



Photo by Juri Becker

## Reshuffle Brings Authority, Experience to EXPO 2017, Younger Talent to Almaty



Bauyrzhan Baibek



Akhmetzhan Yessimov



Beibut Atankulov

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev introduced new Almaty Akim (Mayor) Bauyrzhan Baibek during his working visit to Almaty Aug. 9, reported the press service of the Akorda presidential residence. On Aug. 10, former Mayor Akhmetzhan Yessimov was appointed chairman of the Astana EXPO 2017 national company.

Introducing Baibek, the President noted that Almaty is not only the largest city in Kazakhstan, but also the engine of its economy, as well as its scientific and educational centre. Therefore, managing such a city requires a skilled and creative staff.

“Baibek is the first graduate of the Bolashak educational programme, who is appointed to such a post. He worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Presidential Administration, was First Deputy Chairman of Nur Otan. He saw my work while working beside me,

travelled all over our country, took part in the major election campaigns... I am confident that together with you, he will be able to solve the challenges facing the city in the context of programmes, which are being implemented in the country,” he told officials at city hall.

Nazarbayev thanked Yessimov for his work in the southern capital and noted that his experience is needed for the organisation and holding of EXPO in Astana in 2017.

“EXPO 2017 is our future. Construction of facilities for the exhibition is only one side of this task. Another, more important, is that the international exhibition aims to give impetus to Kazakhstan’s transition to a new technological system in all sectors through the development of alternative energy. The head of the national company must be an experienced man who will work with the government, regional administrations as well as dozens of countries in order to attract investments and technologies,” said Nazarbayev.

On Aug. 8, during the President’s working visit to the South Kazakhstan region he announced that Beibut Atankulov, the former executive secretary of the Ministry for Investment and Development and a former Kazakh ambassador to Malaysia, was appointed Akim (Governor) of the region. Previous Akim Askar Myrzakhmetov became First Deputy Chairman of the Nur Otan party. Nazarbayev noted that as a result of his work, the region’s economy is doing well, social facilities are being constructed and the sector of services is steadily improving, the Akorda reported.

The Nur Otan Democratic People’s Party is the largest political party in Kazakhstan with more than 762,000 members. The leader of the party is Nursultan Nazarbayev. Before Myrzakhmetov, the position of the First Deputy Chairman was occupied by Baibek.

ASTANA – The people of Kazakhstan shared the pain of millions of Japanese who perished in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945 in an Aug. 6 observance at the capital’s Otan Ana Defenders of the Motherland monument. The dreadful nuclear explosions took nearly 130,000 Japanese lives. “Today on Aug. 6, Hiroshima is hosting a ceremony to commemorate the victims of the tragic events of Aug. 6 and 9, 1945,” said one of the invited guest speakers, Japanese Ambassador in Kazakhstan Kamohara Masayoshi in his address. “The people of Japan are calling on the entire world not to repeat such tragedies. There are over 16,000

## Kyrgyzstan Enters EAEU, Customs Controls to be Removed

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed the Kazakh law ratifying the accession of the Kyrgyz Republic into the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Aug. 5.

According to AKIpress, Russian President Vladimir Putin ratified the agreement on the Kyrgyz Republic’s entry into the organisation on July 13 and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko ratified it on July 24.

On July 27, Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev told Russian news agency TASS that Kyrgyzstan would open its customs borders to other EAEU member states soon. “I know that Nazarbayev supports these plans,” he said.

Officials in both Astana and Bishkek announced that Nazarbayev and Atambayev will together observe via a live video link the removal of customs checkpoints between the two countries on Aug. 12. The removal of customs control is one of the key components of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union which focuses on promoting the so-called four freedoms of movement of goods, services, capital and workforce.

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## Nation Commemorates 70th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings

By Dmitry Lee

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“Today on Aug. 6, Hiroshima is hosting a ceremony to commemorate the victims of the tragic events of Aug. 6 and 9, 1945,” said one of the invited guest speakers, Japanese Ambassador in Kazakhstan Kamohara Masayoshi in his address. “The people of Japan are calling on the entire world not to repeat such tragedies. There are over 16,000

units of nuclear weapons in the world today; this number is more than enough to destroy the entire human race and that is extremely dangerous. Japan and Kazakhstan will jointly co-chair the conference to enforce the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) for two years starting September.”

The CTBT will ban all nuclear explosions in all environments for either military or civilian purposes. The treaty was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996 but it can only be enacted should eight specific countries – China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and USA – both sign and ratify it. Although 183 states have signed the treaty and 164 ratified it, those nations have not yet followed suit.

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## FC Astana Set for Maiden European Football Autumn, Kairat Almaty Also Progresses



FC Astana beat HJK from Finland in a nailbiting match on Aug. 5 ending 4-3. Read the full story on Page B7.

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## NATION

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

# Capital's Charity Fund Seeks Support to Open Private Senior Homecare, Breaks Stereotypes



Visitors, volunteers, neighbours, orphans and good friends of the homecare.

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Whether affluent or underprivileged, black or white, the human clock has no mercy. What once excited the young spirit will tomorrow be a vague memory.

The staff of the Adal Niet Astana charity fund, headed by its inspiration, founder and director general Bibisara Beysenbayeva, knows the challenges of seniors firsthand as the small, private fund offers homecare services for the elderly.

