of non-oil products in Kazakhstan’s exports to 70 percent, increasing financing for science to no less than 3 percent of GDP, halving the economy’s energy consumption, increasing the contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from the current 20 percent to 50 percent of GDP and increasing labour productivity by five times, from \$24,500 to \$126,000.

All of these will lead GDP per capita to more than quadruple, growing from \$13,000 to \$60,000, while the middle class becomes the largest segment of the popula-

tion and the share of urban population increases from the current 55 percent to about 70 percent of the total. The development of infrastructure, healthy lifestyles and advances in medicine are expected to lead to an increase in Kazakhstan’s life expectancy to 80 years.

“Kazakhstan will become one of the leading Eurasian centres of medical tourism. The formation of an advanced and competitive national educational system will be completed. Kazakhstan has to become one of the safest and most comfortable countries for living. Peace and stability, fair and effec-

tive justice and the rule of law are the basis of a developed country,” the President said.

### Seven Priority Areas to Steer Country Forward

The President went on to outline seven long-term priority areas, including adjusting and strengthening the trend of innovative industrialisation; developing an agro-industrial complex on the basis of ongoing innovations; expanding Kazakhstan’s scientific capacity; dynamically developing the infrastructure triad, in-

cluding agglomerations (Astana, Almaty, Shymkent and Aktobe), transportation and energy; promoting small and medium-sized businesses as the backbone of the economy; pursuing a host of programmes in education, healthcare and social protection to develop human potential further and improving the work of public institutions.

Regarding innovative industrialisation, Nazarbayev stressed that mining will need to be developed, as subsoil use provides the country with a natural competitive advantage, but that new approaches to managing, producing and processing hydrocarbons need to be developed. These new approaches are priorities for the second five-year plan of the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID) for 2016-19. In fact, he suggested breaking the years between now and 2050 into seven five-year periods, each aimed at achieving this one goal, to become one of the 30 most developed countries, from its own standpoint.

“During the second and subsequent five-year plans, we should establish mobile and multimedia industries, nanotechnology and space technology, robotics, genetic engineering and explore the energy of the future,” the President said.

Turning to agriculture, he said competition in global agro-production will intensify; hence, in Kazakhstan, “agricultural lands should be used by those who introduce new technologies, continuously improve productivity and perform up to the best international standards.”

Continued on Page A2

## Nazarbayev Holds Key Meetings in Davos

By Aveya Bremen

Kazakhstan’s President Nursultan Nazarbayev participated in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on Jan. 22-23 and called the gathering a useful platform for the exchange of opinions on global economic issues and global development.

“The Davos forum is a place where you have an intense schedule of meetings, as it gathers a large number of heads of state, leaders of international organisations and large businesses. After [Kazakhstan regained] independence, I have often visited the forum because our country was little known to the world. The aim of the visits was to speak to and attract investors to the young republic. As you are aware, it was this place where the establishment of the Foreign Investors Council was initiated. Today, as we have adopted Strategy 2050 and established the goal of entering the group of the top 30 developed countries, there is a need to tell forum participants about this programme,” the President told the Kazakh media after the event as reported by his press service.

In Davos, President Nazarbayev had meetings with current and former heads of state, leaders of international organizations and multinational corporations. He also met the forum’s hosts, President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum Klaus Schwab.

Continued on Page A8

## Kazakhstan Institute Developing Eco-Friendly Plant Protection, Research May Apply to Efforts to Prolong Life

By Sergey Obolensky

ALMATY – The Kazakh Research Institute of Plant Protection and Quarantine (KazRIPPQ) with the support of KazAgroInnovation and the Kazakhstan Ministry of Agriculture is now conducting extensive research into the development of biological agents to be used against agriculturally damaging insects.

“During the years of independence, Kazakhstan has rapidly expanded the range of plant products’ procurements. The transition from central planning to foreign trade and market economy has radically changed the system of combating biological risks. It is quite obvious that the work to counter threats of quarantine pests is carried out today, not only in the conditions of sharply diversified imports, but also at the important for Kazakhstan moment when we have begun to restore the agricultural sector of the national economy, thereby providing food self-sufficiency,” says Abay Sagitov, the institute’s director as well as an academician of Kazakhstan National Academy of Sciences (NAS).

The institute was founded in 1958 and its main mission is to help reduce crop losses from pests and decrease the use of pesticides. It conducts basic and applied research in strategically important areas of protective measures against pests dangerous to agriculture and forestry.

Worldwide research is being done into environmentally friendly technologies for plant protection because the use of traditional pesticides has been shown to damage human health and can lead to soil, air and water contamination.

Participating in international research programmes, as well as utilizing the latest technology and equipment, provides the opportunity for KazRIPPQ to make advances in the field of plant protection and to safeguard the nation’s plant health.

This work has generated strong interest and demand for beneficial insects and biological products among farmers, agro-producers and urban professionals who are responsible for the condition of forest areas. The institute in the near future is expected to launch a laboratory and manufacturing facility for small-tonnage production of biological drugs.

Modern optical devices and other equipment allow the institute’s scientists to conduct high-level research into the morphological features and different parameters of identified insects, nematodes, fungi, bacteria and weed seeds. Due to the development of rapid diagnostic methods, the institute’s laboratories of virology and bacteriology in recent years have been dynamically evolving. They conduct systemic monitoring of imported seeds and planting material of fruit, berries and ornamental plants.

Continued on Page B5

## FM Idrissov discusses bilateral, EU relations in Vilnius

By Erik Blackwell

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov visited the Lithuanian Republic on Jan. 27 where he met with top country officials to discuss bilateral relations as well as ties with the European Union.

In Vilnius, Idrissov met with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė, Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevicius, Head of Seimas Loreta Graužinienė, as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs Linas Linkevicius.

According to Kazakhstan’s foreign ministry, Lithuanian leaders support Astana’s desire to expand cooperation with Europe on both bilateral and multilateral levels. As an important outcome of the Vilnius talks, Lithuanian officials reassured of their commitment to facilitate Kazakhstan’s collaboration with the European Union, including in areas such as signing an enhanced partnership and cooperation agreement between Kazakhstan and the EU, the country’s accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), economic and investment cooperation, as well as easing of the Schengen visa regime for Kazakhstan citizens.

Idrissov drew special attention during his meetings to the latter question. He underscored that easing the pan-European visa regime and eventually eliminating visa requirements for Kazakhstan citizens would become a catalyst for cooperation in all spheres, including entrepreneurship, tourism, education and investments.

The introduction of a visa-free regime with Schengen area states is not an easy issue and requires extensive coordinative procedures, signing a range of bilateral and



Foreign Ministers Erlan Idrissov and Linas Linkevicius signed a plan of action to promote bilateral ties in Vilnius on Jan. 27.

multilateral agreements, as well as reaching a consensus resolution of all member states of the single pan-European visa area. Kazakhstan is preparing the documents to make this change. According to Idrissov, it is hoped the European partners “will also do away with stereotypes and offer an unbiased evaluation of the progress Kazakhstan has made as an established state, which does not pose any risks, be it in the areas of migration or security.”

During the meetings, Lithuanian officials noted Kazakhstan’s progress in various areas, including the prospective hosting of EXPO 2017 in Astana, which, in their view, became “a major political victory” and an acknowledgement of Kazakhstan’s international reputation. Idrissov also briefed his Lithuanian partners on the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy, the main aspects of the recent state-of-the-nation address, as well as plans on industrial and innovative development and the

greening of the country’s economy.

The growing trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Lithuania was also noted as an important factor. In January-November 2013, bilateral trade grew by almost 25 percent, reaching \$700 million. Officials on both sides noted that trade and economic cooperation are not being utilized to their full extent and agreed to increase efforts to promote ties in transport, logistics, agriculture and tourism, education and healthcare.

Transit and transport cooperation is of special interest to both sides. In this respect, Lithuanian officials expressed a desire for Kazakhstan businesses to more actively exploit the potential of the Klaipeda port and their country’s railways, including increasing shipments from Kazakhstan in the frames of the Baltic Wind and Saule projects. Interestingly, the latter name has similar meaning – “sunlight” in Kazakh and “sun” in Lithuanian,

– although the languages belong to different language groups.

In turn, Idrissov underscored Kazakhstan would welcome expanded cooperation in agriculture. Kazakhstan is specifically interested in Lithuania’s advanced experience in agriculture processing and modern agricultural management technologies.

Kazakhstan “is seriously determined to bring its agriculture to a new level,” and participation by Lithuanian entrepreneurs in these efforts would contribute to reaching the goal, Idrissov said.

The parties agreed to continue their dialogue across the spectrum of cooperation and as part of preparations for the upcoming visit of Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevicius to Astana in 2014. They also agreed to work on an effort to organise a trip by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev to Vilnius.

### The growing trade between Kazakhstan and Lithuania was noted as an important factor. In January-November 2013, trade grew by almost 25%, reaching \$700 million.

During Idrissov’s visit, a plan of action on cooperation for 2014-2015 was also signed between the ministries of foreign affairs of the two countries.

### INSIDE

**NATION**  
Participants Assess Effectiveness of Coordination Consultation Conference, Note That Many 2013 Recommendations Were Accepted A2

**ECONOMY & BUSINESS**  
Government Develops National Export Strategy A4  
15th Session of KazEnergy Council Focuses on Current and Emerging Challenges A5

**EDITORIAL**  
Reviving the Great Silk Road in Structure and Administration A6

**OPINIONS**  
KUANYSHEV: Kazakhstan-India Ties: Facts and Perspectives A7  
ZHOLDASSOV: Syrian People are Victims of Geopolitics A7

**NATION & CAPITAL**  
Nurlan Alimzhanov: My Way into the Cinema B1  
Country Pays Its Respects to National Poet Ongarsynova B8

# NATION

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## President Urges Country to Use “Window of Opportunity” of Next 15 Years

Continued from Page A1

“The future lies in the creation of a network of new processing enterprises in the agricultural sector, mainly in the form of small and medium-sized businesses. In this area we should provide loans to business,” Nazarbayev explained.

In the area of science, “we should improve legislation on venture financing, intellectual property protection, research and innovation support, as well as commercialisation of research,” the head of state said as he charged the government with developing and submitting to Parliament a package of relevant bills by Sept. 1.

To accelerate the transfer of knowledge and new technologies to the country, Kazakhstan needs to fully use the potential of foreign direct investment.

“In cooperation with foreign companies, we need to set up design and engineering centres. We need to invite leading transnational companies operating in major oil and gas and mining facilities to establish production facilities for their own needs and services here in Kazakhstan. I know some large companies are ready for this. The government must elaborate on this issue and provide favourable conditions for the process if necessary,” Nazarbayev said. He also called for more activity in the country’s technology parks, including the intellectual innovation cluster already operating around Nazarbayev University in Astana and the Alatau Information Technology Park on the outskirts of Almaty.

As far as the triple priority of agglomeration, transportation and energy are concerned, the specific tasks included developing four cities—Astana, Almaty, Shymkent and Aktobe—into major agglomerates, contemporary urban centres driving economic growth. “They should become centres of science and investment, attract talent and provide high-quality education, healthcare and social and cultural services,” he explained.

Developing transport infrastructure and augmenting Kazakhstan’s transit potential in the heart of Eurasia will continue to be a top priority, with attention paid to improving both domestic infrastructure and transit routes. Domestic highways now under renovation include the Astana-Karaganda-Almaty, Astana-Pavlodar-Ust Kamenogorsk and Almaty-Kapchagay-Ust Kamenogorsk routes.

“We need to develop the logistics services sector,” the President continued. “First of all, it is a question of the maximum use of the Customs Union territory for transportation of our goods. Construction work on the Western Europe-Western China corridor is coming to an end. We have built a new railway to Turkmenistan and Iran, with



President Nazarbayev speaks to invited attendees after his address.

access to the Persian Gulf. In the future, Kazakhstan must invest in the creation of logistics centres in countries with access to the sea. It is necessary to reduce the customs clearance time for goods, increase the capacity of border checkpoints, strengthen the efficiency of the Aktau seaport and simplify exporting and importing procedures.”

Also significant is the new 1,200 km railway connecting Zhezkazgan-Shalkar-Beineu currently under construction, which will connect the country’s west and east by 2015. “These routes will enable us, through the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus, to reach Europe and, in the East, the Lianyungang seaport on the Pacific Ocean, regarding which there is an agreement with the People’s Republic of China,” Nazarbayev said.

Turning to the energy sector, he said traditional sources of power will be developed, while preparation for EXPO 2017 will provide an opportunity to promote the development of non-traditional sources. The head of state also announced plans to build a fourth oil refinery (the existing three are in Atyrau, Pavlodar and Shymkent) and a nuclear power plant.

Small and medium-sized businesses will continue to be looked at as the foundation of economic wealth creation as well as the most assured way to expand the middle class and social stability.

“The greater the share of small and medium-sized businesses in our economy, the more developed and sustainable Kazakhstan will be. Currently we have more than 800,000 small and medium-sized enterprises employing 2.4 million of our citizens,” Nazarbayev said as he urged greater assistance and better conditions for SMEs. “Small and medium-sized business is the economic basis of our Society of Universal Labour. For its development, we need to

comprehensively address private property rights. It is necessary to repeal all the outdated legal norms impeding business development. Small businesses should become a family tradition, passed down from generation to generation.”

As he urged the “unleashing” of human potential, Nazarbayev set specific goals for improving the quality of education and the quality of primary healthcare, promoting culture and the Kazakh language, raising pay for civil servants from the middle of 2015 and supporting those with disabilities.

“Kazakhstan must become a barrier-free zone for them,” Nazarbayev said. “It is our duty to take care of those people. Countries around the world are tackling these issues. People with disabilities can work in the service sector, food processing and agriculture industries. I am calling upon our businesses to encourage the employment of people with disabilities. An introduction of a special quota of 5-10 people should be considered. We will incorporate these people into active life, and they will not only receive disability benefits, but also feel themselves to be fully-fledged members of society.”

The seventh and final priority mentioned by the President is improving public institutions, ensuring equality before the law, fighting corruption, cutting red tape and introducing the principles of meritocracy in state-financed organisations.

According to the President, there will be two stages for the country as it seeks to join the 30 most developed nations: one before 2030, which he called a “window of opportunity” during which the country “will ensure dynamic growth in our traditional sectors and create a strong manufacturing industry,” and the other between 2030 and 2050, during which development will be based on the principles of a knowledge-based economy.

### Seven Goals for 2014

Turning from long-term plans, the President set seven specific development goals for 2014.

These include ensuring the economic growth of 6-7 percent (GDP grew an estimated 6 percent in 2013) and the increase of GDP per capita to no less than \$14,500.

Secondly, by May 1, the National Bank and the government are to develop a set of measures to bring inflation down to 3-4 percent in the medium term.

By June 1, the government and the National Bank are to develop a comprehensive financial sector development programme to run until 2030.

Fourth, the government and the Samruk Kazyna Fund are tasked with analysing all state-owned companies and defining a list of enterprises to be privatised. The same review should be done for the rest of the public sector. In the first quarter of 2014, a comprehensive privatisation programme for 2014-2016 is to be adopted.

Fifth, by the end of 2014, the government must prepare draft strategies on the formation of agglomerations in Astana and Almaty from now until 2030.

Sixth, by Sept. 1, the government must prepare Kazakhstan’s transit potential development programme to 2030, envisaging the removal of barriers to international trade.

Seventh, by the end of the first quarter of this year, the government has to agree on the location, investment sources and construction schedule for a nuclear power plant and the fourth oil refinery.

### Following Clear Principles, Promoting Patriotism and Cultural Values

According to the President, fol-

lowing a specific set of principles will help Kazakhstan achieve its ambitious goals.

The first principle is pragmatism and the evolutionary nature of all decisions. “No leaps, thoughtless experiments or adventures should be accepted in the economy, politics or social life. Our country and society will change as fast as the surrounding world,” he said.

The second principle is mutually beneficial openness. “We will attract a wide range of foreign investment, technology and innovation to our economy. We will create favourable conditions for the investors,” the head of state noted. “We see the deepening integration of our economy in regional and global economic systems as an important mechanism for joining the 30 most developed countries. This is, above all, linked to our participation in building the Eurasian Economic Union and joining the World Trade Organisation.”

The third principle is improving people’s well-being; the fourth is ensuring nationwide support.

Such support, according to the President, can be based on values seen as the embodiment of the “Kazakhstan Way” of development demonstrated over the 22 years of its existence as a sovereign state. These include the independence of Kazakhstan and Astana; national unity, peace and harmony; a secular society with high spirituality; economic growth based on industrialisation and innovation; the Society of Universal Labour; a common history, culture and language; and the country’s national security and its engagement in addressing global and regional issues.

According to President Nazarbayev, these form the foundation of the “New Kazakhstan Patriotism.” He called on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and the recently established Kazakhstan 2050 national movement to organise the drafting and the adoption of a Patriot Act Mangilik El (Eternal Land), a document outlining the principles of patriotic activism.

“The concept of the Eternal Land [Mangilik El] is the foundation of the nation’s great cause, the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy,” Nazarbayev said. “It is more difficult to sustain independence than to achieve it. It is a centuries-old truth, proven by many nations of the world. Mutual hostility and lack of cohesion have caused the disappearance of many nations. Many nations are lost forever, having been unable to withstand the tests of time. We must learn from the mistakes of others and draw lessons from the past. One lesson is that the creation of the Eternal Land lies in our own hands. We need to encourage ourselves to keep moving forward. We absolutely must preserve our undeniable independence: that is our wealth and our happiness.”

### DOMESTIC NEWS IN BRIEF

Two bus terminals with capacities of 4,500 people a day will be built in Astana by 2017. This decision was made at a meeting of city authorities where the latest presidential address was discussed. “By 2017, a new railway station, two bus terminals that can handle 4,500 people per day and a passenger terminal of the airport with four gates with a capacity of 1,500 passengers during rush hour will be built in Astana. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on two priorities. The first is development of the public transport system and making sure that its fleet remains up to date and efficient. The second is completion of the second ring road by 2016,” Astana Mayor Imanali Tasmagambetov said at the meeting. Along with the development of road infrastructure, implementation of the bus rapid transit (BRT) project will be a priority. The first 23 km BRT line is to be built by 2016. “The completion of the project will allow full coverage of the left bank and the right bank areas of the city with 63 kilometres of BRT lines,” Tasmagambetov added.

The akimat (regional government) of the Akmola region held a meeting to discuss the recent presidential address to the nation. Akim (Governor) of the region Kosman Aitmukhanov elaborated upon measures to be taken to promote sports among the region’s residents and develop sports facilities and outdoor activities. In 2014, it is planned to commission swimming pools in the Bulandy and Shortandy districts and a fitness centre in the Zharkain district. By 2019, fitness centres will have been built in every district. As earlier reported, 20 volleyball courts, 19 football courts, 28 hockey rinks and a fitness centre in the Atbasar district, a swimming pool in the Akkol district, a tennis centre in Kokshetau and a sports complex in the Burabai district were built in the region in 2013. “All of these measures will help increase the number of people exercising and playing sports on a permanent basis to 30 percent by 2020. Presently, this indicator is at 22 percent,” Aitmukhanov said.