“The homecare service originated from my previous experience working with kindergartens,” Beysenbayeva told The Astana Times in an exclusive interview. “[also] used to work with the Akimat (city administration) by handing out charity packages to the underprivileged and then I thought why not help the needy. The homecare started for free. At first, I took a rape victim and an older woman who was assaulted into my own home. It was then when I heard of

the services of daycare for elders from my friend in Belgium and I thought why not open one here [in Astana].”

This is how Beysenbayeva's journey started two years ago, when she took care of the needy and elderly. Today, the homecare has 10 permanent residents and two more who attend the daycare. The homecare services include highly-qualified doctors and medical staff from the state's hospital No. 1; 24-hour medical and social care, with daily health checks for blood pressure, temperature and blood sugar level; medication treatments and injections; hygienic procedures and laundry; individual approach and rehabilitation programmes; five balanced meals a day according to the nutritionist's and doctor's recommendations; a specially-equipped area with multifunctional beds, anti-sore mattresses, bedside tables and tools to facilitate walking; a Wi-Fi area, home cinema,

karaoke, interesting activities and events; regular walks as treatment accompanied by a member of the staff and the opportunity for family members, friends and loved ones to visit and communicate at any time, day or night (including phone calls and Skype).

To be able to accommodate the residents and improve the quality of their stay, the fund currently charges for the services. The fee starts at 80,000 tenge (US\$424.79) and the exact cost is determined after an assessment, as various drugs and types of care may be required for different individuals, said Beysenbayeva.

The homecare residents are involved in numerous projects as part of the Third Age People Club, which includes catering services, a mini confectionery, handmade accessories and textile works.

“These types of activities help residents socialise, be active. They are all approximately the same age, so they have a lot in common.

Some discover they have been neighbours, some even related. We often have guests who visit the residents, spend time talking with them. We try to treat them as equals. We don't use hospital gowns; they're free to wear anything they like, for instance. They need to feel comfortable here,” said Beysenbayeva.

In order to advance such services in Kazakhstan, however, Beysenbayeva believes that first society needs to change its mentality towards such services.

“Remote love is also love; our clients thank us for what we do. One of our clients has a good salary and to make that living she spends all her time at work. She is gladly using our services; otherwise, she would have to sacrifice her career to take care of her elderly parent. Hiring a caretaker costs even more and there have been cases of caretakers who abused their responsibilities. One of our other clients told us she had installed a surveillance camera and was shocked by what she saw,” she said.

“As opposed to the caretakers, we are a company that has legal responsibilities for the residents. We are interested in their good health, as this is our source of income. It is known that in the world seniors often travel and enjoy their lives, but our grandmothers and grandfathers from Soviet times have a mentality of separating themselves from society as they grow old. It is often looked down upon and derided when parents are given to elder's houses in Kazakhstan,” she explained.

Beysenbayeva wants to take her ambitions even higher with her new project, the House of Generations. She is currently seeking any support to be able to realise her plans, including cooperating with government institutions, in particular hospitals, non-governmental

organisations, private companies and foreign diplomatic missions.

“Speaking of future plans, we want to open a House of Generations for disabled children and seniors. We have found a facility in the city that suits our needs. It has a total area of 5,000 square metres with good infrastructure for further inclusive development.

It will be next to a clinic, a school and an entertainment centre in the area around the Eurasia shopping mall. So far, the embassy of South Africa, headed by Ambassador Shirish Soni, is actively helping us in various ways and I am thankful to the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan for their support in the realisation of this project,” she said.

“According to statistics of the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development, in Astana as of January more than 7,125 children under 18 years have disabilities; 3,266 of them are between the ages of three to seven years old. To engage different social groups in various activities, the House of Generations would include such services as a centre for full-day stay of children with disabilities based on medical and preventive, rehabilitative, educational and methodical work; a guesthouse with medical and social support for older people up to 52 people; a centre for the third age adaptation and preventive measures to support elder people and an employment centre for the graduates of orphanages with accommodations for mothers of children with disabilities,” said Beysenbayeva.

She smiled, as she recalled that her life is tightly related with daycare services. Beysenbayeva was previously engaged with kindergartens and currently refers to the programme as a “Grandgarten.” Both are rewarding life experiences for her, she said.

## NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

14th International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Social Welfare will take place at the Palace of Independence of Astana on September 2-4, according to the Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development of Kazakhstan. The conference plans to address issues of integrated, mass use of ICT systems at social welfare organisations and to discuss unified standards and solutions based on ICT and applicable in the sphere of social welfare.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev visited the new Multifunctional Ice Palace in Astana on Aug. 8. Given the climatic peculiarities of Astana, great emphasis needs to be put on winter sports in the capital city, the President noted during the visit. He also stressed that the new facility should become financially sustainable. The new stadium meets Olympic standards and is designed to sit up to 12,000. It includes an ice arena, a hockey academy, 50-metre pools for Olympic and artistic swimming.

“Kerbez” folk ensemble of Amre Kashaubayev Semye Philharmonic Hall in eastern Kazakhstan will perform in Paris where they will take part in an international festival of world's nations, Tengrinews reported on August 10. The ensemble passed the qualifying stage online before. They have already performed outside of Kazakhstan, but that will be their first time in Paris.

The list of holders of state educational grants in 2015 was published Aug. 11. According to Tengrinews.kz, 32,168 grants were allocated in 2015. A total of 2,500 slots are distributed among the preparatory departments of universities and 29,668 are intended for entry of students into the first year of university studies. The number of grants for full-time training is 29,168, while extramural grants number 500. Sixty universities that were identified on a competition basis obtained the right for acceptance of students through educational grants. According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, more than 12,500 grants were provided for technical training and technological specialties, around 6,000 grants for pedagogical and 2,690 for agricultural and veterinary specialties. Tengrinews reported that 67,377 people participated in the competition for educational grants in 2015, including 53,162 with Kazakh language and 14,215 with Russian language of tuition.

Rental bikes will become part of the public transport system in Almaty, Tengrinews reported Aug. 10 referring to the Chairman of Social and Entrepreneurial Corporation of Almaty Kairat Kulbayev. The company's project provides 200 bike stations for installation with nearly 2,000 bicycles that will cost around \$12 million. The company plans to install 200 parking lots for private bicycles near shopping malls and office buildings of the city. According to the Kulbayev, Almaty's environment is its main problem where 80 percent of air pollution comes from cars and promoting cycling among residents may help reduce carbon emissions.

Kazakhstan's cosmonaut Aidyn Aimbetov will conduct a number of studies during his 10 day space flight on board Soyuz TMA-18M spacecraft to the International Space Station that will blast off from the Baikonur cosmodrome Sept. 2. He will fly along with Russian astronaut Sergey Volkov and Flight Engineer of European Space Agency Andreas Mogensen in the main crew, Chairman of the Aerospace Committee (Kazcosmos) of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Investment and Development Talgat Mussabayev said Aug. 10.

To avoid future traffic jams authorities gave priority to public transportation, the Astana city administration announced. According to the officials, there are about 300,000 registered vehicles in the capital, and about 15-20,000 cars add up each year. The designated bus lanes, introduced recently, will give full priority to buses; the fines for violating those regulations have been set at 10 monthly calculation indexes.

# Nation Commemorates 70th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings

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According to the ambassador, Japan intends to play a “leading role in practical approaches of the international community in the [nuclear non-proliferation] area, including the soonest entry into force of the CTBT.” He added Japan and Kazakhstan are also tightly collaborating to achieve positive results at the Nuclear Security Summit that will take place in March 2016 in the United States.

“The civil society needs to undertake joint efforts and actions in order to realise the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons by showing the [nuclear] painful past to the new generations and I highly regard the International Day Against Nuclear Weapons (Aug. 29) and the ATOM Project created to raise awareness about nuclear weapons that were initiated by President Nursultan Nazarbayev,” said Masayoshi.

The ATOM Project was

launched by Nazarbayev on Aug. 29, 2012 as a campaign to raise global awareness about the consequences of nuclear weapons explosions and testing. To date, The ATOM Project's online petition has collected more than 170,000 signatures worldwide. The effort has been supported by global governmental and non-governmental organisations such as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPWC), which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013, Mayors for Peace and Bike for Peace among many others throughout the international community.

“Some 60,000 people died in the first hours of the explosion in Hiroshima and within the next few weeks the same number of people shared the same fate,” said Roman Vassilenko, chairman of the international information committee of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, representing The ATOM Project. “It is important to host such commemorative campaigns against nuclear weapons so people will remember the consequences of nuclear explosions, as the bombings are echoing further and further in history. Our President had numerous global initiatives against nuclear weapons and one of them was The ATOM Project, which serves as a platform to say ‘no’ to nuclear weapons testing and ultimately, nuclear weapons. We cannot feel safe and secure in the world from nuclear annihilation as long as nuclear weapons continue to exist and hang over our heads.”

Similar sentiments were voiced by Kazakh Senate (upper house of Parliament) member Vladimir Redkokashin.

“I would like to express my deepest condolences to the Japanese people. Kazakhstan is making great global efforts to help avoid the tragedies of Hiroshima and Na-

gasaki in the future. Our President is also making efforts to assure the peaceful use of nuclear energy and at his initiative the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was shut down,” he said.

Head Coordinator of the Ak Orda Public Partnership non-governmental organisation Zoya Tyulebayeva read out an appeal to the people of the world on behalf of the gathering.

“The Semipalatinsk test site equalled the hundreds of tragedies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thousands of lost lives of our compatriots and an ecological catastrophe of our soil. During the active years of the Semipalatinsk test site, 459 nuclear explosions were carried out. We are asking to shut down

the existing nuclear test sites and to stop nuclear tests. The 21st century must become the century of stability and security,” she said.

In addition to the representatives of the Japanese Embassy, the ceremony was attended by the Council of Veterans of Astana, Zhan Arystan Astana Experimental Group represented by children of the capital and youngsters from Sulu Ai kindergarten and Oner Educational and Creative Centre in Koshy village, as well as veterans and students of the Astana Judo Federation.

The event ended with the children laying flowers at the eternal fire and releasing seven balloons and seven white doves into the air as a sign of peace on Earth.



Members of Astana's judo clubs and representatives of The ATOM Project release white doves in commemoration of the victims of the Hiroshima bombing 70 years ago on Aug. 6.