Free courses on the state language will be launched in Astana on Jan. 24, 2014. All people willing to take the courses should submit their applications between Feb. 20 until Mar. 10. The courses will be held two times a week. Classes will consist of at least 12 people. Participants will be divided into three groups according to their level of knowledge. To enroll, please call: +7 (7172) 21-11-85, 21-36-41, +7(775) 902-61-89. It should be noted that there are a lot of people in Astana willing to study the Kazakh language.

The Astana Opera Theatre announced the opening of an opera and ballet studio for children. All children aged 8-10 years are welcome to try ballet, all candidates for the opera classes must be 6-15 years old. Children in the choir, orchestra, and instrumental groups must be from 10-16 years old. Priority is given to children with musical talent or that have music education, the press service of the theatre stated. Manager of the children’s studio of the Astana Opera Theatre Maiya Beknazar said the opera studio will prepare artists for the children’s choir and chamber orchestra. “Coping with stage fright is very important for young performers as well as developing artistic potential and a sense of rhythm. For this purpose, all students of the opera studio will take classes in acting techniques,” Beknazar emphasised. All students of the studio will have a busy schedule, as the children’s choir and instrumental groups participate in operas and concerts of the theatre together with the adult groups. They will also stage children’s plays. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 21 on the theatre’s website [www.astanaopera.kz](http://www.astanaopera.kz) (in the “About the Theatre” section).

## Participants Assess Effectiveness of Coordination Consultation Conference, Note That Many 2013 Recommendations Were Accepted

By Meruyert Nemerbayeva

ASTANA – The Kazakhstan Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted an event on Jan. 14 to summarise the 2013 results of the Coordination Consultation Conference held under its auspices. The conference facilitates dialogue between government bodies and representatives of local and international NGOs and multilateral organisations on issues of Kazakhstan’s democratic development.

The conference was established at the end of 2012 in response to the need to discuss issues related to democratic development, the rule of law and human rights. The conference provides recommendations to state authorities and the Parliament, including recommendations concerning the government programme “National Action

Plan on Democratic Issues for the Period to 2020.”

The Jan. 14 meeting assessed the conference’s results from the past year and laid out plans for 2014.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov opened the meeting to allow discussion among participants representing civic organisations and state authorities, as well as different regions of the country. Among the participants were prominent representatives of the Kazakhstan human rights community and international organisations such as Evgeny Zhovtis, Zauresh Batalova and Zhemis Turmagambetova, as well as UN Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan Stephen Tull and representatives of government ministries and agencies.

Evaluating the 2013 work of the conference, the hosts and guests praised the conference’s efforts.

The participants appreciated the efforts of the conference to establish a special culture of dialogue based on principles of openness, effectiveness and ability to both “listen” and “hear.”

Idrissov stressed that the conference is not burdened by trying to solve global issues, but rather seeks to impact urgent and achievable tasks.

“We did not set the task to solve cardinal issues and bring disparate opinions into uniformity. By contrast, our discussions are held for the sake of a rich exchange of different viewpoints and experiences. The main aim of such exchange is to produce results for raising the quality of life of our citizens,” Idrissov said.

During 2013, conference members held six specialised meetings, which resulted in 157 recommenda-

tions on issues of democratic development, rule of law, as well as human rights and freedoms.

More than half of those 157 recommendations have been accepted by executive departments and Parliament. The remaining recommendations are to be further developed in 2014.

Participants at the Jan. 14 meeting also accepted the conference’s plans for 2014, including mechanisms to accept and put into practice the recommendations the conference will make over the coming year.

The discussion focused not only on addressing issues, but also on ways make the conference function more effectively.

As to specific issues, a wide range of questions were considered.

Turmagambetova raised the question of the possibility of eliminating capital punishment. She called for

the consideration of eliminating the death penalty, referring to the experiences of other countries, including neighbouring Russia and Central Asian states. She also drew the participants’ attention to the need to establish a more accurate definition of terrorism and the repercussions for a person formally accused of terrorism. Among other important issues discussed were facilitating easier movement within the country, specifically the issue of local registration; freedom of religious unions, and participation in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

Concerning improving the conference itself, participants discussed how to better promote the conference’s recommendations to the government and what actions could be taken to incorporate the conference’s recommendations into the country’s legal framework. Participants expressed their desire to hold conference sessions on a more regular basis and with more time devoted for discussions. In that regard, a decision was made to increase the effectiveness of the meetings and to conduct additional working sessions of the conference.

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan welcomed the commencement of implementation of the Joint Action Plan on Iran's nuclear programme, which was adopted by the E3+3 and Iran on Nov. 24, 2013 in Geneva. In a Jan. 21 statement, Kazakhstan's foreign ministry said: "As a country that is firmly committed to the non-proliferation regime and that has voluntarily given up its nuclear weapons, Kazakhstan calls on Iran and the E3+3 to take all necessary steps to timely and effectively implement all arrangements within the framework of the Joint Action Plan, which should lead to a comprehensive and long-term agreement on Iran's nuclear programme. Kazakhstan is confident that implementation of the arrangements will result in an improvement of the level of trust, further normalisation of the relations between the parties and make an important contribution to strengthening regional and global security."

Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan Colonel General Saken Zhassuzakov attended the annual meeting of the NATO Military Committee in Brussels on Jan. 22-23. Heads of the general staffs of the militaries of NATO member states and partners took part in the meeting. Participants discussed the results of cooperation over the past year and prospects for the development of cooperation within the Partnership for Peace programme, as well as issues of regional and global security. "Kazakhstan pays special attention to cooperation with NATO. This is an important part of our multi-vector policy and a contribution to national and regional security," Zhassuzakov said at a meeting with Chairman of the NATO Military Committee General Knud Bartels. At the meeting, the sides reviewed efforts of the international community in creating conditions for the stable development of Afghanistan. Kazakhstan presently renders educational and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. Annually, about 200 Afghan students come to study in Kazakhstan and obtain bachelor's degrees in engineering, education, healthcare and agriculture under a Kazakhstan government financed programme that would educate 1,000 Afghan students. Also, Kazakhstan has granted the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan the right to ship cargo through the country both overland and by air. In Brussels, the Kazakh delegation also held a number of bilateral meetings with their colleagues from Turkey and the U.K. on the sidelines of the NATO meeting. Zhassuzakov said the Ministry of Defence of Kazakhstan paid special attention to the development of the peacekeeping ability of the army. Kazakhstan's armed forces participate in international peacekeeping exercises every year.

On Jan. 18-22, Kazakhstan participated in Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week in the UAE. Booths representing 650 companies were present at the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) and representatives of such international organisations as the International Energy Agency, UN Fund and heads of the world biggest energy companies delivered reports at the event. According to Serik Amirov, director of the department for cooperation with the International Exhibition Bureau and participants in the EXPO at the Astana EXPO 2017 national company, one of the biggest advantages of participation in the WFES is the opportunity to become familiar with the latest energy trends and innovations in the energy sphere. Kazakhstan's pavilion was one of the most popular pavilions at WFES 2014. Executive Director of the International Energy Agency Maria van der Hoeven, as well as Chairwoman of the World Energy Council Marie Jose Nadeau visited the Kazakhstan pavilion. The visitors to the pavilion had the opportunity to make their own video about future energy which is webcast on the expo2017astana.com website. Visitors could also learn more about the concept and theme of the EXPO 2017 exhibition.

## Emir of Qatar Visits Astana to Promote Economic Ties



President Nazarbayev and Emir Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani meet with musicians following a small concert.

By Erik Blackwell

ASTANA – The leaders of Kazakhstan and Qatar met in Astana on Jan. 19 during Emir Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani's official visit to Astana.

During a meeting at the Ak Orda presidential palace, President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his guest discussed the main areas of bilateral cooperation, in particular, investment, trade and economics, noting diverse pros-

pects for cooperation between the two nations.

"I congratulate you on taking up the high position of Emir of Qatar and wish you good health and success," President Nazarbayev told his Qatari counterpart. "We had a few meetings with Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, your father. He visited Kazakhstan several times and I visited Qatar. We are interested in building effective relations, particularly in economics. The economies of our countries

share some structural commonalities. In terms of volume of oil and gas, Qatar is one of the leading countries worldwide. Kazakhstan is also generously endowed with natural resources. Because of this commonality, we share many potential areas of cooperation."

The Emir expressed gratitude for the meeting and warm hospitality and extended greetings from his father, Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

"Since gaining its independ-

ence, Kazakhstan has increased its economy to \$230 billion. Despite the current economic crisis, Kazakhstan's GDP growth reached 6 percent [last year]. Today, Kazakhstan is one of the fastest growing economies in the world," the President of Kazakhstan said during the meeting.

The guest said he was looking forward to further developing cooperation between the two countries. He also noted that the parties will maintain discussions on bilat-

eral issues and the regional situation.

During the visit, several documents were signed by the parties, including an agreement on avoiding double taxation with respect to income taxes, a cooperation agreement between Tau Ken Samruk national company and the Qatari Mining Company, as well as a memorandum of understanding between the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund and the Qatar Investment Fund.

## Kazakhstan, Israel Strengthen Military Cooperation

By Aveya Bremen

The defence ministers of Kazakhstan and Israel signed a security cooperation agreement on Jan. 20 in Tel Aviv. The agreement formalises military and defence industry ties between the two nations.

During the meeting, Kazakhstan Defence Minister Adilbek Dzhaksybekov and his Israeli counterpart Moshe Ya'alon discussed current relations and future defence cooperation between the two governments.

Since Israel and Kazakhstan established diplomatic relations in 1992, the two countries have signed multiple cooperation agreements in the spheres of telecommunications, science and technology, among others.

"Kazakhstan has actively cultivated diplomatic relations with Israel starting from the time Kazakhstan obtained its independence. The Defence Ministry of Kazakhstan is interested in further developing military and military-technical cooperation with Israel, areas which are now seeing a notable rise in activity," Dzhaksybekov said.

Ya'alon noted that the visit, Dzhaksybekov's first to Israel, will enhance further cooperation between the defence bodies of the two countries.

Both parties agreed that the agreement on military-technical cooperation will create new dynamics in defence collaboration. "Israel is known worldwide for its capabilities," Dzhaksybekov said. "I hope this visit will mark a milestone for strengthened defence cooperation between our countries."

He added that Kazakhstan is interested in developing its military forces and for this reason is interested in studying the military experience of the Israeli army.

In order to cultivate practical contacts between the countries' special forces, Dzhaksybekov invited representatives of the Israeli Army to participate in the Altyn Uky international sniper contest, which will take place in Spassk, Kazakhstan, on July 14-19.

Regarding military equipment, both sides agreed to cooperate in

unmanned systems, border security, command-and-control capabilities and satellite communications.

During the official visit to Israel, the Kazakhstan delegation visited a range of leading producers of military equipment, including Israel Military Industries (IMI), Elbit Systems and Rafael. These companies deal with the production and modernisation of military equipment and the development of space surveillance satellites and rocket weapons.

In order to strengthen military-technical relations, Dzhaksybekov invited Israeli companies to participate in the KADEX-2104 international exhibition of weapons systems and military equipment to be held in Astana in May.

In Jerusalem on Jan. 20, Dzhaksybekov was also received by President of Israel Shimon Peres.

During the meeting, Peres noted that over many years the relations between Israel and Kazakhstan have been growing and noted that Kazakhstan, thanks to the balanced foreign and domestic policies of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, has become one of the dynamically developing countries in Central Asia. The Israeli president expressed readiness to cooperate in the area of high technology, and, turning to military cooperation, proposed holding joint exercises on Kazakhstan's firing ranges and facilities.

In turn, Dzhaksybekov noted that Kazakhstan attaches special importance to expanding investment and technical cooperation with Israel in military industries.

"Today, professionalisation is the defining development trend in Kazakhstan's Armed Forces. In modern circumstances, forms and methods of war have changed, while weapons and military equipment used require highly qualified specialists," Dzhaksybekov told Peres as reported by Kazakhstan's Ministry of Defence. "In this context we attach special significance to the possibility of studying the experience of combat training of the Israeli Defence Forces."

To help promote ties further, Astana dispatched a military attaché to its embassy in Israel last year.

## Astana Will Build Schools in Osh and Bishkek

By Rulfiya Ospanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a number of bills into law on Jan. 14, including a bill ratifying an agreement authorising the construction of a school in Kyrgyzstan dated Aug. 22, 2012 and the minutes of amendments made to it.

The agreement covered the construction of a school for 900 schoolchildren in the Osh region and the development of the territory adjacent to it. The amendments set the number of schools at two. Each school will be capable of handling 500 students.

According to the minutes, Kyrgyzstan will provide building lots of 2.49 hectares in Bishkek and 2.5 hectares in Osh.

Kazakhstan's Samruk Kazyna Welfare Fund will foot the 1.2 billion tenge (US\$7.72 million) bill for the project.

Earlier on Nov. 20, 2013 at the plenary session of the Mazhilis (the lower chamber of parliament) chaired by Speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin, the final bill, including all of its amendments, was discussed.

"The agreement encompasses the construction of a school for 900 schoolchildren and the development of land adjacent to it in the village of Ishkavan in the Karasu district of the Osh region. In the treaty, President Nazarbayev instructed that two schools be built," Deputy Minister of Education and Science Takir Balykbaev said then.

During the discussion of the bill, members of the Mazhilis underlined that the construction will not be funded by state funds. They noted that Kazakh funds should be spent solely for their intended purposes.

"In this regard, we need to men-

tion in the agreement that Kyrgyzstan shall not have the right to use the funds for other purposes," Irina Aronova, member of the Mazhilis, stated.

According to the procedure, after the approval of the bill in the Mazhilis, it was forwarded to the Senate (upper chamber of Parliament) and was approved. The document was considered adopted and submitted to the President for his signature.

Kyrgyzstan is hiring a general contractor for construction of the facilities and is working on providing design and cost details, issuing all necessary documents for connection of the facilities to engineering networks and carrying out other tasks.

The agreement was signed during the official visit of President Nazarbayev to the Kyrgyz Republic in August 2012.



A school is built in Kyrgyzstan under an agreement with its northern neighbour.

# ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Government Develops National Export Strategy

By Kulpash Konyrova

ASTANA – The head of state has repeatedly said that Kazakhstan should not remain a raw materials source for the world's economically developed countries, but rather build its own highly industrialised and developed society.

In recent years, with the implementation of the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID,) new factories have appeared in the country that may be competing with similar businesses abroad.

The opportunities which the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space have created for Kazakhstan necessitated the new National Export Strategy (NES). Specialists from the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies and the National Agency for Exports and Investment KAZNEX INVEST partook in formulating it.

Deputy chairman of KAZNEX INVEST Meyrzhan Maykenov, while presenting the document in Astana in mid-January, spoke in detail about its essence. First, he described the current situation regarding exports.

Today, Kazakhstan is ranked 42nd on the list of world exporters. The main export item of the republic is oil at almost 65 percent of exports; next in importance and volume of deliveries abroad are uranium, ferroalloys, wheat and flour.

According to Maykenov, despite the fact that Kazakh products reach 119 countries, active trade is conducted with only 10 of them. Only 25 percent of exports are processed goods, the remainder is by and large raw materials.

"Unfortunately, domestic exports are still characterised by low commodity diversification," said a representative of KAZNEX INVEST.

Thereby, the drafters of the strategy were facing a concrete challenge: Kazakhstan must have a quality and diversified export basket.

"In the new strategy, we have taken into account these factors. The plan consists of three main



According to KAZNEX INVEST, priority export industries will include metallurgy, the chemical sector and food production.

parts. The first gives the answer to the question over which goods Kazakhstan can supply to the world markets. The second determines the markets on which our products may be in demand. The third contains measures of support to Kazakh exporters which will help them to become competitive," said Maykenov.

According to him, priority export industries will include metallurgy, the chemical sector and food production. Major outlet markets are the country's main neighbours – Russia and China. To the south, they include Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Iran. The three south Caucasus nations and the EU will also be targeted.

The main question, however, relates to measures to be provided to support domestic exporters. In this regard, said Maykenov, much work must be done in the country. The first issue is creating an overseas trade network.

"Unfortunately, we have not developed a network of foreign support; we have only established diplomatic missions, while other countries abroad have commercial and trade representations. According to official data, a network of trade support abroad provides a ten percent increase in export volumes," Maykenov said.

In his opinion, there are two solutions to this problem. First is the introduction of the institute of trade attaches in the Kazakhstan embassies in 12 the abovementioned countries. The second step is to open, in conjunction with private business, trade missions and offices of enterprises in the major cities of other countries based on demand for various Kazakh products.

"In addition, to support domestic exporters, we need to improve transportation and logistics services, as well as greatly expand the range of financial services," he said. In particular, the agency propos-

es introducing so-called pre-export financing of products for domestic enterprises.

"This tool will allow the manufacturer to apply to second tier Kazakh banks and obtain loans under already concluded export contracts," explained Maykenov.

Indeed, in many countries, financial and insurance support for exporters from the state today is quite effective and popular measure. There are 75 export credit agencies in the world that cover 10 percent of all world trade, which is \$1.8 trillion.

During the global financial crisis, many exporters were able to remain afloat due to their insurance. The amount of compensation they received was \$20 billion.

As for domestic producers, they do not have such support and are consequently in unequal conditions with their competitors.

"About 80 percent of our exporters work only on the terms of preliminary payments, because no-

body covers their risks. Soft-term financing is not available to them either. Our manufacturers are left with high risk options, for example, while delivering goods to Afghanistan," he said.

According to Maykenov, having large financial guarantees and insurance, exporters in foreign countries can offer other incentives for the same export contracts: for example, they can work on deferred payment. But to introduce such tools as pre-export insurance in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to capitalise Kazekspogarat. Today, the share of its coverage does not reach even 1 percent of national exports, while the same institute in Belarus, for example, covers 2.3 percent of national exports.

Therefore, the successful implementation of the National Export Strategy will require better coordination in the field of export support and development and adoption of the law "On National Exports," Maykenov concluded.

### ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

Economic modernisation is a key priority for Kazakhstan on its way to becoming one of the top 30 most developed countries, director of the Institute of Economic Research of the Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning Maksat Mukhanov said at a Jan. 22 Central Communications Service media briefing. "Economic modernisation policies will seek to increase economic productivity, business development and introduce innovations and form new models for a science-driven economy," he noted. "Human potential development is another priority. Many countries pay special attention to this factor. President Nazarbayev set particular goals to be reached in this sphere. They include improvement of the entire educational system and improvement of demographic, social and cultural factors," Mukhanov said. According to him, the President also set such goals as increasing productivity, adopting the principles of sustainable development, scientific development and development of new segments of the economy in industry, the agro-industrial complex and the service sector.

Three investment projects for the construction of wind power plants are planned to be implemented in the Mangystau region. "Wind power plants will be built in Tyupkaragan and Karakiyan districts," Akim (Governor) of the region Alik Aidaibayev said. According to him, world leading transnational companies in the oil-and-gas and mining sectors are looking to start projects in the region. The project ensures the transfer of technologies, knowledge and investments. The KazMunayGas and CNPC signed a memorandum on construction of a plant for production of oilfield equipment at the "Aktau Seaport," one of Kazakhstan's special economic zone.