Japanese Ambassador in Kazakhstan Kamohara Masayoshi spoke at the event declaring: “The people of Japan are calling on the entire world not to repeat such tragedies.”

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakh businessmen are working together with German consultants on kumys production, Khabar news agency reported Aug. 6. Having evaluated the healing properties of the horse milk, entrepreneurs from Germany opened a factory in their country where a prototype of Kazakh kumys is being produced. For the new plant, a total of 25,000 hectares of pastureland, 600 horses, 250 of which stably produce milk that is later converted into powder are lined up at the world's largest facility for processing horse milk situated at the junction of three oblasts of Pavlodar, Karaganda and Akmola, according to Khabar. The only largest enterprise in Kazakhstan producing dry milk based on fermented horse milk is located in Karaganda region.

Kazakhstan and Armenia representatives of tourism organisations discussed opportunities to enhance cooperation in tourism during an Aug. 5 conference held at the initiative of the Embassy of Kazakhstan to Armenia with the assistance of the "European Integration" NGO, the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Aug. 7. A conference was named "The Tourism Potential of Kazakhstan and Armenia: Experience, Perspectives of Cooperation" and was hosted by Tsakhkadzor tourism centre of Armenia. The event brought together representatives of local expert communities, mass media and tourism organisations of Kazakhstan and Armenia.

Kazakhstan is working on measures to support its car-making industry upon accession to the WTO, Tengrinews.kz reported Aug. 6 with reference to Director of Foreign Trade Department of Ministry of National Economy Zhanel Kushukova. Kazakhstan as a member state of the WTO is expecting a reduction in prices for cars and certain goods, the country's media reported earlier. "Measures are currently being developed to bolster the country's car-building industry but in order to prevent imports of used vehicles, some tax restrictions are to be introduced," Kushukova said.

Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Canada Konstantin Zhigalov's visit to the Province of New Brunswick in Canada confirmed the potential of deepening cooperation between Kazakhstan and Canadian provinces, which play an important role in developing Canada's global trade, economic and people-to-people ties, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Aug. 5 report. Zhigalov talked with Deputy Premier of New Brunswick Stephen Horsman, leadership of the ministries of natural resources, energy and mines, Port of Saint John and other representatives of the province. Parties noted the need to promote bilateral engagement in energy and education spheres.

200 million tenge (\$1.07 million) from the state budget will be allocated for the airport in Shardara town of South Kazakhstan region to resume its operation after a hiatus of 20 years, Khabar TV reported Aug. 10. The reconstruction of its 1.5 kilometre runway will begin in September, while a guard rail and a reception centre will also be built. With the airport in place, it will take only 20 minutes to get from Shymkent to Shardara, located 300 kilometres away from each other, flights from Shardara, known for its mineral water resorts, to Astana and Almaty are expected to be launched as well, according to Tengrinews.kz.

Kazakhstan's Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and Water of the United Arab Emirates signed a memorandum on cooperation in the field of veterinary medicine, BNews.kz reported Aug. 11. "The document is intended to give a new incentive to the beneficial cooperation between the two countries in the field of veterinary medicine. Therefore, the Arab side opens up a possibility of exporting live animals, animal products and feeds to the UAE," the press service of the Ministry of Agriculture reported.

## International Seminar Concluded on Public Health for Specialists from Africa

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – The closing ceremony of an international seminar on public health was hosted in Nazarbayev University, reported the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) press service in Kazakhstan. The university's Centre for Life Sciences (CLS) of the National Laboratory of Astana trained 24 professionals from seven African countries July 20-31 in areas of epidemiology, biomedicine and public health.

Representatives of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP and trainees from Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe attended the ceremony.

"This is the first time that we are conducting a training seminar for international professionals. Researchers from the Centre for Life Sciences gave lectures and shared knowledge and experience in epidemiology, biomedicine and public health, with new requirements of world healthcare having been taken into consideration," said CLS Director Zhaksybai Zhumadilov.

The goal of the seminar was to acquire system-based theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in the three areas. The conference contained a course of lectures and workshops delivered by leading professors and PhDs from the school's private facility. Participants valued the opportunity to attend lectures by Nazarbayev University President Shigeo Katsuo, Dean of the School of Medicine Massimo Pignatelli and South



Steven Tull, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative (C), presented certificates to the participants of the seminar on July 31.

African Republic Ambassador Shirish Soni.

English writer Samuel Johnson once said, "Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information on it," emphasising the necessity of providing an appropriate platform to improve people's professional skills. In this regard, seminar participants learned methods of conducting research in epidemiology and biomedicine and will be able to apply their new knowledge and skills in their countries.

Botswana nurse-midwife Mabile Masweu appreciated Ka-

zakhstan's strengths in medical research.

"I feel that some of the things that maybe we've been taking lightly, we are now going to take them to the next level. We are now going to do more research to inform the interventions that we already have, because we cannot in any way divorce public health from research. Whatever it is that we do, it should have a background or it should be made better by research so that we know that evidence medicine is the key. Kazakhstan is very strong [in evidence-based research] and most of the lectures that we had in these two weeks were research-

based. Things that we might think are very, very minor, when we now do research we can come up with a solution in the twinkling of an eye," she said.

During the past 20 years of cooperation, UNDP has assisted Kazakhstan in preparing key national and regional policy documents, legislative drafting, institutionalisation and capacity-building of authorities at different levels of government. Today, the Kazakh government and UNDP work jointly to strengthen ties and seek new ways to boost comprehensive cooperation.

"From the UN side we are very

happy to join Kazakhstan and the government of Kazakhstan in highlighting the emergence of Africa and the importance of partnership between countries that are pretty far away. I recently travelled from Africa to Astana and it took a long time and it's not so easy. But I think through bridging activities like these we bring your continent and countries closer with countries in Central Asia on this continent. From the UN-country team side, and UNDP in Kazakhstan in particular, we will keep working to build these bridges and I think especially together with the government of Kazakhstan and civil society of Kazakhstan, as we move into the period of the Sustainable Development Goals," said UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Stephen Tull.

During 2015, UNDP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will also organise a series of professional update courses in Kazakhstan in the fields of oil and gas exploration, public health and Kazakh agriculture for specific individuals from a number of African countries. The project envisions two more short-term thematic trainings in agriculture and oil and gas exploration, with field visits for 90 students from 23 African nations.

The UNDP has been also assisting Kazakhstan in the establishment of KazAID, the new national agency for international aid, which marks an important evolution in the country's significance regionally and globally. The support and partnership will focus on Central Asian and African countries, as well as small island developing states, the UNDP said.

## Upcoming CVE Summit Discussed in Rome

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

Rome hosted the Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) Summit Process Senior Officials' Check-In Meeting on July 28-29. Representatives from more than 65 countries, 10 multilateral bodies and other organisations gathered to review the results of achievements gained since the February White House CVE Summit and to prepare for the Sept. 29 leaders' meeting in New York, which will be held on the sidelines of United Nations General Assembly.

There, countries and organisations from around the world will gather to evaluate progress in countering today's terrorist threats and embrace a more preventive and proactive approach to countering violent extremism.

The Kazakh delegation was headed by Ambassador-at-Large Timur Urazayev. He expressed

support for the summit and said that Kazakhstan is ready to continue cooperation with international partners in combating extremism and terrorism.

According to a Foreign Ministry of Kazakhstan press release, particular attention of the delegates was drawn to the fact that extremism and terrorism fuelled each other. However, the primary responsibility for addressing these global challenges of modernity lies with each state, Urazayev said. The need for concerted and effective measures to combat these threats, including the development of a common list of terrorist and extremist threats and their sponsors, was underlined.

In addition, the conference noted the contribution of the Fifth Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held in June in Astana with the participation of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, in strengthening inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. The confer-

ence participants welcomed the outcome of the congress and noted the importance of cooperation between religious leaders to counter violent extremism.

The results of past regional conferences were discussed during the meeting. February's White House CVE Summit brought together local, federal, and international leaders – including President Obama and foreign ministers – to discuss concrete steps the United States and its partners can take to develop community-oriented approaches to counter hateful extremist ideologies that radicalise, recruit or incite to violence.

Since then, U.S. partner countries have also brought together ministers and foreign leaders, civil society and private sector representatives and senior officials from the UN and other organisations at regional summits.

On June 29-30, Astana hosted the Conference of Ministers and

High Representatives of nine countries of Central and South Asia to discuss countering violent extremism in the region. Participants of the conference included official delegates of nine partner states and 11 partner organisations, as well as civil society organisations and the private sector.

"Participants expressed gratitude to the governments and organisations that hosted follow-on regional CVE summits and other related events, including Albania, Algeria, Australia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, and Norway, and the Global Centre on Cooperative Security. They highlighted how the events were essential for expanding participation in the global movement against violent extremism, building international support for the CVE Summit Action Agenda and continuing the momentum generated by February's Summit," Co-Chairs' statement of the CVE Summit Process Senior Officials' Check-In Meeting said.

## Kazakhstan accepted into UNESCO WCF Executive Council

Staff Report

UNESCO delegations from around the world reelected the organisation's managerial staff and discussed its direction during UNESCO's July 21-24 70th anniversary celebration in Beijing.

Kazakhstan was also accepted to the Executive Council of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs at the ninth WCF World Congress, UNESCO Centres and Associations, which were part of the gathering.

"The young, but already stronger Kazakh National Federation of UNESCO Clubs was selected for the five-member Executive Council of the World Federation from the Asia-Pacific region for four years. This event emphasises the trust and respect from participating countries of the UNESCO World Movement," National Coordinator for Development of UNESCO Clubs Arman Uteniyazov said.

The first UNESCO clubs were established in the Japanese city of Sendai in 1947 and have spread to 120 countries, promoting the basic ideals and principles of UNESCO among civil society.

"The first UNESCO Club was established in 2005 in Kazakhstan and today the National Federation includes 35 clubs whose members unite over 3,000 young talents of our country. Kazakhstan's federation held 'Children in the Rhythm of the World' large-scale festival in June," Uteniyazov noted.

Earlier, Kazakhstan's National Federation of UNESCO Clubs won the bid to host the meeting (session) of the Executive Council of the Asia-Pacific Federation of Clubs, Centres and Associations in Kazakhstan in 2016.

## Kyrgyzstan Enters EAEU

Continued from Page A1

The meeting with Atambayev is to take place during Nazarbayev's two-day working visit to the neighbouring country on Aug. 11-12. Their talks will focus on "a number of concrete issues of cooperation in areas of investment and industry, road construction, tourism and the use of resources of trans-border rivers," Dauren Abayev, the press secretary for President Nazarbayev, told Kazinform on Aug. 11.