In 2013, state grants for business development amounting to 54 million tenge were allocated to 14 entrepreneurs in the Akmol region within the Business Road Map 2020. There are more than 33,000 registered small and medium business entities functioning in the region. About 120,000 people are employed in the SME sector which is 27 percent of the total number of economically active population. SMEs produced goods and rendered services worth 309 million tenge. Besides, six investment projects totalling 1.7 billion tenge were implemented in tourism sector thanks to the Business Road Map 2020. Another 36 infrastructural projects are to be implemented in 2014-2016.

Kazakhstan retained leading positions in the world in uranium production. Last year, the country produced 21,317 tonnes of uranium, according to the leading expert of Finam Management Dmitry Baranov, according to a Tengrinews.kz report. Canada, Australia, Niger, Namibia, Russia, Uzbekistan, the U.S., China and Malawi were other leading uranium producers in 2012. According to Deputy Director of the analytical department at Alpari, Darya Zhelannova, Kazakhstan has the second largest uranium reserves in the world and is the global leader by reserves of zinc, chrome, tungsten and vanadium ores. The country is also in the third position in the world by reserves of asbestos, wallastonite, rhenium and manganese, fourth in the world by the deposits of lead, sixth by reserves of phosphorites and gas, seventh by deposits of iron ores, silver and oil, and ninth by reserves of coal, copper and gold. Besides, Zhelannova said Kazakhstan has commercial reserves of three types of ferrous, 29 types of nonferrous and two types of precious metals. "Kazakhstan indeed has significant reserves of different natural resources but their large-scale production has not started yet. It is possible that with the full-scale production of these minerals, Kazakhstan will gradually gain positions in the ratings among the leading producers, but this will happen gradually, not overnight," the Finam Management analyst said. Meanwhile, Baranov added that China produced the most amount of gold in 2012, 370 tonnes. Other gold producers include, in the descending order, Australia, the U.S., Russia, South Africa, Peru, Canada, Indonesia, Uzbekistan and Ghana. Mexico produced the most amount of silver in 2012, 4,250 tonnes. Other leading silver producers include China, Peru, Australia, Russia, Bolivia, Poland, Chile, the U.S., and Canada. Chile leads in copper production in 2012, 5.37 million tonnes. Other copper producers are China, Peru, the U.S., Australia, Russia, Zambia, Congo, Canada and Mexico.

## IDB Forum Focuses on Private Sector Investment, Supporting SMEs

By Arman Kalabayev

ALMATY – Government officials, bankers and experts from 11 member countries of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) converged on Almaty on Jan. 14-16 for a forum assessing the IDB's performance over the past four decades, particularly with respect to economic cooperation programmes with member countries.

Asset Issekeshov, Kazakhstan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and New Technologies led his country's delegation.

To date, the IDB has invested in Kazakhstan \$500 million of the total \$1.2 billion contracted for the period of 2012-2014, Yerlan Baidauletov, a member of IDB's board of directors, reported.

According to Baidauletov, the bank plans to intensify its work with the private sector by both boosting project financing and initiating new deals. He added that active negotiations on new projects were underway.

During the forum, Issekeshov noted that the IDB has financed predominantly government projects in Kazakhstan. "When we signed the country strategy, we emphasised private sector financing by the IDB. Currently, the main IDB activities are tied to financing the trade and wheat sectors. However, it is important to implement new projects financing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)," Issekeshov said.

The IDB, with the Baiterek Nation-

al Innovation Holding, has recently established the Central Asian Fund of Renewable Energy. According to Issekeshov, the fund will start financing projects as soon as this year. He suggested that leasing companies also start financing SME projects this year.

Forum participants also examined the approaches and programmes of economic cooperation between IDB member countries. During the forum, two workshops, dedicated to issues in global Islamic financial sector development and assistance to Muslim communities in non-member countries, took place.

Public and private sector experts, including bankers, central bankers, officials and experts from economic ministries from Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the workshop on Islamic financial sector development. The participants discussed the effectiveness of the IDB's programmes promoting Islamic financing within the region.

The workshop on development assistance to Muslim communities in non-member countries in the region brought together representatives from Muslim communities in Mongolia, Georgia, Kosovo, Latvia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Russia to discuss the impact of programmes in various sectors including education, health, awqaf (religious endowment) investments, private sector support and relief aid.

## Mazhilis Approves Kazakhstan-Vietnam Investment Protection Agreement

By Aveya Bremen

ASTANA – A plenary session of Kazakhstan's lower chamber of parliament, the Mazhilis, on Jan. 15 approved a bill titled "On ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on encouragement and mutual protection of investments."

"The agreement is aimed at creating a favourable legal framework for promotion and mutual protection of investments, improving the investment climate and further development of mutually beneficial economic and

trade cooperation between the two countries," said Yerbolat Dossayev, Minister of Economy and Budget Planning of Kazakhstan, while presenting the bill in the Mazhilis. "A promising direction of our investment cooperation lies in collaboration between the KazMunayGas national company and Vietnam's oil and gas corporation Petrovietnam."

"Among the goods exported to Vietnam are asbestos, iron, and various transport equipment. From Vietnam we import tea, medicines, food processing equipment and computers," the minister added.

According to the minister, the

agreement was signed in September 2009 in Astana during a visit by the Vietnam's Prime Minister. The agreement includes provisions related to expropriation, nationalisation, compensation payment to investors and dispute resolution.

Dossayev noted that from 2005 to September 2013 gross inflows of Vietnamese investments in Kazakhstan amounted to \$2.4 million. The volume of trade turnover between the two countries has doubled since last year and reached \$221.8 million in January-November 2013.

## Monotown's Development Plan Spurs Economic Growth

By Zhubanysh Baygurinov

AKTOBE REGION – An ore mining and processing enterprise of TNK KazChrom is developing a large industrial centre in the once single-industry mining town of Khromtau that now employs more than 7,600 people.

TNK KazChrom has allocated more than 430 million tenge (US\$2.8 million) for the town's development and the centre is continuing to modernise production and infrastructure, as well as invest in social services in the community and ongoing training for its employees.

Khromtau is a mining town that is well known internationally for its huge deposits of chromite ore. In 2012, Khromtau was among 27 Kazakh-

stan's monotowns, which were towns that were supported by a single industry during the Soviet era. So the town's leaders in 2012 approved a comprehensive plan with large projects to diversify its economy. New life has also been breathed into the town with the launch of construction of the international Western Europe-Western China transport corridor, including a rail line from Khromtau to Altynsarino.

Over the next three years, the national government also plans to spend approximately 1 billion tenge (US\$6.4 million) to improve the town's roads and other infrastructure. The long-term plan also includes construction of a new residential area with more than 750 low-rise houses, support and service industries, a business in-

cubator, a support centre for businessmen and the implementation of partnership programmes.

The town's comprehensive development plan has already brought noticeable changes. The Aktobe Bread Factory is expanding its macaroni production facility and the Keramika company is also modernising its local operation. In the first year of the town's development programme, the government also allocated 96 million tenge (US\$618,240) to improve the heating systems in the gymnasiums of two schools and an education centre. About 14 million tenge (US\$90,160) has also been spent improving lighting along the road from Samara to Shymkent. The local park and recreation area were also modernised.

# BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

Issues regarding development of small and medium business and implementation of related instructions of the President were discussed at a Jan. 22 media briefing with Mazhilis (lower chamber of the Parliament) Member and head of the Ak Zhol Party's faction in the Mazhilis Azat Peruashev. "The President called small and medium-sized enterprises the main instrument of industrial and social modernisation. It is much easier for small and medium-sized enterprises to respond to the current challenges. Their organisational expenses are less. Therefore, SME entities are the driving force of diversification and innovation in opening new sectors of the economy and enriching industrial output in all counties," Peruashev said at the Central Communications Service briefing. "The President has urged cancelling all inactive regulations hindering business development; our party will follow suit by pursuing similar reforms," he noted.

"I think it is necessary to establish a scientific and innovation centre under the Atyrau Social-Entrepreneurship Corporation and oil extracting companies should be involved in the work of this centre," said Akim (Governor) Baktykozha Izmukhambetov of the Atyrau region, according to a Jan. 22 report of the Kazinform news agency. "The President's state-of-the-nation address reads that one of the key tasks is creating a knowledge intensive economy and increasing the potential of the scientists of Kazakhstan. As noted, development of new knowledge-intensive spheres of the economy requires financing of science in an amount no less than three percent of GDP. This should be done in the Atyrau region. Financing of some specific scientific research impacting development of the economy should be taken into account," Izmukhambetov said. According to him, the region has about 40 oil producing companies. "However, it is difficult to say that all of them meet allocation requirements of one percent of the budget for scientific research. As a result of the loss of finance resources, scientists will be left without support. Therefore, I believe we need to establish a science and innovation centre under the Atyrau Social-Entrepreneurship Corporation where oil companies will be involved," he added.

A Pavlodar plant producing methyl tert-butyl ether and polypropylene is ready to start implementation of the second five-year phase of the Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development, the 24.kz TV channel reported. The enterprise has successfully reached its intended output and now plans to conduct comprehensive modernisation of the production process. A modern petrochemical facility is to be built there soon. The plant was launched five years ago and impressive results were achieved there over this period. The production of an enhancive additive and polypropylene was launched at the plant. The second five-year stage of the industrialisation programme is aimed at developing extracting industries. The export potential of the oil and gas and mining sectors will be built up. In this context, the plant plays an important role. The plant holds great opportunities for development. It is planned to switch the plant over to operating on natural gas in order to make it more environmentally friendly.

An international conference "Current Issues in Planning Water-Supply and Wastewater Disposal Systems in Kazakh Municipalities" was held on Jan. 23 in Astana. The conference included a dialogue platform for the open discussion of how to increase the quality of planning in construction in Kazakhstan (legislation, efficient equipment usage) and issues of professional preparation of specialists. Representatives of the Committee for Construction Affairs and Housing Utilities, Kazakhstansky Vodokanalproekt company, Lev Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Karlskrona Company and international experts from France, Spain, Switzerland, Russia and Germany took part. The event was held at the Gumilyov Eurasian National University.

## 15th Session of KazEnergy Council Focuses on Current and Emerging Challenges

By Aveya Bremen

ASTANA – The 15th session of the KazEnergy council under the chairmanship of Timur Kulibayev took place on Jan. 16 in Astana. The council is an advisory body in which the largest Kazakh and foreign companies operating in Kazakhstan's energy sector participate.

Asset Issekeshov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and New Technologies; Uzakbay Karabalin, Minister of Oil and Gas; Nurlan Kapparov, Minister of Environment and Water Resources; Yerbolat Dossayev, Minister of Economy and Budget Planning participated in the session. Maria van der Hoeven, executive director of International Energy Agency (IEA), also attended. The head of the IEA presented the World Energy Outlook for 2013 as well as the forecast of the global energy development. According to van der Hoeven, Kazakhstan is a promising source of oil production growth.

During the session, the National Energy Report was presented. The presentation was prepared by KazEnergy. The report included key indicators in the energy balance which allows planning and future development of Kazakhstan's oil and gas industry and the energy sector in general.

"According to our estimates, oil production will reach around two million barrels per day after 2020," Karabalin said. According to the oil and gas minister, oil production has more than tripled to 1.6 million barrels per day,



The 15th session of the KazEnergy considered reports and forecasts for up to 2035.

whereas natural gas production has more than quintupled and reached 40 billion cubic metres per year.

"It is important that according to forecasts for up to 2035, oil, gas and coal are still cited as the most significant global energy resources. The energy sector is key in supporting strategic tasks. Since independence, we have entered the top 15 countries possessing

proven oil reserves and the top 20 countries possessing natural gas reserves," Karabalin noted.

It was reported earlier that by the end of 2014, the volume of oil production will reach 83 million tonnes. Oil production data is based on the strategic plan of the Ministry of Oil and Gas for 2011-2015. During the period from January to August 2013, Kazakhstan produced 54 million tonnes of oil

and condensate which exceeded 2012 levels by three percent.

At the Kashagan field, it is planned to produce around 15 million tonnes of oil in 2022. The share of KazMunayGas in this operation will reach 2.51 million tonnes. At the Tengiz field, production is expected to reach 39.315 million tonnes in 2022, including 7.863 million tonnes from KazMunayGas. The Ka-

rachaganak field is expected to produce 7.760 million tonnes; with the share for KazMunayGas of 776,000 tonnes. It was noted, however, that the data is subject to possible adjustment in the future.

Another major issue discussed during the session was emissions penalties related to the recent gas leaks at Kashagan. In September 2013, oil production at the field was suspended shortly after its start because several gas leaks were discovered in the pipelines from Island D to the onshore Bolashak Refinery.

Karabalin said: "The sanctions and fines specified in our agreement will be applied [to the consortium developing the field]. The size of the penalties will first of all depend on the ecological damage caused by the gas leaks and acid gas incineration. The process is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment. They have already conducted several meetings with the contractor to define the precise volume of gas incinerated, bled, etc."

Referring to the pipeline examination process, Karabalin further added: "Data analysis is being finalised. We expect work to be completed by the end of the month. After that, the contractor will present a plan of restoration of the gas pipeline and the system in general."

In general, the annual meeting provided a useful platform that allowed the discussion of current issues in Kazakhstan's energy sector and its prospects in the current global energy climate.

## Pavlodar Plant Prepares to Produce Euro 5 Fuels

By Sergey Gorov

PAVLODAR – The Pavlodar Petrochemical Plant is continuing its modernisation and expansion programme meant to prepare the plant to produce Euro 4 and Euro 5 fuels.

Euro 4 and Euro 5 fuels are fuels that meet current European Union restrictions on emissions.

In order to produce these fuels, the plant has spent 13.5 billion tenge (US \$87 million) to modernise its equipment. At the end of 2013, the plant commissioned a nitrogen-oxygen station with two cryogenic tanks of 50 and 20 cubic metres to store liquid nitrogen and oxygen. Two new 20 thousand cubic metre tanks for crude oil are also being installed.

Their construction will be completed by the end of 2014.

The updated equipment and improved production management allowed the plant to refine 5.09 million tons of oil in 2013, 1.8 percent more than the previous year. The company hopes to reach an annual refining volume of 7 million tons and to start producing Euro 4 and Euro 5 fuels by 2016.



The Pavlodar Petrochemical Plant refined 5.09 million tonnes of oil in 2013, 1.8 percent more than the previous year.

## \$112 Million Needed for Construction of Kazakh Terminal in Lianyungang

By Alina Usmanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan will need to spend more than \$100 million to build a terminal in the Chinese port of Lianyungang, said a Jan. 16 report by the country's national railway company, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy.

According to the project's feasibility study, its estimated cost is \$112 million. The Kazakhstan Temir Zholy report stated that on Jan. 9, a joint venture agreement was signed between Kazakhstan Temir Zholy and the Chinese company Lianyungang Gankou Jituan. The agreement outlined the parties' shares and obligations in the joint venture, activity on which will begin in the near future.

"The beginning of construction of the terminal is planned for the second quarter of 2014. The Chinese partners conducted the zero cycle work in 2013 to prepare the site for construction of the terminal," the report stated.

On Sept. 7, 2013, an agreement on cooperation and interaction was signed between Kazakhstan

Temir Zholy and the government of Lianyungang that envisages the creation of a Kazakhstan terminal in Lianyungang's port. Previously, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev noted that the project would allow Kazakhstan to reach the Asia-Pacific region via a route more than three times shorter than existing ones.

Kazakhstan Temir Zholy explained that the contributions of participants in the project will be formed according to their participation shares. The joint venture plans to take out a bank loan, but does not specify from where.

According to Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, the purpose of the project is to facilitate the processing and handling of Kazakhstan's imports and exports as well as transit cargo from Southeast Asia, Australia and Canada, providing a full package of services for all types of transport carriers. The idea of attracting prospective cargo volumes through the Chinese port was worked out with leading domestic shippers and exporters of grain.

## Kazakhstan Improves Score on Int'l Economic Freedom Index

By Altair Nurbekov

WASHINGTON – Kazakhstan improved its position over last year on the Heritage Foundation's 20th annual Index of Economic Freedom released Jan. 14.

The study, released by the Washington, DC-based think tank in conjunction with the Wall Street Journal, examines countries in four areas of economic freedom within specific categories including rule

of law (property rights, freedom from corruption); limited government (fiscal freedom, government spending); regulatory efficiency (business freedom, labour freedom, monetary freedom); and open markets (trade freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom).

The Heritage Foundation ranked Kazakhstan the 67th freest economy among the index's 178 countries. Kazakhstan score of 63.7 is .7 points higher than 2013 with

improvements noted in investment freedom, business freedom and monetary freedom.

Regionally, Kazakhstan ranked 11th out of 42 countries in the index's Asia-Pacific region.

Heritage defines economic freedom as "the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labour and property. In an economically free society, individuals are free to work, produce, consume, and invest in any way they please.

In economically free societies, governments allow labour, capital and goods to move freely, and refrain from coercion or constraint of liberty beyond the extent necessary to protect and maintain liberty itself."

Scores of 80 or higher are considered free, 70-79.9 mostly free, 60-69.9 moderately free, 50-59.9 unfree and under 50 repressed. Kazakhstan ranks as moderately free and above the international average.

Kazakhstan's score has improved by 22 points over the 17 years it has been included in the index and has been listed as moderately free since 2008, according to the Heritage Foundation. That is among the top 20 most improved countries.

Those gains have included dou-

ble-digit improvements in seven of the ten economic freedoms, including monetary freedom, trade freedom, financial freedom, fiscal freedom and business freedom, according to Heritage Foundation indexes. Improvements in the country's regulatory efficiency and market openness have contributed to these gains, according to the index.

To improve further, Heritage Foundation suggests Kazakhstan adopt structural reforms associated with reducing dependence on the country's energy sector and achieving a more diversified economy. It also recommends further improvements in property rights and in the fight against corruption.

# EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Reviving the Great Silk Road in Structure and Administration

Since the time of Alexander the Great, trade has played a crucial role in the development of the Eurasian continent. The web of trading routes called the Silk Road helped spread religions and scientific knowledge in addition to trading numerous goods between Europe and Asia. The Silk Road played an important role in the governing of empires, including the Roman, Mongolian and Ottoman, for thousands of years. The times of Alexander the Great, Marco Polo and the golden ages of the buoyant transcontinental trade in silk and spices are now deep under the ashes of history. The development of sea transport in the 17th century made the land routes traversing Eurasian steppes, valleys and deserts redundant.

As often happens in history, however, the situation seems to be reversing itself. We live in an astonishing age, when the great Silk Road, once abandoned, is now entering a new era. Modern geopolitical and geo-economic imperatives dictate that Central Asian countries and their neighbours revitalise the land-based Eurasian transit corridor.

Kazakhstan, like other key states in the region, is keenly committed to the development of land-based trade routes. In his Jan. 17 state-of-the-nation address, President Nursultan Nazarbayev emphasised the importance of developing transport routes. He said, "Transport infrastructure is at the heart of the industrial economy and society. I have said many times that it is impossible to reach the level of a developed country without modern, high-quality highways. Situated between Europe and Asia, between the North and the South, transportation remains of great importance to Kazakhstan."