"The removal of customs controls on the border with Kyrgyzstan is an important stage in the development of an integration initiative launched by Nursultan Nazarbayev more than 20 years ago," Abayev said referring to the proposal, first put forward in 1994, to create a Eurasian Union. "This is an event we have all been waiting for and it has a strategic significance for our head of state. The expansion of geography of the common market should be primarily beneficial for the well-being of citizens of our countries."

He also commented on the assistance Kazakhstan provided to Kyrgyzstan during the process of its accession to the EAEU.

"Nursultan Nazarbayev has always prioritised the well-being of Central Asia," he said. "By providing assistance to our neighbours, we are creating beneficial environment for our own development. That is why Kazakhstan has helped the brotherly nation in issues of joining the common market. Consultations took place on technical and methodological issues, and significant financial assistance was provided. Further painless integration of the Kyrgyz economy into the EAEU fully meets Kazakhstan's national interests."

Senior officials from the two governments will be present for the actual removal of the customs control at the Akzhol Avtodorozhny checkpoint.

Earlier, Minister of National Economy of Kazakhstan Yerbolat Dossayev noted, in connection with Kyrgyzstan's acces-

sion to the EAEU, that members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) will negotiate the introduction of relevant tariff commitments for Kyrgyzstan in accordance with the organisation's rules.

Obligations of Kyrgyzstan in the WTO do not extend to other member states of the EAEU. The main terms of Kyrgyzstan's accession to the union were agreed to in the framework of the accession acts. Thus, the abolition of customs control will take place since the ratification of the Treaty of Accession of Kyrgyzstan to the EAEU by all member states. The decision was made after the country's reformation of a number of checkpoints in compliance with the union's requirements. In particular, the Russian side provided full technical assistance to Kyrgyzstan to equip these checkpoints, he informed.

The Eurasian Economic Union was launched in 2015 based on the Customs Union of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. Armenia

soon joined the union. The grouping was launched to ensure the free movement of goods, services, capital and workforce within its borders. Kyrgyz President Atambayev signed a bill on his country's accession to the EAEU on May 21.

Nazarbayev also signed the law ratifying the protocol on the accession of the Republic of Armenia to the Treaty of Accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Eurasian Economic Union signed Dec. 23, 2014.

This protocol stipulates that Armenia recognises Kyrgyzstan as a member of the EAEU and agrees to the terms of accession established in the Treaty of Accession of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Treaty of the Union.

Many countries have expressed interest in setting up a free trade zone with the EAEU. Vietnam has already signed the agreement, while India is in discussions on such a zone. Thailand is expected to launch a free trade zone with the EAEU in 2016.

# ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## IMF Raises Kazakh GDP Growth Forecast to 3.25 Percent in 2016

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article 4 consultation with Kazakhstan on July 31, considering and endorsing the staff appraisal without a meeting. Real growth of gross domestic product is now forecasted to increase 3.25 percent in 2016 through a recovery in prices for oil and external demand.

Financial conditions have tightened and external imbalances are emerging in the context of external shocks and the deceleration of economic growth and inflation. Real gross domestic product growth slowed to 2 percent per annum in the first quarter of 2015 in comparison with 4 percent in 2014 and 6 percent in 2013, the IMF said. The slower growth was affected by lower income and profitability because of low prices for oil.

Kazakhstan's exchange rate has appreciated in 2015 showing the ruble's depreciation and appreciation of the U.S. dollar. Slowing demand and a more stable exchange rate caused the fall of inflation from 7.4 percent at the end of 2014 to 3.9 percent in June. The Kazakhstan government successfully issued a \$4 billion sovereign bond and widened the exchange rate band from 170-188 to 170-198 tenge per dollar, the organization said.

Real growth of the gross domestic product is forecasted to reach 2 percent this year because of low prices for oil, weak demand from Russia and China and delays in the Kashagan oil field coming online and amount to 3.25 percent in the next year, the IMF predicted.

IMF executive directors endorsed Kazakhstan's appraisal concluding the 2015 Article 4 consultation with Kazakhstan announcing that "Amid slower economic growth, tighter financial conditions and emerging imbalances, policies should balance ensuring sustainability while alleviating the impact of shocks in the near term."

"In recent years, the authorities have successfully harnessed oil resources to bolster economic growth and build buffers. However, economic growth has now decelerated largely as a result of likely long-lasting external shocks and is expected to remain subdued this year and next year," the IMF said. "Moreover, the outlook for growth is subject to predominantly downside external risks. In view of weaker growth, the large and likely long-lasting nature of the shocks, and the accumulated buffers, the policy response in the short term should be geared toward supporting the economic recovery. Over the medium term, there is a need to further strengthen macroeconomic policy frameworks, to bolster resilience to shocks and promote durable growth."

## 48th Anniversary of ASEAN Celebrated in Astana

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – Heads of diplomatic corps accredited in Kazakhstan joined with Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Askar Mussinov Aug. 6 for the reception dedicated to the 48th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In his remarks to the gathering, Mussinov noted the ASEAN community, which consists of the 10 largest nations of Southeast Asia with a population of more than 617 million and gross domestic product of \$2.31 trillion, is a fast-growing subregion and major economic player. He also stressed that the accumulation of a large amount of natural resources, improvement of the social and economic situation and development of science and high technologies in the area form the foundation to look into the future with confidence.

"Kazakhstan is a reliable partner of the ASEAN. I would like to note that our country will continue to take all the efforts for further development of cooperation in order to strengthen political, socio-economic, cultural and humanitarian ties with the ASEAN countries and to ensure prosperity and development of the Southeast Asia region," said Mussinov.

He added Kazakhstan is actively implementing the Nury Zhol programme put forward by President Nursultan Nazarbayev in an effort to join the 30 most developed nations.

"In the framework of this programme, we have adopted the second five-year plan for industrial and innovative development, launched the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railroad which provides access to the Persian Gulf, opened a joint terminal of Kazakhstan and China at the Lianyungang



ASEAN ambassadors and Deputy Foreign Minister Mussinov (C) cut the cake.

seaport in China and a railroad to Almaty and almost completed the Western Europe-Western China motor road corridor.

"All these will give an opportunity to develop close economic relations with the countries of East and Southeast Asia, especially with the ASEAN countries, and deepen comprehensive cooperation," he noted.

In his speech, Mussinov said that ensuring security in the Asian region is, without a doubt, a key and collective challenge which has direct influence on economic development.

"Measures on strengthening cooperation between the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which was convened at the initiative put forward by President Nazarbayev from the rostrum of the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 and which currently consists of 26 states, and the ASEAN Regional Forum established in the Asia-Pacific region in 1994, were not in vain," he said.

Regarding global security is-

suess, Mussinov reminded the audience of the country's bid to secure a seat as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for 2017-2018.

As a result, development of security cooperation with the countries of Asia and Africa, especially with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), is one of Kazakhstan's strategic goals, he added.

Mussinov also noted that conducting EXPO 2017 in Astana with the theme "Future Energy" against the background of climate change and global economic challenges is necessary for the energy security of the whole world.

ASEAN was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand to promote political and economic cooperation and regional stability. Brunei joined in 1984 shortly after its independence from the United Kingdom and Vietnam became its seventh member in 1995. Laos and Burma were admitted into full membership in July 1997 as ASEAN celebrated its 30th anniversary, followed by Cambodia in 1999.

### ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed the law "On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on pensions." The law provides for changing the calculation mechanism of basic pension payments. Beginning July 2017, the basic pension will be assigned depending on length of participation in the pension system and only upon reaching the retirement age (58 and 63 for women and men respectively). The length of participation will include experience reached in the solidarity system (seniority before January 1, 1998) as well as periods for which mandatory pension contributions were paid (the actual length of the payment of pension contributions).

The United States will not impose sanctions against Kazakhstan's banks for failure to comply with the U.S. tax authorities due to the need to prepare a bilateral agreement, reported the press service of the U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan. The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) obliges banks to provide information about American depositors to the U.S. Treasury. Kazakhstan and the U.S. have initiated a bilateral agreement on the procedure for the transmission of such information and will continue to work on the development of a definitive agreement.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recommended Kazakhstan increase its exchange rate flexibility. IMF-released information said it is necessary to increase the flexibility of the exchange rate parallel with the introduction of new instruments of monetary policy to strengthen the common ground of economic policy and the elimination of imbalances. The IMF believes that the Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) for the tenge in 2014 rose mainly due to the weakening of the Russian ruble and a sharp appreciation of the U.S. dollar, according to which the tenge exchange rate is regulated. "The authorities have taken measures leading to an increase in trust and providing a radical revision of the foundations of monetary policy to support its medium-term objective for the introduction of inflation targeting and expanded corridor fluctuations of the exchange rate," stated the IMF.

The Mangystau region is actively attracting foreign workers, reported news. "The Mangystau region is one of the regions, along with Atyrau region, Almaty and Astana, where it is necessary to attract foreign labour in connection with the modernisation of production and implementation of investment projects in the oil companies and enterprises," said the head of the local department of coordination of employment and social programmes Gulmira Kalmuratova. According to her, highly skilled workers are in demand. "About 70 percent of the total attracted labour is top management, first leaders and heads of units and about 30 percent is qualified workers with appropriate training," added Kalmuratova.

The National Bank of Kazakhstan continues to work on the transition to Basel III, or the Third Basel Accord, a global, voluntary regulatory framework on bank capital adequacy, stress testing and market liquidity risk. According to the financial regulator, since the beginning of 2015 the bank's capital requirements, which are consistent with international standards, came into force. "A key element is the formation of the methodology of stress testing of liquidity in the banking sector, which along with stress testing of credit and market risks will more clearly and comprehensively assess the possibility of fulfilment of obligations under the negative developments in the financial sector or in a separate financial institution," said the National Bank's representative.

## Kazakhstan Considers Building Fourth Oil Refinery



Deputy Akim (Governor) of the region Rakimbek Amirzhanov (L) announcing plans to build a new refinery alongside an Iranian official.

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – A new 10-million-tonnes-per-year oil refinery, fourth in the country, is considered to be constructed within the next five years in the Mangistau region, Deputy Akim (Governor) of the region Rakimbek Amirzhanov has announced.