The wisdom and rationality of this vision cannot be overestimated. Developing transportation infrastructure will bring multiple benefits both direct and indirect, short term and long term, to Kazakhstan and the region. Among the main benefits is socioeconomic growth. Developing the physical infrastructure required and improving the administrative sphere, including tax and customs procedures, will bring import prices to much more affordable levels, while exporters will find more efficient ways to reach international markets. Opening new markets and efficient export routes will give an important impetus to the production of ready goods in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the construction of transcontinental roads will connect the sparsely located cities of Kazakhstan and provide easier transit for goods within the country.

President Nazarbayev in his address noted the importance of internal roads. "We have initiated construction of highways between Astana, Karaganda and Almaty; Astana, Pavlodar and Ust-Kamenogorsk and Almaty, Kapchagay and Ust-Kamenogorsk. Double-speed trains already use these routes," the President said.

In addition to the political wishes of the leaders of key regional countries and their commitments to transportation construction, many powerful institutions, including the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), are championing transcontinental trade and providing substantial funds for the development of infrastructure. According to the World Bank, a \$2.125 billion loan has been allocated for the South-West Roads Project. Total funds provided by other international organisations including the ADB, EBRD and Islamic Development Bank, amount to \$3.5 billion.

A major impetus for the development of the Western China-Western Europe project is provided by neighbouring China. A few years ago, Wang Jisi, a prominent Chinese academic, suggested the "March westwards" strategy aimed at developing the historically underdeveloped western provinces of Xinjiang and Tibet. The Chinese central government has undertaken a series of measures to develop its western regions by allocating a share of the country's gross domestic product and staff to work in those regions. Moreover, the government has undertaken a number of infrastructure development projects and encouraged investment in the western provinces. All these efforts are directed, among other crucial

goals, at securing the stable transportation routes so vital to the Chinese economy: the volume of hydrocarbons coming through the pipelines traversing the country's west is projected to increase in the coming years.

Not only West-East energy supply routes determine the growth of transportation activity on the borders between Central Asian states and China. A gradual growth in activities along the transport routes passing through the Western China-Western Europe route is also stipulated by recent changes in the business supply chains of many producers.

Major computer manufacturers are being forced to transfer their production facilities deeper into China, pushed by the pressure of surging labour and land costs in traditional coastal centres. They are in the process of establishing new factories and development and logistics centres in the cities of Chongqing and Chengdu in western China. Hewlett-Packard (HP), Acer and Asustek's vast manufacturing centres are now in Chongqing. Dell and Lenovo chose Chengdu, the capital of the western province of Sichuan. Foxconn, a company that serves HP, Dell, Apple and Sony, has set up facilities in both cities.

According to experts, conditions are ripe for the development of transportation routes from China to Europe via Central Asia. With this surge in production in the western part of China, manufacturers will provide both motivation and support for the development of transportation routes to Western Europe, one of their main markets. HP was a pioneer in probing the rail shipment of its made-in-Chongqing computers to Europe.

A section of a modern-day Silk Road stretching from Chongqing to Western Europe will allow increasing commerce while reducing transportation costs. The manufacturers operating in China now have the choice of using the existing trans-Siberian railway, which is costly, or sea routes, including passing through the Suez Canal, which cost less but take up to three times longer. The Eurasian corridor will allow shipping from China to Europe in as few as 10-15 days. An HP executive said the company planned to shift more shipments from sea routes to rail. According to him, the rail route to Europe takes 18-19 days.

There is no doubt that the construction of roads and railways through Central Asia presents multiple beneficial prospects for the transit countries and their businesses. The mere physical existence of transit routes is not sufficient, however. A substantial challenge lies in the revitalisation of the Silk Road. The transit countries need to surmount the challenges of long delays on the borders, excessive customs duties and in some cases the imposition of non-official charges. Central Asian governments need to improve their customs procedures by increasing their effectiveness and coordination between national authorities of different countries in the region. In this respect, President Nazarbayev has a clear view. "It is necessary to reduce the customs clearance time for goods, increase the capacity of border checkpoints, strengthen the efficiency of the Aktau seaport and simplify exporting and importing procedures," he said in his Jan. 17 address.

There is also the huge, not-yet-unleashed potential of the private sector. As in the case of HP, businesses may take all possible measures to support the government bodies of the transit countries in improving border procedures with management and technological expertise. Large economic integration initiatives put forward by governments may allow businesses to contribute to the process. There are many companies in the Central Asian region that are eager to embrace commercial operations connected with transporting goods from the East to the West. However, it is still difficult for them to do so in the face of excessive customs fees, tight trade controls and other obstacles.

The New Silk Road is possible. Nations and businesses are already trying to build it, and there is no lack of commitment or interest from countries in both the East and the West. Yet creating the necessary institutional frameworks will require just as much effort and focus as actually building roads and infrastructure.

## Improving People's Welfare the Main Goal of Kazakhstan Way 2050

By Akhan Bizhanov

President Nursultan Nazarbayev's state-of-the-nation address, "Kazakhstan's Way 2050: Common Goal, Common Interests, Common Future," outlined specific contours and implementation phases for the ambitious plans for socio-economic modernisation set out in the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy. Its tasks reflect a new stage of activity for society and the state in making Kazakhstan one of the 30 most developed countries in the world by the middle of the century. Improving the welfare and social well-being of Kazakhstan's people are the main goals of this science-based policy document.

The country's leap to a qualitatively new stage of socio-economic development is a natural consequence of its achievements over the last decade. Consistently developing the country's economic potential helped solve many pressing social modernisation issues. Kazakhstan reduced unemployment from 12.8 percent in 2000 to 5.2 percent in 2013. During the same period, the share of people in Kazakhstan with incomes below the subsistence minimum decreased by more than four times while pensions grew more than sixfold. Investment in education increased eightfold; spending on health care tenfold. At the end of 2013, the average monthly salary in Kazakhstan exceeded 107,000 tenge (US\$689).

### One of the most important factors in achieving the set goals is education. Kazakhstan's education system is currently facing the challenge of introducing modern techniques and training programmes.

Based on this fundamental groundwork, Kazakhstan is now working toward a new set of goals arising from the 2014 presidential address and Kazakhstan 2050. The next two decades present a window of opportunity for a major breakthrough. The President set the task of meeting quality of life standards equal to those of the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Target achievements include important indicators like job security, provision of housing, clean drinking water, the consumer basket and access to education, health care, cultural and consumer services and social benefits.

Achieving this goal directly depends on quadrupling gross domestic product per capita by 2050. The middle class, which produces more than half of the GDP, will become the largest segment of the population of Kazakhstan. Life expectancy will reach 80 years or more. The country will establish an advanced national education system that meets the best world standards. Kazakhstan will be one of the safest and most comfortable states in the world.

To implement these plans, in the next 10-15 years the country will fundamentally restructure its economic base, emphasising the development of an innovative, knowledge-intensive and diversified economy as well as significantly increasing the proportion of small and medium-sized business in the GDP.

However, economic success is not a goal in itself. This progress must be converted into social achievements: full employment, material well-being, abundant housing, good education and health care, a connection with culture and other conditions for a fulfilling life. Economic independence provides the best opportunity for this and the President believes the development of small and medium-sized business should be the main instrument of Kazakhstan's industrial and social modernisation in the 21st century.

Among the main principles of the plan to modernise the country is improving people's well-being. According to the head of state, the social well-being of ordinary people should be a key indicator of progress toward our main goal.

In this regard, one of the major com-



ponents of social modernisation is ensuring active employment. Today, about 30 percent of employed workers do not have secondary or higher educations and the share of self-employed persons is about a third of the total economically active population. The state is taking steps to improve the efficiency of utilisation of our labour resources through the Employment 2020 programme. Developing small and medium-sized businesses is another key factor in improving employment in the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy, and one with a proven international track record.

The private sector is an engine of job creation and accounts for 90 percent of employment in developing countries. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) create two-thirds of all new jobs. In principle, Kazakhstan's SMEs are moving in line with global trends. At present, the country has more than 800,000 small and medium-sized businesses, which employ 2.4 million Kazakh citizens. However, their share in terms of employment and contribution to the country's economy still hasn't reached the desired results. Therefore, we've been tasked by the President to double these figures by 2030.

Special attention will be paid to developing the agricultural sector and agricultural processing. The creation and implementation of targeted programmes and mechanisms in this area will help address fundamentally important social problems, including the formation of a rural middle class and creating new jobs in rural areas, thereby improving the welfare of the rural population. The state will support its entrepreneurs, including with legal assistance.

One of the most important factors in achieving the set goals is education. Kazakhstan's education system is currently facing the challenge of introducing modern techniques and training programmes, improving teaching, including trilingual education and vocational training, promoting analytical thinking and more. We must reform the entire system of acquiring knowledge, the result of which should be access to education meeting the highest global standards. We must introduce at all levels of education the duality principle, which will contribute to the consolidation of not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills and work in production, including in high-tech and innovative enterprises.

Health is also a key socioeconomic

indicator. By leading healthy lifestyles, citizens increase their capacity to perform and, through that, their welfare. The state's task is to create the appropriate conditions for this. In general, the main principle of the national health care system is that the health of individuals becomes the joint responsibility of the state, the employer and the employee.

Demanding high standards from the education and health care systems, Kazakhstan will invest in the human resources of these sectors. The social packages of workers in the educational, health care and social protection spheres are set to be revised. From July 1, 2015, a new model of wages for civil servants will be introduced. It will ensure an increase in the salaries of workers in health care up to 28 percent, in education up to 29 percent and in the sphere of social protection up to 40 percent.

No less important in social development are intangible factors. As the President has pointed out, we are entering a period when spiritual issues will be no less important than economic and material factors. In this regard, forming a social and cultural environment that strengthens national unity, social harmony and Kazakhstan patriotism, as well as developing a local cultural code based on the synergy of the diverse cultures and spiritual traditions in the country, is relevant as never before. In this context, the President's goal of developing a long-term concept of cultural policy is a farsighted and timely proposal.

In socially oriented states, special attention is paid to citizens with disabilities. Today, there are over half a million such people in Kazakhstan. The country must become a barrier-free zone for them, the President said.

Resolving the problems of the disabled must be the common cause of all Kazakh citizens. I am convinced that socially responsible domestic entrepreneurs will support the President's call to provide all possible assistance in the employment of people with disabilities. The proposal to introduce special quotas for employing 5-10 people with disabilities to increase productive employment and socialise disabled people aims at that. So does the President's instruction to the government to increase by 25 percent the social benefits given for the disability and loss of a breadwinner by July 1, 2015, and to improve the legal framework for associations of disabled persons.

Our committee is actively involved in implementing the provisions of the President's address. Our increased activity in scientific work is reflected in our new name, the Committee on Socio-Cultural Development and Science. Among our immediate plans is a round table on the effectiveness of legal research and implementing its results in the process of socioeconomic modernisation. Expressing the opinion of my colleagues, I am sure that the deputy corps of the country will do their best to make a worthy contribution to this historic programme document and its implementation.

The author is chairman of the Senate Committee for Socio-Cultural Development and Science.

## THE ASTANA TIMES

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to announce that readers in Kazakhstan can now subscribe to the print edition of *The Astana Times*. The newspaper will be delivered to your door twice per month.

If you're interested in receiving *The Astana Times* in print, along with enjoying our online stories, act now! Contact KazPost near you and set up the subscription using our new subscription index **64572**.

We hope all of you continue to enjoy reading and sharing our stories.

Sincerely,  
Roman Vassilenko  
Editor-in-Chief  
The Astana Times

THE ASTANA TIMES  
astanatimes.com

### THE ASTANA TIMES

Editor-in-Chief: Roman Vassilenko  
Managing Editor: Tatiana Kostina  
18a Pobeda Avenue Astana, 010000  
Telephone/Facsimile: +7 7172 32 17 29  
Distribution in Astana: +7 7172 44 51 53

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

Advertiser bears responsibility for the content of advertisements. The newspaper does not answer the readers' letters, does not mail them, does not consider copies the size of over 5 printed pages, does not review and does not return the materials not ordered by the newspaper. Guest opinions do not necessarily reflect the newspaper's opinion. For reprinting, permissions must be sought and obtained first from The Astana Times, and reference must be made to "The Astana Times".  
The Astana Times is printed at "Media Holding "ERNUR" LLP, 30 Sileti Street, Astana.

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

ORDER: 32

PRINT RUN: 6,000

# OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Kazakhstan-India Ties: Facts and Perspectives



By Doulat Kuanyshiev

India celebrated her Republic Day on Jan. 26 with a traditional parade on the Indian Gate in New Delhi and festivities all over the country. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the Chief Guest of the celebrations this year. Five years ago, President Nursultan Nazarbayev received similar honours extended by the Government of India. And that very fact has had a long resonance ever since, among Indians of all possible backgrounds.

The year of 2014 will be fateful for Indian politics as general elections will take place. On Feb. 5, the Indian Parliament will hold its next session where, as expected, the timetable for the polls will be announced. The next government will be decided by the people by electing Members of Parliament to the 16th Lok Sabha. Voting will be held in all 543 parliamentary constituencies of India. 272 seats are needed for a majority.

But the country has already been in the midst of very active and – at times – fierce electoral campaign. While main political parties and leaders may differ in their approaches and positions for the future, one thing a reader in Kazakhstan must be sure about: whichever party or alliance gets the majority in the new parliament, and whoever heads the government as Prime Minister, Indian policies towards Kazakhstan as well as pillars of Indian foreign policy will remain the same.

Kazakhstan's relations with India have always been warm and friendly. Bilateral relations between Astana and Delhi are based on equal partnership, mutual respect and understanding. Ties between the two countries, maturing from year to year, show great potential, which has everything to once again bring the Kazakhstan-India relations to a new level of cooperation.

Establishing new contacts, regular signing of major projects demonstrate the progressive development of bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation. The recent state-of-the-nation address by President Nazarbayev attracted wide interest in India. The Kazakh leader's call on developing an "Eternal Land" concept, in particular, drew special attention as nationhood in the modern and diverse world is always in the focus of the Indian public opinion. Both countries are multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi-cultural societies committed to following secular policies and to countering fundamentalism, religious extremism

and terrorism. Views of both countries coincide on all major domestic and international issues. Kazakhstan respects and recognizes India's global and regional standing. India is one of the key players in political, economic, global and regional affairs. We see the growth of India and we have full appreciation for the opportunities India's growth presents to the world and to our part of it.

Kazakhstan-Indian diplomatic relations were established just over 20 years ago, although contacts between our nations date back to the days of the Great Silk Road. Signed on Feb. 22, 1992, an agreement establishing the relations gave a start to close friendly relations between the two nations based on the fundamental principles of international cooperation. President Nazarbayev chose India to be the first country outside the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to visit in February 1992 just after Kazakhstan regained independence. This visit was followed by the visit of Prime Minister of India Narasimha Rao to Kazakhstan in 1993. But prior to it, the then State Minister of External Affairs Salman Khurshid who is currently the Indian Foreign Minister led one of the first official delegations to our country.

Vice President of India KR Narayanan visited Kazakhstan in September 1996, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev visited India in August 1999. The year of 2002 was highlighted by the exchange of state visits. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid his visit to Kazakhstan combining it with participation in the first Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) Summit. President Nazarbayev, in addition to official meetings in New Delhi, visited an unofficial IT capital of India, Bangalore.

More recently, Vice President of India Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited Kazakhstan in April 2008. Fruitful discussions to provide greater economic and commercial content to bilateral relations were held with President Nazarbayev. Several areas including IT, space, agriculture, food processing and others were identified as key to bilateral ties.

President Nazarbayev's state visit and his participation as the Chief Guest on India's 60th Republic Day celebrations on Jan. 23-26, 2009 gave a significant impulse to our ties. Discussions were held on providing a big push to bilateral commercial and economic ties as well as in the area of energy cooperation. Significant deals and accords were reached. Our countries agreed on forging strategic partnership. While Kazakhstan was second only to the Russian Federation to attain such a high level of partnership with India, it also became a key element of India's proclaimed "extended neighborhood" and "Connect Central Asia" policies.

India has been consistently and actively supporting the CICA

process initiated by President Nazarbayev in 1992. Its idea of a full-fledged security and cooperation mechanism is very much in concert with aspirations of India for the continent, being a founding member and a driving force of the Non-Aligned movement, SAARC, BRICS, IBSA, among others.

India has an observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and is keen to enhance its contribution to its programmes and activities. India has applied for full membership of SCO and there is a considerable positive interest among members to engage India more actively and substantively as a full member of the organization. Interaction in the UN and other international fora has been close and mutually supportive. Kazakhstan endorsed India for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council while India supports our bid for the Security Council non-permanent membership in 2017-2018.

Over the past two decades, Kazakhstan's foreign policy, designed in broad lines and put in practice through consistent action by President Nazarbayev, has focused on developing and strengthening relations with our key partners, and establishing a safe and friendly environment around us. Taking advantage of our geography, as a country at the heart of Eurasia, we can benefit from trade flows between European and Asian markets, both along the East-West and North-South vectors. The key to making the most of Kazakhstan's strategic location is to promote integration between West and East and to keep the wider Central Asian region in a clear focus of the international community.

Today, Kazakhstan accounts for more than half of India's trade with the Central Asian countries. Bilateral trade between India and Kazakhstan increased from \$120 million in 2005 to almost half a billion dollars in 2012. During the nine months of 2013, this figure reached \$505 million.

One of the biggest impediments to expanding our bilateral trade is the lack of direct connectivity. In this regard, the construction of new routes from North to South will play an important role in trade development and economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and India. This will reduce by half and even more the trucking distance and reduce transportation costs.

Kazakhstan already commissioned its portion of the Beineu-Etrek-Gyzylgaya-Gorgan (Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran) railway route as part of the International North-South Transportation Corridor. In May 2013, President Nazarbayev and President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov opened the Bolashak (Kazakhstan) – Serkhetayka (Turkmenistan) railroad crossing, which is set to become one of the key links in the growing network of railways and road connections restoring the ancient Silk Road in modern conditions. We hope our Iranian and Turkmen partners commission their respec-

tive parts of the route as soon as in 2014, and we will be celebrating the completion of the construction of the whole railroad leading to the Gulf ports of Iran.

Currently, India has been invited to be a part of the Eurasia Project to develop oil and gas assets in the north Caspian Sea area. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) is keen to participate in it. Currently, OVL, in close cooperation with KazMunayGas (KMG), finalizes preparations to start drilling on Satpayev exploration project. The Indian side proposal to establish a joint working group to study the possibility of constructing a pipeline from Shymkent in the south Kazakhstan to the border of India has received positive feedback in Kazakhstan.

Since 2010, Kazakhstan's KazStroyService (KSS) engineering, procurement and construction company's has signed up to perform works in Indian infrastructure projects worth more than \$600 million. Another Kazakhstan company, Azimut Energy Services, signed a contract with Cairn India Ltd. to work on implementation of a seismic survey in Rajasthan.

Nowadays, several private Indian companies have a significant presence in Kazakhstan such as Punj Lloyd Kazakhstan Ltd., KEC International Ltd., TCS and others. They have been active in the market in the area of construction of oil and gas pipelines, electric transmission lines, IT etc. Indian companies are also keen to bid for infrastructure and construction projects in Kazakhstan in the field of road and railway construction, electric power transmission and distribution, telecommunications, power generation etc. According to the statistics, more than 500 joint ventures are registered in Kazakhstan, of which 190 are fully funded by the Indian capital.

During his official visit to India in March 2013, Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov urged Indian businesses to strengthen business-to-business links with their counterparts in Kazakhstan. Several noted businessmen took initiative in answering the call. I would like to commend Rajan Madhu who cleared all legal formalities for the India-Kazakhstan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI), now registered in New-Delhi. The Chamber is created to protect and promote business interests in both Kazakh and Indian markets, as well as to initiate the establishment of joint ventures in various economic activities. We suggest and hope that the recently instituted National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan, chaired by Timur Kulibayev, will – after completing its institutionalization's formalities – also devote special interest to creating a twin structure with the India-Kazakhstan CCI.

The prospects of cooperation between Kazakhstan and India are bright. We agree to work very closely and pragmatically to develop connectivity between South Asia and Central Asia. This is the key answer to many challenges which lie before us. We hope that

with the strength and potential of India we will be absolutely able to develop those connecting opportunities in multiple forms.

Civil nuclear energy cooperation presents attractive prospects for further diversifying our bilateral economic and commercial contacts. Kazakhstan actively supported India for an unconditional waiver for international commerce in civil nuclear energy in 2009 at the negotiations at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Astana in April 2011 provided the much needed impetus to bilateral relations. One of the most significant achievements of Prime Minister Singh's visit was the signing of an agreement for cooperation in peaceful uses of atomic energy. It provides a legal framework for cooperation in fuel supply, nuclear medicine, use of radiation technologies for healthcare including isotopes, reactor safety mechanisms, exchange of scientific and research information, exploration and joint mining of uranium, design, construction and operation of nuclear power plants. The agreement needs to be viewed in the context of India's growing energy demands. According to India's 12th Five Year Plan, nuclear power will play a major role in meeting the country's energy needs. The country needs an additional 100,000 MW of power during the 12th Plan (2012-17).

Prominent diplomat and public figure, Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar who currently heads the National Foundation for Communal Harmony in his recent article noted that in the area of space, the needs and demands of Kazakhstan and the expertise and capabilities of India are complementary to each other. Manufacturing and launching of satellites as well as utilizing remote sensing technology for improving the living conditions of the people through uses like telemedicine, geo-prospecting and others. can be harnessed to mutual advantage. It is useful to mention that this former Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia has been continuously contributing to strengthening ties between Kazakhstan and India.

The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme is an excellent initiative to enhance knowledge and upgrade skills of Kazakhstan officials and entrepreneurs through training programmes in India. Under this scheme, India offers around 60 scholarships to Kazakh specialists, entrepreneurs and officials, both in the public and private sector for imparting training in areas and sectors including Information Technology, English conversation, Mass Communication, Environment, Educational Planning, Bank Management, Remote Sensing, Textiles, Pharmaceuticals and others. They are provided under the guidance of Indian Ambassador to Kazakhstan Ashok Sharma and conducted in some of the best and most reputed institutions in India. India has in-

dedicated its readiness to expand the range, content, size and scope of these programmes depending on Kazakhstan's requirements.

Tourism is another area which presents immense possibilities. We have daily flights between Almaty and New Delhi and several more connecting the two countries are pending. India has a rich and enterprising middle class estimated in the range of 50 to 300 million people.

Kazakhstan presents an excellent location in the neighborhood of the country which, in addition to its unique steppes, lakes and hills, also offers snow clad mountains and ski slopes. And, of course, the challenge of attracting as many visitors to EXPO 2017 by definition cannot exclude potential Indian participants and tourists from the equation.

Today, the tourism industry in Kazakhstan is entering a new phase of its development. The simplification of visa procedures, the build-up of the hospitality industry, and many other issues are on the agenda. A bilateral intergovernmental agreement on simplifying the issuance of visas for some categories of citizens is under the consideration by relevant authorities of two countries. It is worth saying that Kazakhstan is included to the very exclusive list of the selected countries whose citizens will be able to get a visa at the airport upon arrival. We hope this decision will come into force in the near future.

Since the embassy of Kazakhstan opened its doors in New Delhi in 1993, one of the main concerns is to provide for the continuity and regularity of functioning of the institutes and mechanisms of mutual interaction. Right now, we are preparing for the next regular annual meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission, presided over, respectively. Similarly, a bilateral Special Working Group on Trade and Commerce will soon gather in New Delhi. We look forward to hosting in the Atakat exhibition centre in Almaty a huge Indian Fair at the end of March. The Kazakh "Saltanat" State Dance Ensemble will soon participate to the annual Surajkund Mela Arts Festival in India.

The Indian embassy was first set up in Almaty in 1992, and now it is in Astana. Embassies add their own flavour to the city's landscape. Keeping within the diplomatic protocol, I wish that one day I will see a beautiful building of an Indian embassy adding something that might remind us of Taj Mahal and the eternal magics of India in the heart of Eurasia.

I would like to convey to our Indian friends and colleagues my best wishes on the occasion of the Republic Day. I firmly believe the existing strategic cooperation between our countries will progress further for the benefit of both of our peoples.

**The author is the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to India.**

*For the full version of the opinion please visit our website.*

## Syrian People Are Victims of Geopolitics



By Yelaman Zholdassov

The Syrian Civil War, the ongoing armed conflict in Syria between forces loyal to the Ba'ath government and those seeking to oust it, is nearing its third year carrying multiple dimensions of violence, including sectarian and ethnic violence and global terrorism. What was called in the West the

Arab Spring came to Syria as an Arab Winter, leaving thousands dead and making millions refugees. Today, the historically rich country and the centre of the Umayyad Caliphate that controlled a third of the world in the Middle Ages has become a war-torn country, lagging economically behind its neighbours. Syria has a special place in the hearts of the Kazakh people, whose great sons Al-Farabi and Beibars are buried in Damascus.

Its globally strategic position has never allowed Syria the chance to resolve its internal conflict through political dialogue. Its location on the Mediterranean Sea, a potential transit route for liquid gas as well as a connecting point for Sunni Muslim radicals, combined with the volatile security situations in many of its neighbours, created a scenario in which global and regional powers felt it necessary to intervene in the conflict.

World powers with an interest in the Syrian conflict took firm positions, as if taking a last stand. The supporters of the Arab Spring managed the conflict to fit their interests. Now the Syrian people as well as other peoples of the region are paying for this multidimensional conflict of geopolitical, strategic and economic interests.

The only hope is the Geneva II Conference on Syria, during which both sides of the conflict can negotiate to implement the Geneva Communiqué, which calls for a transitional governing body. I hope the optimistic statement of the spokesperson for UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon proves correct when it says "it aims to bring two broadly representative and credible delegations of the Syrian government and opposition to a negotiating table in order to end the conflict and launch a political transition process through the

full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012."

Unfortunately, these negotiations lack a full and real representation of the two sides. The opposition especially cannot be fully called in to this process. Even if they persuade the Western-backed Syrian Free Army to implement the communiqué, they will face the Islamic Front and Al-Qaeda loyal Jabhat Nusra, who are also members of the opposition. Here, there is a risk of repeating the long conflict in Afghanistan, creating a conflict between fundamentalism and liberalism and creating the conditions for lingering sectarian and ethnic rivalry. Rebel groups who want to implement Sharia law in Syria may start to fight any transitional government, creating an enclave inside the country to host global terrorism. That's what Al-Qaeda leader Aiman Zawahiri meant by using this opportunity

to call rebel groups to unite after the Islamic Front started to fight another affiliate of Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant. This is yet more fuel to ignite global terrorism.

There is another dimension of this conflict that is hard to stop through political dialogue: sectarian violence. The Syrian Civil War has leaked into neighbouring Iraq and Lebanon in the form of sectarian violence. This conflict needs the involvement of neighbouring countries, and its resolution depends on the internal political dialogue in Iraq and Lebanon as well as among religious leaders and clerks in the region. Iraq suffered sectarian violence, while Lebanon had a civil war.

The issue of the Kurds is yet another transnational problem within the Syrian conflict. Today, Syrian Kurds have formed armed groups inside Syria. Even if they

have never declared separatist intentions, they could cause serious cross-border problems if they were not satisfied by the transitional government.

What we have learned from conflicts in the Middle East and especially from the Syrian Civil War is that Kazakhstan's national leader Nursultan Nazarbayev's global and regional initiatives, starting from confidence-building measures and extending to fostering dialogue among religions, were really necessary for stability in the region. The resource-rich countries of the Middle East must invest their human energy into social and economic development instead of being victims of the geopolitical games played by regional and global powers.

**The author is a chief expert at the Centre of Military and Strategic Research in Astana.**

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Nazarbayev Holds Key Meetings in Davos

Continued from Page A1

During the meeting with Burkhalter, Nazarbayev discussed key areas of Kazakh-Swiss relations, prospects for further development, as well as issues of global and regional security. Nazarbayev stressed that Switzerland is considered one of Kazakhstan's main trading partners in Europe. More than 400 Swiss-Kazakh companies, including such major ones as Algroup, Rieter and Glencore, operate in Kazakhstan. The parties also discussed strengthening the work of the Kazakhstan-Swiss Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation.

The Kazakh President also met former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. International issues, including the situation in the Middle East and Central Asia were discussed during the meeting. Nazarbayev and Blair also talked about Kazakhstan's Strategy 2050 and issues related to its implementation.

The actions necessary to implement Strategy 2050 were also discussed with the presidents of international development institutions. During a meeting with Sir Suma Chakrabarti, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the parties discussed mechanisms of the bank's support for domestic and foreign investments in Kazakhstan.

"EBRD has already invested US\$6.5 billion in Kazakhstan. During our meeting, I expressed my wish that more attention be paid to supporting the development of small and medium-sized businesses," Nazarbayev said after the meeting. The sides reviewed a number of prospective projects aimed at developing Kazakhstan's infrastructure, in particular the bank's support for financing Almaty's urban transport programme.

In turn, Chakrabarti expressed EBRD's interest in increasing its investment operations in Kazakhstan. Moreover, he emphasised EBRD's active participation in implementing key aspects of Kazakhstan's Green Economy Strat-

egy through more than 50 percent of all projects.

Nazarbayev also discussed the country's development programme during a meeting with Roberto Azevedo, director general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

They discussed the process of Kazakhstan's accession to the WTO and expressed confidence that continued dialogue would resolve issues related to Kazakhstan's accession.

**"EBRD has already invested US\$6.5 billion in Kazakhstan. I expressed my wish that more attention be paid to supporting the development of SMEs." – Nursultan Nazarbayev**

A meeting with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso also contributed to the discussion of international economic cooperation. Nazarbayev and Barroso talked about prospects for strengthening trade and investment cooperation and stressed the importance of the work being done within the framework of the EU Strategy in Central Asia. The parties also focused on efforts to sign a new Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Kazakhstan and the European Union to replace the one from 1999. Nazarbayev and Barroso also discussed the activities of the Customs Union and prospects for the Eurasian Economic Union.

While in Davos, President Nazarbayev also met with business executives. During his meeting with President of Total Christophe de Margerie, the company's activities in Kazakhstan and its participation in projects implemented under the North Caspian Sea Production Sharing Agreement were dis-

cussed. The parties emphasised the dynamic development of Kazakhstan's oil and gas sector due to the state policy of attracting foreign investments and new technologies. The President of Kazakhstan underlined the importance of human capital development and a focus on the socio-economic development of the country.

"I had meetings with the heads of the companies operating in Kazakhstan. We discussed prospects for their further activities in our country. The main goal is to encourage multinationals to establish their servicing companies in our country. This issue is related to the industrialisation of Kazakhstan. My counterparts underscored the importance of our determination to develop infrastructure: construct roads and railways, ports, airports for further development of our country. In this context, our meetings have been very significant," the President said.

Another business-related dialogue was held with Chairman and CEO of ArcelorMittal Lakshmi Mittal. Nazarbayev and Mittal reviewed aspects of the company's participation in the development of the metallurgical sector of Kazakhstan, as well as activities of ArcelorMittal Temirtau Company and implementation of various investment and social projects. One of the more timely issues on the agenda for this meeting was the importance of keeping the company's obligations regarding maintaining its workforce at stable levels.

Overall, President Nazarbayev praised the international event. In subsequent comments to the media he called the WEF a good platform for meeting old partners and making new acquaintances.

"The leaders of other countries are interested in my opinion regarding the current situation and perspective development of our region. A general concern exists regarding Iran's nuclear programme, the resolution of the situation in Afghanistan, Syria and recent events in Ukraine. However, the exchange of opinions brings up useful proposals and solutions. The forum is not a managing body, but rather suggests possible ways to resolve various difficult situations," Nazarbayev said.

## Astana Demonstrates Progress on Green Economy at Energy Summit



By Merrey Kabidin

ASTANA – Minister of Environment and Water Resources, Nurlan Kapparov led a Kazakhstan delegation to the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) in Abu Dhabi on Jan. 20-22. As part of the summit, a large exhibition was organised at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company venue, where Kazakhstan presented its Astana EXPO 2017 pavilion.

WFES is the world's premier renewable energies, energy efficiency and clean technologies event. This year, the summit attracted world leaders, international policy makers, industry experts, investors from the public and private sectors and the media, who participated in the discussion of future energy challenges.

For Kazakhstan, the WFES has been an important platform for useful dialogue on alternative energy development since the transition to a green economy became the country's main priority a few years ago. This event also offered a good opportunity to invite future exhibitors and attract investments to EXPO 2017 in Astana.

Last year, Kazakhstan became a member of the International Re-

newable Energy Agency. Now, the government of the country has set a goal to ensure that wind- and sun-generated power account for half of energy supplies in Kazakhstan by 2050.

According to Kapparov, it is high time for Kazakhstan to move to renewable energy sources, as they are safe and cost-effective.

"Many countries are already using alternative energy sources. We should join them. Coal is highly pollutive. Up to 5,000 people die every year in Kazakhstan because of diseases caused by coal dust. It is time to change the status quo, but this does not mean that we completely abandon coal," he said at the event.

During the summit, Kapparov and ministers from 42 countries that recently joined the organization signed a Global Atlas for Solar and Wind Energy. It includes information about all alternative resources in any given country.

Afterwards, the Kazakhstan minister met Secretary General of the Energy Charter Urban Rusnak. Kazakhstan plans to hold the Energy Charter Conference in Astana in November.

"I have studied President Naz-

arbayev's recent state-of-the-nation address and I think his energy transition goals are very progressive," Rusnak noted.

Kazakhstan's pavilion was very popular at the event, thanks to its interactive features. Visitors could record their own video testimonials on future energy and upload them onto the EXPO 2017 website ([www.expo2017astana.com](http://www.expo2017astana.com)), as well as take part in a number of different learning activities built around the EXPO 2017 exhibition stand.

Maria van der Hoeven, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) also shared her thoughts on Kazakhstan's policy on green development.

"Kazakhstan has great potential. I think EXPO 2017 will show us not only the changes happening in Kazakhstan, but also by pooling together the efforts of all Eurasian countries the country will find an answer to the question about what should be done to build an eco-friendly city," van der Hoeven said.

The WFES was held for the seventh time this year and continues to build bridges between countries seeking to spread clean technologies and renewable energy use.

## President Says EXPO 2017 Construction Should Utilise Domestic Companies



By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev during a Jan. 21 meeting with Astana EXPO 2017 National Company Board Chairman Talgat Yermegiayev directed that the construction of EXPO 2017 facilities be used to develop local entrepreneurship.

"Construction of large EXPO 2017 complexes should be used for development of small and medium-sized businesses. Primarily, Kazakhstan construction companies that match the level of quality should be involved," the President said. "Kazakhstan construction materials should also be used. This will give the opportunity for domestic businesses to work. There

should be quality control and relevant professionals."

Nazarbayev also said it is important for large companies to develop training programmes.

"We need to look at their experience and develop a similar programme, select young people, train them and get them ready to work in the preparation and conduct of EXPO 2017. We need to attract professionals and companies from all regions of Kazakhstan. I will stress again, all efforts must then be used for the benefit of our people and the capital," the President said.

Yermegiayev reported during the meeting that construction of EXPO 2017 facilities and receipt of the official flag of the Inter-

national Exhibitions Bureau are scheduled for 2014.

"In December 2013, we completed all registration procedures. To date, the work has been carried out according to the schedule, no failures or under-runs. The construction of EXPO facilities is scheduled to start for April of this year," he said.

The President also noted the possibility of establishing an Energy Institute in conjunction with the Nazarbayev University.

"This research institution will study new energy sources. We need to gather the experience of foreign countries and create an opportunity for its analysis in laboratories," the President said.

**Special offer for  
Your event from  
Rixos Borovoe!!!**

**Banquet menu  
Non alcoholic drinks  
from 15 000 kzt  
per person**

For more information, please contact: +7 71636 20100. [borovoe@rixos.com](mailto:borovoe@rixos.com)

www.rixos.com

Akmola region, 021708 Borovoe / Kazakhstan  
T: +7 71636 20100 E: [borovoe@rixos.com](mailto:borovoe@rixos.com)

expect nothing less

**RIXOS**  
BOROVOE

# Nation&Capital

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

**PEOPLE**  
Family Achieves Small Business Ambitions

B2

**CULTURE**  
Felt Art Exhibit Opens at Ramada Plaza Hotel

B3

**SPORTS**  
Astana Pro Cycling Team Sets Sights on 2014 Tour de France Success

B7

## Nurlan Alimzhanov: My Way into the Cinema



Nurlan Alimzhanov in his role as Nursultan Nazarbayev

By Galia Shimyrbaeva

ASTANA – Nurlan Alimzhanov, who played the role of Nursultan Nazarbayev in the epic, “The Way of the Leader,” is one of seven recipients of the Zhas Tulpar award established by the Nur Otan party

in honour of the eponymous youth movement of the 1960s.

When asked what he felt playing the title role in the film, Alimzhanov answered that he felt an enormous responsibility.

“Even trying to do my best in this part, of course, I was

well aware that I could not repeat exactly the childhood and youth of the protagonist. That’s why in the film about the President of Kazakhstan, I worked from my own childhood and adolescence,” Alimzhanov said. “When I played in ‘The Sky of

My Childhood’ and ‘The Way of the Leader,’ the protagonist did not know what fortune would send him. Therefore, at all meetings with the audience, I say that my character is a brave boy, one of the people.

Continued on Page B3

## Saiga Population Increasing, More Conservation Work Planned for This Year

Staff Report

ASTANA – “The population of Saiga in Kazakhstan is growing, reaching 187,000 in 2013,” Minister of Environment and Water Resources Nurlan Kapparov said at a department meeting, according to the prime minister’s official website.

“Today, there is a positive trend in the number of Saiga steppe antelope, which in 2013 reached 187,000, an increase of almost nine times [over the past few years],” said Kapparov.

He also confirmed that “the work on the conservation and restoration of rare and endangered species of wild ungulates and saiga will be continued.” A concept for the preservation and development of biological resources and a programme for the development of the forest sector will be developed this year within the framework of the country’s action plan for the transition to a green economy.



## Country Plans Housing Inventory Expansion

By Rysty Alibekova

ASTANA – This year, 6.9 million square metres of housing will be commissioned in Kazakhstan.

“As part of the Affordable Housing 2020 programme, developed by the President, 6.8 million square metres of housing was commissioned in 2013, which is more than last year. Low disbursement of funds has been observed in some regions,” Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov said at a Cabinet meeting.

In his report on the implementation of the housing programme, Minister of Regional Development Bolat Zhamishev noted that according to preliminary data from the statistics agency, 6.8 million square metres of housing was commissioned in 2013, which is 1.5 percent more in comparison to 2012. The oblast akimats (administrations) and akimats of Astana and Almaty allocated 27.5 billion tenge (US\$177 million) of targeted

transfers for construction of rental housing last year, of which 27.3 billion tenge (US\$177 million) was disbursed. In reality, 402,600 square metres of rental housing was commissioned, or 140 percent of what the plan mandated.

Alongside that, 29.4 billion tenge (US\$189 million) in loans was allotted from the national budget in 2013 to local executive bodies for the construction of housing sold through the system of housing sav-

ings, of which 95 percent was used. As a result, 320,000 square metres of credit housing was built, or 122.8 percent of what the plan prescribed.

As part of the project, 40.1 billion tenge (US\$258 million) was allotted from the national budget to engineering infrastructure, 39.7 billion tenge (US\$255.6 million) or 99 percent of it was used.

The head of the agency noted that government funds have been dispensed with greater efficiency as of late, adding that funds not used in some regions allotted for construction of rental housing and utilities will be withdrawn.

“This year, a total of 6.9 million square metres of housing will be built across the country.

Continued on Page B2

## Recent Study Reveals Sense of National Unity

By Raushan Shulembayeva

ASTANA – Thanks to its internal policy, Kazakhstan has maintained its ethno-political balance in the new century and has retained its national characteristics, culture and statehood. This was evidenced by a recent opinion poll conducted by the Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies of the Kazakhstan Ministry of Education and Science in 2013.

A majority of respondents believe that the language policy is balanced and promotes interethnic harmony. The positions of the two major ethnic groups – Kazakhs and Russians – on this matter are practically identical. At the same time, there are Kazakhs who are dissatisfied with the development of the state language; they equal 7 percent of the population and believe that the interests of their native language are ignored for the sake of stability. This position is supported by 3.2 percent of Russian respondents and 4.7 percent of other ethnic groups.

Furthermore, the survey revealed some differences of opinion about the rates of introduction of the state language in different spheres of life.

All in all, 41.1 percent of respondents (including about 49 percent of Kazakhs) think the state language should be the only mechanism for naturalisation, referencing the experience of developed countries with liberal-democratic traditions such as Germany, France, the USA and the UK. Almost the same number of respondents (44.8 percent) said the Kazakh language is developing normally. Russian respondents and people of other nationalities support the moderate introduction of the Kazakh language to a greater degree (about 56 percent).

The survey shows 45.3 percent of Kazakhs understand patriotism to include competency in the state language. In popularity, this definition follows the notion that patriotism is support for the President’s policies, an idea to which 49.6 percent subscribe. Moreover, 86.3 percent of Kazakhs believe the study of the state language is the central expression of patriotism. Among Russian respondents, this figure is 59 percent, and it is 77 percent among other nationalities.

According to the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, further development of the state language is a leading factor in the new Kazakhstan patriotism.

Head of the Philosophy Department of the Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies and leader of the “New Kazakhstan Patriotism” project Ayazhan Sagikyzy reminded that there are three perceptions of patriotism.

**A majority of respondents believe that the language policy is balanced and promotes interethnic harmony. The positions of the two major ethnic groups – Kazakhs and Russians – on this matter are practically identical.**

The first one is the unconditional acceptance of the motherland under any condition; 70.7 percent of respondents, according to the poll, embrace this type of patriotism. Among Kazakhs, 76.6 percent adopt this way of loving their country, which is quite understandable, because they have no other historical homeland.

The second stage is deterministic patriotism, in which the homeland is perceived as a state associated with certain values that psychologically and or materially satisfy the expectations of the individual. About 24 percent of respondents to the poll (among them 28.6 percent Russian and 31 percent of other nationalities) adhere to this form of patriotism.

Finally, the third form of patriotism, the pragmatic negation of patriotism in market conditions all together, is supported by only 3 percent of respondents.

The survey also indicated that the idea of ethnic enclaves and other types of isolation are not accepted in Kazakhstan.

The Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy is aimed at achieving social cohesion. According to the poll, achieving national unity is perceived as the duty of the overwhelming majority of citizens of the country.

### THINGS TO WATCH JANUARY-FEBRUARY

#### MAXIM GORKY STATE THEATRE

January 31 at 18.30

Mixed Emotions

February 1 at 18.00

by Richard Baer

#### CONGRESS HALL

February 7 at 19.00

Black and White  
Sergey Trofimov concert

#### PALACE OF PEACE AND ACCORD

February 6 at 19.00

Merry Spring Celebration concert

#### PALACE OF INDEPENDENCE

December 20-February 23 at 10.00

“Napoleon Bonaparte: life and legend” exhibition

#### DAULET NATIONAL TENNIS CENTRE

January 31 - February 2 at 12.00 Davis Cup

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Family Achieves Small Business Ambitions



The family shop, with its modern sewing equipment, produces about 1,600 items monthly.

By Asset Kalymov

ALMATY REGION – Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev called entrepreneurship the main instrument of industrial and social modernisation of Kazakhstan and a solid economic foundation for the Society of Universal Labour in his Jan. 17 state of the nation address. The President noted that international ratings indicate that Kazakhstan has one of the most business friendly environments of any country and that this needs to continue.

The President also said small businesses should be passed on from generation to generation.

A year ago, entrepreneurs Murat Murzageldinov and Nazim Kamzina opened an individual enterprise called M-PLUS in the Yenbekshi district centre that manufactures work clothes and uniforms. Initially, the new company faced a number of problems, such as a deficit of professional staff, a lack of capital and difficulties supplying the countries of the Customs Union. But today, this sewing plant is on its feet and

has achieved a turnover of 35 million tenge (US\$255,500). They manufacture antibacterial gowns for medical personnel, heat-resistant and waterproof suits made of innovative fabrics for firefighters, metallurgists, builders and oil workers, as well as winter sets of clothes that retain heat at extremely low temperatures.

Monthly, this shop, with its modern sewing equipment, produces about 1,600 items. Customers like not only the functional properties of M-PLUS clothing, but also its modern style and comfort. Not so long ago, the couple applied for participation in the Business Road Map 2020 programme. Now, the state subsidizes the interest rate on the family businesses' bank loan.

"Unprecedentedly favourable conditions for business development have been created in our country. For example, we not only got relief on our loan, but also took advantage of free training courses offered as part of the Business Communications project," said Kamzina.

In the long term, the couple plans to build a special textile cluster in the region. According to their plan, it will include all small sewing factories in Zhetisu, suppliers of raw materials, services and institutions dedicated to training staff. The cluster will contribute to the growth of the domestic consumer goods' industry and improve the probability of Kazakhstan's full accession to the WTO.

## Ninth Edition Record Book Chronicles Accomplishments of Kazakh Nationals

By Uak Manbeteyev

ALMATY – The ninth edition of Kazakhstan's record book, also known as the Kazakh Encyclopedic Information Reference Book or the Kazakhstan Book of Honour, was unveiled recently in Almaty.

The book chronicles the extraordinary and unique accomplishments of Kazakhstan nationals. It is similar to the Guinness Book of World Records, but for the people of Kazakhstan.

The first edition of Kazakhstan's record book was issued in 1999 and was a thin booklet in Russian without illustrations. Today, it is a Kazakh and Russian language publication (652

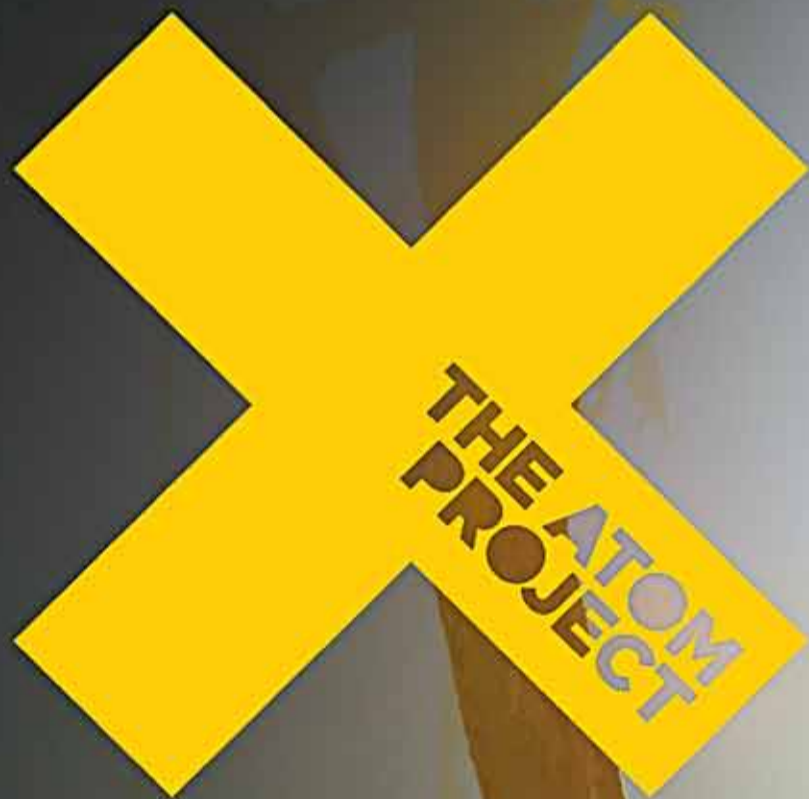
pages), which includes 1,656 entries supported by 1,400 photographs. The creators of the book were invited to its unveiling and were awarded certificates for their contributions.

The book of records is a unique publication. Along with the truly outstanding achievements of Kazakhstan nationals, it contains facts, which undoubtedly deserve respect, but have no relation to the record. For example, a magnetic woman, whose body is able to hold up to eight kilogrammes of metal objects and the creator of the first site in Kazakhstan for bird watching are listed on the same row.

The editorial board also decided to list themselves as record hold-

ers. They hailed their publication as "Kazakhstan's first book of pioneering records and the origin and source of social change brought on by the achievements of Kazakhstan nationals."

Some records create genuine interest, for example, the Dudaev and Sherhanov dynasties. The former is the largest medical family in the world with 25 dentists, while the latter consists of 40 watchmakers. Alexander Schakowsky, a 67-year-old musicologist, is a blood donor. He has donated 520 litres of blood over the course of 43 years. And now he is working on the translation of the immortal poems of Mukagali Makatayev into Russian.



# NUCLEAR TERRORISM. THE THREAT IS REAL.

DENY THEIR CHANCE TO  
DESTROY OUR LIVES.  
SIGN ON FOR A NUCLEAR  
WEAPONS FREE WORLD.

[TheATOMProject.org](http://TheATOMProject.org)



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Gaziza Zhubanova State String Quartet Performs in Astana

By Yelena Kuznetsova

ASTANA – The Gaziza Zhubanova State String Quartet performed recently at the Nazarbayev Centre on Jan. 22.

The quartet consists of young musicians who have won numerous prestigious international prizes, as well as the Daryn State Youth Prize.

Concert host Julia Gaisina preceded each piece by sharing with the audience the story of the piece's creation, highlights of the work and facts about its author.

The concert opened with Quartet number 6, op. 50 D major by Joseph Haydn. The piece presented the fundamental principles of classical quartet – the equality of all four instruments. The piece

was performed by Aydar Toktaliev (first violin), Alexei Lebedev (second violin), Kim Bogdanov (alto) and Ernar Myntayev (bass viol).

Also performing Rondo for String Quartet by Anton Webern, the musicians demonstrated the combination of tenderness and intensity of sound, rigor and austerity of musical forms, which

are typical of representatives of new Viennese School. The quartet also performed Kui by Abdimomun Zheldibaev "Erke sylqym" ("Minx").

The beauty of the concert, including the stings conveying the sounds of the oboe, horn, organ and harp, earned the performers hearty applause and numerous bravos from the audience.



The Gaziza Zhubanova State String Quartet performing concert at the Nazarbayev Centre.

## Nurlan Alimzhanov: My Way into the Cinema



Continued from Page B1

And if he was different from others, it was because of his thirst for knowledge and determination. I felt that if I initially set my mind to play the President, the image would not be true. In addition, the working lad I played in the film had no idea of ever becoming the head of state, so I, too, climbed step-by-step to the heights he reached. To do this, I talked to his friends and read everything that I could find on him, especially memories of the President and his classmates. ... For me, playing in this film was interesting and emotional. I saw with my own eyes how hard-won was the bread of the metallurgists. The future President of Kazakhstan worked at the furnace for nine years. To create realism, I myself punched the tap hole in the furnace that carries the melted steel. The furnace temperature reaches 2,000 degrees, and every misstep or move can cost you life. In the 1950s and 1960s metallurgists did it manually. Now this process is automated, but steel-melting has not become safer from that. After difficult shots, I embraced the workers with whom I stood at the furnace as close relatives. They really helped me get the feel of the role. I did not hesitate to ask them questions, and they were happy to advise me. If I could, I would raise monuments to these people in their lifetime."

**Do you have any fear of becoming known for just one role?**

I just want what's best for the picture. I have played in a dozen films, and mostly in lead roles. To perform well, an actor has to work a lot, travel, read, meet different people. My first film was The Sin of Sholpan made by Bolat Sharipov on the novel of Magzhan Zhumabayev. I played Azimbay, a villain. Then Sergei Bodrov and Gulshad Omarova made a film "Baksy" where I also played a major role, and again a baddy.

I became famous for the role of one of the brothers in the popular movie of Akan Satayev "Agaiyndar". Also I was engaged in the psychological melodrama "Sacrifice" made by Beijing director Hong Fu. My character Salser, a collective image, is one of those Kazakhs who once moved to China.

**How did you become an actor?**

I had dreamed of this profession since childhood. I was especially

impressed by the performance of "A Marriage Proposal" staged on the play written by my father in the Kokshetau oblast (region) drama theatre. I graduated from the Faculty of Music, Drama at the Zhurgenov Film Academy. As a second year student, I worked at the Kazakh Youth Theatre where I was invited by Kazakhstan People's Artist Tlektes Meiramov who gave me the role of Tulegen in "Kyz Zhibek." Then I began to act in the cinema. Until recently, I sang and composed music; I even put an album out recently. But one day I got tired of being torn between theatre, TV and cinema, and I thought I should finally decide on one thing. I chose cinema.

**What is ahead? What films can we expect to see you in?**

As the proverb says, it's a poor soldier who never wants to become a general, and every actor dreams of playing Hamlet. In Kazakhstan, there are a lot of good directors and many more unperformed historical figures. I cherish the dream of playing of one of them. I dream of and respond to roles that will touch people's hearts. And although no one has offered me such a role, I'm preparing internally to embody onscreen, for example, Abylai Khan and leaders of the Alash movement. And if there is romance in it, even better.

**You speak impeccable Kazakh...**

This comes from my father who is very good in it. He instilled in me a taste for books that make you think. I love to reread Mukhtar Auezov, especially his 'Abai,' works by Gabit Musrepov, Sabit Mukanov and, of course, my father, Bayangali Alimzhanov. I also like Gogol and Dostoevsky. Recently, I read 'Secrets of the Subconscious' by Sinelnikov; that impressed me greatly. Also, I love books and films about Genghis Khan. The book by English historian and traveller John Maine, "The Leadership Secrets of Genghis Khan: 21 Lessons From History's Most Successful Conqueror," telling the secrets of success of the great commander, has become like a reference for me.

**Can you tell us about your family?**

I live in Astana with my wife Zhansaya who is an actress. We have two sons and a daughter. My eldest son, a first-grade student, is, according to our tradition, the 'son' of his grandma and grandpa. My parents live with us.

## Ilyayev Exhibits Works in Astana's Museum of Modern Art

By Natalia Kurpyakova

ASTANA – A jubilee exhibition of Sultan Ilyayev's "Repetition" is being held in the capital's Museum of Modern Art.

Ilyayev was born in 1954 to a family of the arts. His father Gani Ilyayev collected and studied Kazakh ornaments, so choosing a career when the time came was not difficult for him. In 1977, Ilyayev graduated from the graphic arts faculty of Shymkent State Pedagogical Institute and began working as a teacher at the Kasteyev Art School. He participated in national and international exhibitions and his works are housed in museums in Almaty, Moscow, Tashkent, Sochi and in private galleries in different countries. Now, Ilyayev is chief art expert for the city of Shymkent and chairman of the Artists' Union of Kazakhstan.

Many of his works are monuments and mosaics. For example, "Zhibek Zholy" (Silk Way) complex in South Kazakhstan's ancient city of Sairam reflects the national identity and the "Altyn Agash"



Sultan Ilyayev's "Repetition" exhibition is held in Astana for the first time.

(Golden Tree) composition amazes with its scale and expressiveness.

Sultan Ilyayev has created the following monuments: Akpan Batyr and Sabir Rakhimov in Shymkent, Kabanbay Batyr in Turkestan, and

Kulager in the Akmola region.

In Astana, where his works are being exhibited for the first time, he presented his paintings and graphics from 2011-2013.

His creative works are distin-

guished by their decorative brushwork, clean bright colours, allegory and capacious repeating images including the horse, fish and bird which symbolize the elements; the house, shanyrak, tree, woman, cradle and dombra kobyz.

They form the original formula of life and are closely related to ancient ideas about the world and traditions. Kazakhs are taught these things during childhood and can understand a series of transformations, mappings and interpretations, which form the constants of existence.

No less important in his works are the ornamental undertones. Ilyayev recalls his father's words that, every Kazakh ornament carries coded information. The viewer is directly involved in the answer to these "codes" of Ilyayev: his "Oasis" work helps one understand how to feel happiness, while "House under the Sun," "Aul," "Cradle," "In the Shade of a Tree" converge to create a great melody like the one that is born when musicians touch the strings of the kobyz and dombra.

## Felt Art Exhibition Opens at Ramada Plaza Hotel

By Bektur Kadyrov

ASTANA – An exhibition of original work by Zamzegul Oralbayeva, as well as crafts from a children's village supported by the Dara Arulary (Women of the Steppe) public fund opened in the Ramada Plaza Hotel. The exhibition, entitled Horn of Salvation, is being presented by the Shezhire Gallery of Modern Art.

Oralbayeva works in felt, one of the oldest and most traditional materials in Kazakh handicrafts. Kazakh homes (yurts), carpets, interior decorations and clothing were for centuries made partially or completely of felt. Compact and easy to

transport, felt was an ideal material for nomads, and, over time, traditionally Kazakh patterns emerged. One of the most common is the koshkar myuizy (sheep horns), symbolising strength, victory, wealth, abundance and prosperity.

In recent years, however, felt-making, along with other traditional handicrafts, has fallen into decline. Modern conditions of life in Kazakhstan, the predominance of urban population over rural, uselessness of felt products in modern apartments, as well as historical factors influenced the decline of this kind of folk art.

Oralbayeva has remained faithful to the tradition of felt-making,

though, while combining with it techniques from modern figurative painting. From a largely pastel colour scheme spring animals, trees and flowers as well as landscapes and nature scenes. She also reworks certain themes, notably in the triptych "Spring" and her "Steppe Legends" series. The figures she depicts are recognisable, easy to read and create a light, contemplative mood. During the opening, the master artist led a felt-working class for children. Oralbayeva is one of the organisers of the exhibition and president of Dala Arulary. She works to promote the cultural values of the peoples of Kazakhstan.



Exhibition of original work "Horn of Salvation" by Zamzegul Oralbayeva

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Country Plans Housing Inventory Expansion



Continued from Page B1

To complete this task and grow rental and credit housing, engineering and communications infrastructure and provide housing through the Kazakhstan Mortgage Company, 129.9 billion tenge (US\$836 million) was approved for financing from the 206.2 billion tenge (US\$1.33 billion) allocated to the Affordable Housing 2020 programme," Zhamishev said.

The Minister also spoke about measures taken to reduce construction costs. The agency submitted proposals to increase the cost per square metre of affordable housing by 5-10 thousand tenge (US\$32-64) depending on the class of accommodation.

"Our ministry drafted amendments to the Affordable Housing programme which increases the construction costs of 4th class housing from 80 to 90 thousand

tenge (US\$515 to 579), class 3 – from 90 to 100 thousand tenge (US\$579 to 644); on the Construction Corporation – from 110 to 115 thousand tenge (US\$708-740) for 4th class and from 120 to 125 000 (US\$772-805) – for 3rd class housing," Zhamishev added.

Amendments initiated by the ministry exclude limitations in co-financing from the local budget (currently, local governments may co-finance the construction of housing at 15 percent of its value).

In parallel, measures are being taken to reduce construction costs through the application of advanced technologies and the use of standardised designs. As part of the development of industrial housing-building, 17 projects on the construction of house-building factories with a total design capacity of approximately 1.5 million square metres per year will be implemented in the country.

First Vice Minister of Indus-

try and New Technologies Albert Rau, regional akims (governors) from Mangistau – Alik Aidarbayev, North Kazakhstan – Samat Yeskendirov, and Zhambyl – Karim Kokrekbayev, chairman of the board of the Kazakhstan Housing Construction Corporation Ruslan Khussainov, chairman of the board of Zhilstroysberbank Aybatyr Zhumagulov, and Samruk-Kazyna Real Estate Fund Representative Bolat Palymbetov made presentations at the meeting.

Summing up the meeting, the prime minister mentioned the Affordable Housing 2020 programme's good progress. However, according to Akhmetov, it is necessary to solve all systemic problems and to ensure strict implementation of the President's instructions on housing construction by increasing the amount of housing to 10 million square metres in 2020.

"The implementation of this programme will provide a multiplier

effect for other sectors of the economy, particularly the construction industry," Akhmetov said.

Last year, seven modern house building factories were launched, this year 8 such plants will be put into operation. It is important to keep these factories supplied. That's why regional governors, together with the Ministry of Regional Development, were instructed to ensure that the factories have 2-3 years of supplies.

The prime minister tasked oblast akimats with providing an unlimited amount of housing this year and taking measures to ensure the disbursement of funds allocated for this purpose.

The Ministry of Regional Development, oblast governors and the mayors of Astana and Almaty were instructed to ensure strict control over the implementation of the programme in the current year, as well as to conclude programme memoranda for 2014.

## Centre of Applied Arts Opens in Turkestan



Potter Abaikhon Rysbayev is one of the first to move into the newly opened centre of applied art in Turkestan.

By Lyubov Dobrota

TURKESTAN – In Turkestan's new centre of arts and crafts near the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yassawi, visitors can see the process of making traditional handicrafts as well as buy them.

The centre consists of three blocks, each with its own purpose. There are workshops, two exhibition halls and classrooms on the first floor, as well as retail shops selling work by local craftsmen. More than 296 million tenge (US\$1.9 million) was allocated from the local budget for building the centre.

Potter Abaikhon Rysbayev was one of the first to move into the new centre of applied art. According to him, the centre has all the necessary conditions for masters to work and their pupils to learn. Those who are interested in the process of modelling clay or making tapestries or jewellery can watch masters at work.

Under the eyes of visitors and

students, clay turns into jars and traditional musical instruments, which viewers are encouraged to try, in the master's hands. Rysbayev follows the tradition of ancient ceramics from Otrar, creating bottles with narrow necks and recognisable printed patterns.

Rysbayev has long wanted to open a school of ceramics, where he could teach teenagers and young adults to create as a hobby or as a potential profession. As traditional ceramic pitchers are increasingly in demand among visitors to Turkestan, the traditional craft may become a more lucrative career. Last year, about 700,000 people visited Turkestan.

When the idea of the centre was proposed by local authorities, many craftsmen supported it. The exhibition that celebrated the opening of the applied art centre presented a variety of souvenirs and artwork, including pottery and jewellery, stone-encrusted leather harnesses, tapestries and handicrafts made of wood and felt.

## Nuclear Medicine Centre to Open in Semey

By Jan Furst

Kazakhstan's first nuclear medicine centre is to be constructed in Semey.

"It was proposed to build such a radiological facility back in 2003, based on the existing oncology centre," Bayan Atantayeva, deputy director of radiological services of Semey regional oncology centre, said.

"Even then, the cost of such a grand project was estimated at 13.9 billion tenge (about US\$89.6 million). And only in 2007, during the visit of then-Prime Minister Karim Massimov, was the decision taken to build a nuclear medicine centre.

I would like to emphasise that this will be the first centre of this kind in Kazakhstan," Atantayeva said.

Even during construction, the main section of the building is maintaining 85 beds, Atantayeva said. The centre is also training their staff while construction is ongoing.

"Within the framework of the two long-term projects with the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] from 2007 to today, 25 specialists have undergone training abroad. These were not only doctors but engineers, physicists, chemists," Atantayeva said.

"An engineering and radiological service is also operating within the oncology centre, and all those

specialists have undergone training abroad in Italy, Slovakia, Germany, Russia, et cetera. Their roles are not to be underestimated, as they are responsible for maintaining medical equipment that has to function without fail, medical physicists are involved in the planning of radiotherapy and chemical engineers will be engaged in producing radiopharmaceuticals in a cyclotron mounted in the nuclear medicine centre," Atantayeva said.

"Currently, this would be the first centre of its kind in Kazakhstan, although in Astana a department of nuclear medicine has been operating since 2010 at the National Diagnostics Centre," she added. "It is equipped with positron emis-

sion tomography and single photon emission tomography, which is mostly used to assess cancer patients. This small department serves almost the entire population of Kazakhstan needing an accurate diagnosis. This is quite insufficient. It was therefore decided to build a large Semey Nuclear Medicine Centre to give Kazakhs access to high quality medical care, free of charge."

"Our work will include producing our own radiopharmaceuticals and using them for diagnostic purposes, not only to detect cancer, but also cardiovascular disease and diseases of the renal and endocrine systems. We are also planning to open a radionuclide therapy wing

with 15 beds. It will assist endocrinological patients with diffuse toxic goiter and thyroid cancer. Today, patients with toxic goiters are not able to be treated in our country because there is no appropriate medical facility, and patients who can afford it go abroad for treatment. This treatment costs 1,700 euros (US\$2,322) a week. In our Nuclear Medicine Centre, any treatment for Kazakh citizens will be free of charge."

According to statistics from the Kazakh Ministry of Healthcare, there are over 17,000 patients with toxic goiter in the country.

"Since February 2013, we have conducted thyroid scintigraphic studies. During this time, 535 peo-

ple were examined and four cases of thyroid cancer and one of follicular neoplasm were found," Atantayeva said.

"There are no such centres, not even in neighbouring Russian regions," said Tolebay Rakhypbekov, president of the Semey Medical University, back in December 2012.

"In Kazakhstan, we have only a few diagnostic centres that can detect the early stages of cancer and treat patients with radiopharmaceuticals," he said adding that the teachers and doctors at the university had undergone special training and were ready for the opening of the centre.

## Medical Manufacturing Plant Creates Jobs in Aisha Bibi Village

By Vyacheslav Lebedev

ZHAMBYL OBLAST – A new pharmaceutical manufacturing plant built as part of the government's Business Road Map 2020 Programme in the village of Aisha Bibi is now providing jobs for 16 local residents.

The Super Pharm, LLP plant produces medical clothing and disposable medical underwear made from nonwoven fabric and has the capacity to produce 15 million

units per year. The plant, utilising the latest technologies and equipment from Germany, Poland, Italy, Turkey, Russia and China, is designed to allow Super Pharm to compete with the world's leading manufacturers.

The plant's products include bandages, medical caps and masks, diapers, towels, shirts, boots and suits for pregnant women. Super Pharm's products help reduce the risk of infection in high-tech medical care. The use of disposable un-

derwear, for example, is generally believed to reduce the number of postoperative complications by 30 percent. Treatment also becomes less expensive.

The company also hopes that its disposable clothing will help protect medical workers from AIDS, hepatitis and other dangerous infections because it is made from high-quality Russian and Belarusian non-woven material with improved barriers against infection.



A new pharmaceutical manufacturing plant in the village of Aisha Bibi is providing jobs for 16 local residents.

# SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Living Donor Liver Transplant Performed in Municipal Almaty Hospital



Svetlana Kaipova received donated liver tissue from her daughter through a liver transplant surgery between related patients in Almaty's Municipal Hospital No. 7.

By Olga Malakhova

ALMATY – A liver transplant between related patients, with a living donor, was performed in Almaty's Municipal Hospital No. 7. This is not the first such transplant to take place in Kazakhstan, but the fact that it was

performed in a local hospital rather than a leading national medical centre indicates that badly needed transplant surgeries are becoming more widely available in the country.

Municipal Hospital No. 7's doctors and nurses have received training in medical centres in

South Korea, India, and Belarus.

Svetlana Kaipova, who received donated liver tissue from her daughter, thanked her daughter, Chief Physician Bulat Baymahanov, Head of the Hepatobiliary Surgery Department Mussa Sakhripov, the visiting Dr. Gupta from New Delhi Apollo Hospital, her surgeons, anaesthesiologists and nurses and the state for funding the costly operation. The 6-8 million tenge operation (about US\$38-51,000) was paid for through the state programme Salamatty Kazakhstan (Healthy Kazakhstan).

Kaipova, who has five children, had been treated for cirrhosis of the liver in hospitals in Uzbekistan, Russia and Thailand over the past four years, but the health of the 55-year-old woman continued to decline, and it was determined that she needed a transplant.

Kaipova's 25-year-old daughter,

Gulshad, a mother of two, was her donor. The transplant was performed on Dec. 16, 2013; a month later, the doctors allowed journalists to visit the patients.

Head of the Municipal Health Department Zhannat Kassymzhanova wished Kaipova a speedy recovery and thanked her daughter for her courage.

At present, 1,000 people in Kazakhstan are awaiting liver transplants, 3,000 people kidney transplants and 1,146 people heart transplants. Until recently, transplant patients had to go abroad for such complex operations; now, however, the skills and technology necessary for such operations is spreading within Kazakhstan, though more education on organ donation is needed.

This year, another 20 liver and 70 kidney transplants are planned and 120 million tenge (US\$773,345) allotted for them.

## Almaty Educates Public about National Job Programme



By Natalia Valuisikaya

ALMATY – The city's municipal employment centre in 2013 conducted an outreach campaign to educate its residents about Kazakhstan's Employment 2020 initiative.

The centre distributed print and video information about the initiative's Employment Roadmap on television and newspapers, throughout the city's bus and subway system and at Almaty's universities.

The Employment 2020 programme is part of the country's 2050 Strategy and is meant to use employment as a form of fundamental social protection in all sectors of the country's population.

According to Almaty Employment Centre Director Orynkiz Zhebergenova, the city has spent 362.7 million tenge (US\$2.33 million) of 366.1 million tenge (US\$2.35 million) allocated by the national government for the campaign on job skills and training development. Training and retraining courses have been opened at seven schools covering such high-demand fields as confectionery, hair-dressing and cosmetics, accounting, cooking, computers, tourism, electronics and mechanics.

Currently, 740 people are at-

tending these classes, which 527 people have already completed. Of those 527, 26.8 percent or 141 people, over the last year found jobs. The campaign also provided its 698 participants with social-sector jobs and 797 people were sent to youth practice which helps them find employment later. Contracts were also signed with 160 employers, including businesses, government entities and nongovernmental organizations for them to accept people who received retraining through the employment support programme. Also, 563 people completed youth practice with 307 (54.5 percent) of them receiving permanent jobs after that.

The Almaty employment centre's outreach effort also included participating in job fairs with the support of the Almaty Department on Employment and Social Programmes and its district offices. A job fair was also organised by the Almaty branch of the Nur Otan party, which attracted more than 100 large and medium-sized enterprises.

This year the city employment centre will continue its work to raise awareness about the opportunities and benefits of the Employment 2020 programme.

## Astana Celebrates Epiphany Day by Jumping in Freezing Waters

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – Thousands of Astana residents flocked to the Yessil River in temperatures below freezing on Jan. 19 to commemorate the Russian Orthodox Church's Epiphany Day by dipping into the freezing water.

Epiphany Day celebrates the christening of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River by John the Baptist and the manifestation of the Christian god in the figure of Jesus Christ; the dip is to wash away old transgression and strengthen spirit and body.

Central Park, on the bank of the river, rang with laughter as Astana's hardiest dove in and hurried out of the icy waters. Though the holiday is a Christian religious celebration, it attracts people of different faiths and nationalities as a test of endurance.

"We came here today to wash off our transgressions. For a newcomer this might seem strange, but afterwards it feels great," said 57-year-old Astana resident Alexander Kovalchuk. "This is very symbolic, to cleanse your body. When you dive, your body is shocked and you get a lot of adrenaline in your heart; it is like being reborn ... the colder the weather gets, the warmer it is when you get out from the water!"

Kovalchuk also recounted some beliefs about the Epiphany day dip, including that swimming on any other day could lead to serious illness, but not on Jan. 19, and that the body will turn blue after being submerged in water on any other day, but emerges red and healthy when celebrating the Epiphany. "This tradition builds up the immune system for the whole year!"



Thousands of Astana residents flocked to the Yessil River for Russian Orthodox Epiphany.

Skeptics just have to try it once," he said.

The Epiphany dip is so popular that at some points participants were waiting up to five minutes in lines to reach the diving holes—long enough to get seriously cold, though after emerging from the water they looked immune to the air temperature.

"The thought that the water is freezing is scarier than it actually is. Just diving quickly in and climbing out, I feel superhuman!" another participant said.

An ambulance and members of the Ministry of Emergency Situations were on hand in case of accidents.

## Kazakhstan Institute Developing Eco-Friendly Plant Protection, Research May Apply to Efforts to Prolong Life

Continued from Page A1

In order to optimise research and introduce new methods of expertise in the field of plant quarantine, KazRIPPQ has signed agreements with research and production companies, including foreign institutes. Recently, the institute introduced the technology of artificial mass breeding of entomophages and hopes to be a leader in the field of measuring the biological strength, known as bioassay.

"This biological method, first of all, needs to be implemented in the 'food zones' around Astana and Almaty and in the regions of cultivation of vegetables, potatoes, fruit and grapes. Bioassay should become the basic method in protection of these fresh-eaten crops," said Sagitov, adding that the national government has allocated 500 million tenge (US\$3.2 million) this year for plant protection.

### KazRIPPQ Research Assists Other Fields

The institute has also collected information that is not directly related to its area of research but rather focuses on prolonging and improving the quality of human life.

Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board of the Nazarbayev University and Professor of Medicine

Almaz Sharman said during a recent interview that a Centre for Life Sciences will be created in Astana to study the possibility of extending human life. He also expressed the idea of uniting under the auspices of the Nazarbayev University specialists and researchers from different fields of science. In this context, the scientific developments of KazRIPPQ would fall within the goals of the Centre for Life Sciences.

"In the mountains of Zaili Alatau at an altitude of 3,000 metres, we found a very interesting insect fungus called Cordyceps. The pharmaceutical value of the fungus is numerous trace elements. The tissues of insects killed by Cordyceps are not colonised by bacteria due to the formation of fungus of the natural antibiotic Cordycepin, which protects the substrate from microorganisms. Cordyceps 'lives' on the plains and open spaces, but only its alpine types have healing properties. Our country is lucky in this sense: we have the opportunity that must not be lost to extend human life to 150 years," said Sagitov.

Cordyceps restores renal function and has a pronounced therapeutic effect in the treatment of platelet and leukocyte deficiencies, including during radiotherapy and chemotherapy, as well as in the treatment of diseases of the cardiovascular system, insomnia and nervous exhaustion. It is also effective in the prevention of premature

aging, acute and chronic hepatitis and various tumours, as well as in the prevention of respiratory diseases, diabetes and inflammation of the pancreas. Mushrooms such as Cordyceps, Shiitake, Reishi and Reishi are considered to be delicacies by some and for centuries were used in imperial Chinese cuisine.

Institute director Sagitov also mentioned that the institute plans to work with the firm Molodit and Chinese scientists to develop the production of drugs from the fungus Ganoderma lucidum. Research has shown Ganoderma Lucidum treats pigment degeneration of the retina, decline of renal activity, increases visual acuity. It is also believed to have a soothing effect and increase the power of the heart muscle. In ancient China, people believed that Ganoderma granted immortality, said Sagitov.

He added that developing plant-based medicines can also help the country as a whole by attracting foreign investment and offers the possibility of Kazakhstan introducing new patented medications. Kazakhstan is also in a position agriculturally to provide Chinese partners with the bran and wheat they need for their own pharmaceutical production, as well as access for those pharmaceuticals to the markets of the Customs Union, he said.

COMPANIES

---

SHOULD

---

COMMIT

---

TO OUR

COUNTRY'S

FUTURE.

**WE AGREE.**

Scott Davis  
Managing Director  
Chevron-Eurasia  
Almaty, Kazakhstan

Human Energy

Chevron recognizes the potential in Kazakhstan. And has from this country's beginnings. Since 1993, we and our partners have put over \$52 billion into the economy. And created thousands of jobs. We've become the country's largest private oil producer. And the Tengiz field is now among the top producing oil fields in the world. Chevron and Kazakhstan have come far together. And our future is even brighter. Learn more at [www.ChevronKazakhstan.com](http://www.ChevronKazakhstan.com)

Copyright © 2013 Chevron Corporation. All rights reserved. Chevron, the Chevron logo and HUMAN ENERGY are registered trademarks of Chevron Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

# Competition Seeks to Boost Akmola Region Winter Tourism



By Rufiya Ospanova

KOKSHETAU – Thirty tourism-related organisations in the Akmola region will have the opportunity to compete in this year's "Best Winter Tourism Project" competition, according to a Jan. 15 announcement by the Akmola region akimat (regional administration).

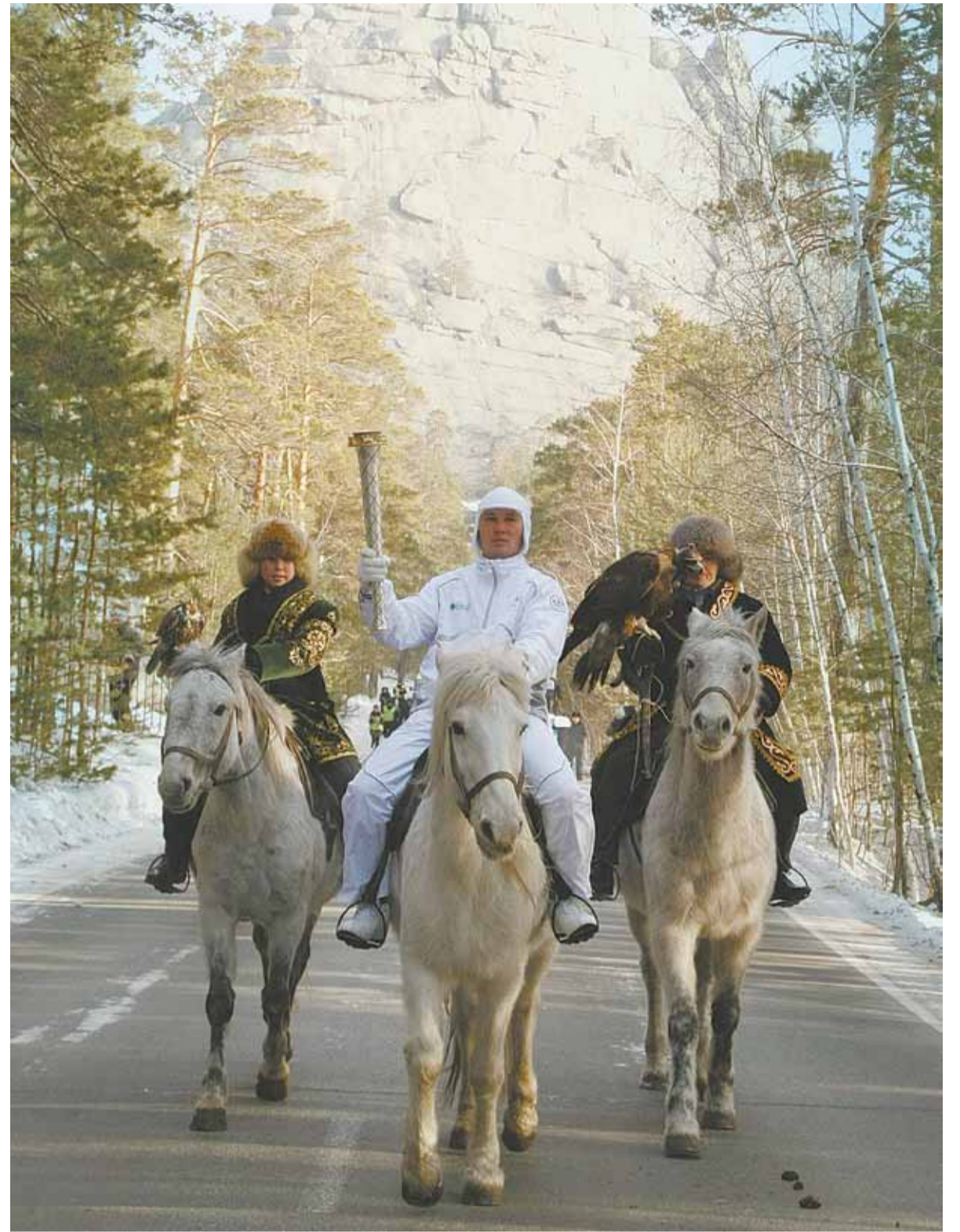
Tourist sites will submit proposals in the categories of best tourist route and best winter recreation information and advertising package. The annual competition usually includes the participation of

tourism executives, tour operators, national parks, resorts and children's centres.

The purpose of the competition is to increase the number of facilities providing winter leisure services, expand the range of services provided and to establish new tourism facilities, according to the organisers. Targeted efforts to expand the region's winter tourism infrastructure, which includes the famous Burabay national park, can magnify the impact of the tourism sector on the nation's economy, organisers say.

The Akmola region's climate allows for the development of both winter and summer tourism and regional tourism officials believe there is significant growth potential in the region's winter tourism industry.

In order to develop the region's winter tourism potential, infrastructure and investment attractiveness, the tourism management of the Akmola region annually conducts tourism-related competitions. The basic idea of the competitions is to identify the most popular tourism activities and facilities.



## Kazakhstan Participates in FITUR Exhibition



By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan took part in the 34th International Tourism Exhibition FITUR Jan. 22-26 in Madrid, according to the press service of the Committee of Tourism Industry of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of Kazakhstan.

FITUR is one of the largest tourism industry events in Spain and is held in IFEMA, Madrid's largest exhibition space. The event showcases the latest tourism trends, products and services. It is also an opportunity for tourism industry officials to network and exchange experiences.

Visitors to the event had the opportunity to see Kazakhstan-related tourism displays presented by delegations from Astana and Almaty cities, as well as from the Almaty, Zhambyl, Mangistau and South Kazakh-

stan regions. Well-known Kazakh jeweler Berik Alibay and the Akku Concert Association named after Baizhanov also took part in the Kazakhstan delegation. Kazakhstan's participation in the event was part of a national effort to attract tourism to the country.

Kazakhstan's participation in the FITUR project is a part of a larger work on the formation of the Kazakhstan tourism image in order to attract tourists to the country.

In 2013, FITUR was attended by about 9,000 companies from over 160 countries and regions. The exhibition was visited by about 100,000 visitors.

This year's event included the Fiturtech Science and Technology Forum, which was dedicated to the joint development of tourism and innovative communication technologies in the modern world. It also included the Know-How Tourism conference and the Sected Prize seminar presentation, which evaluated the quality of tourism destinations.

"We have received a variety of inquiries for more information at the exhibition; more than 50 percent of visitors were interested in cultural tourism. It's about visiting historical and cultural sites and attractions (Astana, Almaty, Turkestan, Burabay, Mangistau and others). In addition, we saw a great interest from visitors to the EXPO 2017," the representatives of the Committee of Tourism Industry at the Ministry of Innovations and New Technologies of Kazakhstan said.

WELCOME  
TO ASTANA!

[www.expo2017astana.com](http://www.expo2017astana.com)



EXPO 2017  
• Future Energy •  
Astana Kazakhstan



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Astana to Host 2014 World Junior Chess Olympiad



Asset Issekeshyev (far left), President of the Kazakhstan Chess Federation, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov (next to him), President of the World Chess Federation, were joined by chess prodigies and officials at a recent event in Kazakhstan.

By Alex Lee

ASTANA – Astana will host the World Junior Chess Olympiad in October 2014 that is expected to attract youth from more than 50 countries, according to the Kazakhstan Chess Federation. “Kazakhstan proved that it is willing to further develop chess,” President of the World Chess Federation (FIDE) Kirsan Ilyumzhinov told the media, as he explained why Astana was chosen over other city candidates. “Everybody shows their interest including the highest state officials.”

According to Ilyumzhinov, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev mentioned during their last meeting two years ago that he

had encouraged the development of chess among Kazakh youth.

“The results are apparent even today. The Kazakhstan Chess Federation is among the fastest developing federations with 1,500 players in FIDE ratings, among them 20 are international grand masters,” Ilyumzhinov said. “It is a pleasure to see that chess among youth is growing and your female players are becoming champions on the continent and are challenging positions on the world stage. I hope they will fight to become world champions.”

“As for the tournament in October, it will be good for the country to gain hosting experience and submit a big list of participants,” he explained.

Ilyumzhinov also commented on the Chess Palace that is to be constructed in Astana.

“A piece of land is allocated for the construction of the International Chess Centre. This Chess Palace is to become a landmark not only in Kazakhstan but in the world. It would receive a status of a subsidiary of the International Chess Academy and will be the centre of symposiums and seminars, in order to prepare specialists in different areas including coaches. There will also be a specialised museum and a library and Internet rooms that would give a chance to participate in large tournaments,” Ilyumzhinov said.

“Most likely, the Palace will be located opposite Nazarbayev Uni-

versity, where EXPO 2017 would be located, and we are also interested in that vicinity,” Ilyumzhinov said.

The exact dates for the commencement of the construction will be worked out with President Nazarbayev and Astana Akim (Mayor) Imangali Tasmagambetov, according to the FIDE president.

Among the most successful Kazakh chess players in 2013 were world champions Dinara Saduakasova and Zhansaya Abdumalik. And in January 2014, Abdulmalik played four matches in an impromptu friendly tournament against Anatoliy Karpov, the former world champion, losing two matches, drawing another and winning one match.

## Astana Pro Cycling Team Sets Sights on 2014 Tour de France Success



London Olympics 2012 gold medalist and Astana Pro Cycling Team manager Alexander Vinokourov

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – London Olympics 2012 gold medalist and Astana Pro Cycling Team manager Alexander Vinokourov during a Jan. 14 press conference set out an ambitious goal for the team for 2014—to win Tour de France.

“Last year we worked as a team to win Giro d’Italia and it was quite difficult,” Vinokourov commented. “But our efforts, motivation and drive led us to a victory in Brescia. It is an honour to be standing here today to say that we are ready to accept the challenge for Tour de France 2014.”

2013 Giro d’Italia winner and top Astana Pro team rider Vincenzo Nibali also noted that July’s Tour de France will be the team’s top priority.

Nibali’s efforts will also be aided over the summer by the team’s recent signings of mountain climbing pro Michele Scarponi and Mikele Landa, a young talent acquired from the Euskaltel team.

“In Euskaltel, the team was very united, more than a team, but a family. In Astana, it is different. There are so many different languages, new people, different cultures. ... I hope to get used to it quickly,” he said in November 2013.

“I accept the challenge respectfully. I need to move step by step but I know that I can achieve a lot here [with the team]. People trust me, that gives me peace of mind, so I want to achieve big results here.”

The July 5-27 Tour de France 2014 will include 21 stages running through France and neighbouring countries and will cover 3,656 kilometres. The Tour de France, along with Giro d’Italia and Vuelta a Espana, is considered one of the top three races in the cycling world. However, since it is the oldest and has run annually since 1903, except during two world wars, it is considered by most to be the most prestigious.

## Kazakh Crews in Top 20 in Dakar 2014

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – The final stage of this year’s 35th annual Dakar Rally, a South American adventure beginning in Rosario, Argentina, finished on Jan. 18 in Valparaiso, Chile.

Kazakhstan’s fastest car crew, headed by Aidyn Rakhimbayev, finished 17th overall; in the truck category, Artur Ardavichus, Alex-

ey Nikizhev and Radim Kaplanek came in 14th.

As usual, the rally was a wild ride for the professionals and amateurs who chose to pit themselves against rocky mountains, sand, mud and other obstacles. One racer and two members of the press died during the event in South America this year. A Kazakh crew of Bayyrzhan Issabayev and Gabdulla Ashimov, driving a Toyota, barely

escaped serious injury when their car burned to ashes in minutes on Jan. 6, during stage two.

Since 1978, 27 people have perished while taking part in the rally, which used to be held in Africa and used to be known as Paris-Dakar. In a race with such high stakes, finishing in one piece and with dignity is seen as a significant accomplishment in and of itself. Less than half of all motorcycles,

quadro-cycles, all wheel drives and trucks that started the race managed to finish it.

“Mountainous, dusty, serpentine, with incredibly sudden and narrow turns and deep vertical cliffs, a total of 157 kilometres—that was our last Dakar stage,” Rakhimbayev wrote on his Facebook page after the stage.

Rakhimbayev and Vladimir Demyanenko finished 17th among

cars overall in a Toyota, coming in 12 hours and 33 minutes behind the winner, Joan “Nani” Roma of Spain.

Another Kazakh crew, Denis Berzovskiy and Ignat Falkov, driving a Nissan, finished 37th. In 14th place in the truck category, Ardavichus, Nikizhev and Kaplanek snagged the country’s best finish this year. Ardavichus did win bronze in the 2012 Dakar race. All Dakar crews are now part of the Astana Dakar

Team that is part of the Presidential Astana Sports Club.

“I was overwhelmed with emotions—we made it!” Rakhimbayev wrote after the race on his Facebook page. “We reached our goal; my 20-year-old dream came true. It has been a tough test and finally I have conquered Dakar on my third attempt. I peeked beyond my capabilities, and it turned out to be rough...” he wrote.



Kazakhstan’s fastest car crew, headed by Aidyn Rakhimbayev, finished 17th overall in this year’s 35th annual Dakar Rally.



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

## Country Pays Its Respects to National Poet Ongarsynova

By Maksut Irzhanov

ASTANA – Kazakhstan paid its last respects to poet and Kazakhstan State Prize laureate Fariza Ongarsynova on Jan. 27.

Hundreds of people came to the Korme Exhibition Centre, where visitors were observed weeping. Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov, Chairman of the Senate Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, Mazhilis Speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin, Minister of Culture and Information Mukhtar Kul-Muhammed, Mayor of Astana Imangali Tasmagambetov, members of parliament, permanent representative of Kazakhstan to UNESCO and poet Olzhas Suleimenov, other public figures and fans came to pay their respects to the beloved artist. More than a hundred people came from the Atyrau region, where Ongarsynova was born.

Kul-Muhammed read condolences from President Nursultan Nazarbayev. “Her gentle and emotional poems will always touch and inspire the hearts and souls of the people. Her works clearly convey the indomitable character of their author and her determination, the ability of her powerful talent to penetrate into the corners of the human soul and with amazing skill to disclose them. That’s why the people of Kazakhstan appreciated this outstanding poet, wonderful journalist and prominent public

figure of our country,” said the President’s letter.

Writer Abish Kekilbayev called Ongarsynova a person with a keen understanding of justice, with a place in her heart for people’s pain and joy. “Ongarsynova is a truly national poet, a classic of modern Kazakh literature and a true citizen of the Motherland,” he said.

“Ongarsynova lived and worked for us, for the sake of her people. We are proud of our compatriot and are confident that her name will live for centuries. The many people—relatives, friends and admirers of her talent—who have come to pay their last respects to her demonstrate the national love for Fariza-apai,” said Akim of the Atyrau region Bakhtykozha Izmukhambetov.

Chairman of the Writers’ Union, Senator Nurlan Orazalin, noted that Ongarsynova’s talent was particularly evident in her patriotic works. “The works of Fariza Ongarsynova raised Kazakh poetry, Kazakh language and Kazakh spirituality to a new level and the reliance on domestic classical poetry gives her work a special brilliance and lyricism,” he said.

“On this mournful day we pay our last respects to Fariza. From the first days of our work, translating her poems, I realised I had a major responsibility. She was a very delicate and yet very coura-

geous woman. Many newspapers from different countries wrote about her femininity, her lyrical poetry. But Fariza Ongarsynova, born in the home of the great national poet Makhambet, absorbed all his courage and set out to perpetuate his memory. ... And this shows once again the versatility of her talent. Fariza Ongarsynova was a stateswoman, a citizen; she had a principled position but remained remarkably lyrical. Many people knew and loved her. Her death is a heavy loss for us,” said Tatyana Frolovskaya, who translated Ongarsynova’s poetry for many years.

Ongarsynova is the universe, a perfect poetic world, said President of Kazakhfilm Yermek Amansharyev. She knew the imperfections of the world and tried to improve them; she was always honest with herself and others, he added.

“Today we pay our last respects to an outstanding poet, who was able to express the deepest aspirations of the people. Fariza Ongarsynova always responded to society’s most urgent problems. And today, I think the whole nation feels the pain of her loss. People love her and she has left a trace in their hearts. Her memory is immortal,” said Director of the Astana State Opera and Ballet Theatre Tolegen Mukhamedzhanov.

Ongarsynova was buried in Astana in the National Pantheon.



## Astana Leading Regional Economic Development

By Gulnara Kussainova

Kazakhstan is working to develop economic growth, create jobs and improve the quality of life in its regions and cities, as well as rural areas.

The economic competitiveness of regions of the country are determined by how each region utilizes its raw materials, labour force, and infrastructure for the formation of businesses, which create permanent employment.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has said in the past that “The first urban centres will become major cities – Astana and Almaty, – which will also be the centres of science and attraction of investment and population.”

Astana is one of Kazakhstan’s leaders in socio-economic development with a large amount of material, financial and human resources. It is also favourably located for economic activity and its development as an urban and economic centre. The Arshaly, Tselinograd and Shortandy districts of the Akmola region are all within a 1.5-hour drive from the capital.

As of Jan. 1, 2013, Astana’s and

its surrounding districts’ population was about 896,000, which was 5.3 percent of the country’s population. According to Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning estimates, the city and its agglomeration, which would bring together those districts around it, can hold up to 2.4 million people.

Despite Astana’s urban growth, which has resulted from a state programme aimed at increasing the role of the capital in the country’s settlement system, Astana has not yet formed a suburban zone. To solve this problem, Astanagenplan LLP, on the order of the former Agency for Construction and Housing (currently a part of the Ministry of Regional Development), has developed a Comprehensive Plan for the capital’s suburban areas. The plan includes two zones emanating from Astana at 30 and 60 kilometres. Seventy-six percent of the area’s population now lives in the larger zone, which is used when defining transportation times into the city centre.

The suburban area includes 80 rural settlements with a total population of about 160,000 people. The plan for the suburban areas

was developed based on economic and labour data, which were then used to make recommendations on prospective growth of the population in the settlements. The projected population of the suburban area in 2035 is 236,000, with an increase of 80,000 people over the next 20 years.

The current population’s number already exceeds the projected figures of 2015. This trend is seen particularly in the villages located in close proximity to Astana. And the development of transport, engineering and social infrastructure of these communities is lagging behind the population growth. For this reason, a moratorium has been declared on the allocation of land for individual housing construction in the suburban area located in the 30-kilometre zone from the boundaries of the capital.

Astanagenplan, at the direction of Astana’s mayor, also formulated proposals relating to the planning of the territories of Arshaly, Tselinograd and Shortandy districts.

According to Astanagenplan, the above territories should be used to address the issues of food security of the capital, the devel-

opment of recreation centres and placement of construction industry enterprises. This in turn will solve the problems of employment, economic development and investment growth in the suburban areas.

And taking into account the goals of President Nazarbayev for regional development, Astanagenplan recommends developing general plans for all 80 settlements located in the suburban zone of Astana. These

plans should contain sections that require some research and design solutions for each community and should take into account such factors as geological, hydrogeological and topographic surveys, detailed planning and studies concerning rainwater drainage.

Today, the capital is being built on the basis of the General Layout Plan approved July 30, 2011. According to that plan, Astana’s

population is projected to reach 991,000 by 2020. As of Dec. 1, 2013, it was already 812,000 with annual growth projected at about 50,000.

It is clear that rapidly developing Astana, which won the right to host EXPO 2017, holds great development potential.

The author is Deputy Director of Astanagenplan LLP.



Become a member of most exclusive  
Wellness & Spa center in Astana!

- Gym
- Saunas
- Swimming pool
- Gift certificates
- Personal trainer
- Turkish hammam
- Swimming lessons
- Therapists from Bali
- Aerobics and Callanetics

expect nothing less

**RIXOS**  
PRESIDENT ASTANA

www.rixos.com      7 Kunayev str, Astana, Kazakhstan,  
+7 7172 24 50 50, astana@rixos.com