"Together with the Iranian side, the Akimat (regional administration) is considering the issue of the construction of the fourth oil refinery in Kazakhstan. Oil products from Mangistau will be sent to the northern ports of Iran, and in the south, Iran will send crude oil to the oil companies onwards," the Central Communications Service reported, citing the deputy akim.

According to Amirzhanov, a series of negotiations have already been held involving the Ministry of Oil of Iran and Kazakhstan's largest investors. It is estimated the refinery would create 10,000 jobs.

Currently, the country has three fuel refineries: in the Atyrau, Pavlodar and South Kazakhstan regions. The Atyrau plant has been operating since 1945. The plant's processed oil products totalled 4,920,005 tonnes in 2014. Pavlodar's output in 2014 totalled

4,925,774 and Shymkent's was 5,085,239 in the same year.

The Aktau sea port and the railway lines Beineu-Zhezkazgan and Uzen-Bereket-Gorgan, connecting western parts of Kazakhstan with its central regions and Kazakhstan with Iran via Turkmenistan respectively, will facilitate the domestic distribution and export of oil products. The proposed plant will produce gasoline, diesel fuel, oil and aviation fuel. The minimum cost of the project is estimated at \$6 billion.

"President Nursultan Nazarbayev spoke about the need to begin construction of the refinery. I believe the Mangistau region meets all the requirements [for that purpose]. There are large reserves of oil. Last year, the volume of oil production [regionally] totalled 18 million tonnes. There are many consumer markets. In addition, we have all the opportunities for transport logistics," oil industry worker Zholdas Tokzhanov, told Kazakh TV.

In December 2014, President Nazarbayev said that due to the growing domestic consumption of gasoline, diesel and gas, the relevance of building a new refinery had increased.



THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN IS SEEKING A SEAT ON THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL AS A NON-PERMANENT MEMBER FOR 2017-2018. OUR PRIORITIES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS REFLECT FOUR PRIMARY ISSUES FACING THE WORLD TODAY: FOOD SECURITY, WATER SECURITY, ENERGY SECURITY AND NUCLEAR SECURITY.

IN THE 23 YEARS SINCE OUR INDEPENDENCE, KAZAKHSTAN HAS WORKED TIRELESSLY TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES IN OUR OWN COUNTRY AND BEYOND. AMONG MANY OTHER INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS, KAZAKHSTAN IS CURRENTLY:

**ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRAIN PRODUCERS AND WHEAT EXPORTERS. WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED WHEAT AND FOOD TO NATIONS IN NEED.**

**A CONSTRUCTIVE INNOVATOR IN WATER SECURITY COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGIES. WE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THE RESTORATION OF THE ARAL SEA.**

**AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF DEVELOPING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES THROUGH OUR GREEN BRIDGE INITIATIVE AND AS HOSTS OF EXPO 2017, THEME OF WHICH IS "FUTURE ENERGY".**

**A GLOBAL LEADER IN NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY, AN INITIATOR OF ADOPTING A UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD AND A SPONSOR OF THE ATOM PROJECT, A WORLDWIDE PETITION CAMPAIGN TO PERMANENTLY END NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING.**

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

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

For more information and a video on Kazakhstan's initiatives, please visit [mfa.gov.kz](http://mfa.gov.kz).



# BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

**Business News in Brief**  
 “Almaty International Airport will direct all the 2014 profits towards the purchase of a passenger terminal,” reported the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange website. “Taking into account the July 13 decision of the board of directors, approval was granted to direct the entire profit for 2014 in the amount of 4,950,462,000 tenge (US\$26.4 million) to finance the purchase of the passenger terminal in accordance with the contract of sale of state property between the company and the Almaty city finance department, dated Dec. 26, 2014,” stated the published decision of Venus Airport Investment BV, the sole shareholder.

The Kazakh car market decreased by 34.2 percent during first six months of 2015. “New vehicle sales amounted to \$1,148.7 billion during the period from January-June 2015,” reported the Kazakh automobile business association press service. Sales of imported cars totalled \$937 million, 31.7 percent less than the first six months of last year, while domestic cars were \$211.7 million, a 43.8 percent drop compared with last year’s results. The sales leaders are Almaty, Astana and the cities in western Kazakhstan, but the cities of Kyzylorda and Uralsk showed a two-time decline in sales. New car sales in Astana decreased by 38.32 percent.

The list of the most liquid shares of the Kazakhstan Stock Exchange (KASE) was expanded, as the list for August-September now includes common shares of Bank-Centre Credit and preferred shares of Kazakhtelecom, reported halyk-ipo.kz. The leaders for the period from Aug. 1-Sept. 30 2015, however, are still common shares of Kazakhstan Electricity Grid Operating Company (KEGOC) and KazTransOil, the participants in the first and second phases of the People’s IPO programme.

Investments in Kazakh fixed capital increased by 8 percent following the results of the first half of 2015, reaching almost 2.7 trillion tenge (US\$14.4 billion), reported ranking.kz. A year earlier, 2.5 trillion tenge (US\$13.3 billion) was invested in the country’s fixed assets. According to experts, the pace of investment activity is set by the Pavlodar, North Kazakhstan and East Kazakhstan regions separate from the traditional investors of Atyrau, Almaty and Astana. By June, these regions reached 61.5 percent, 57.6 percent and 47.7 percent of investment growth, respectively. Investments in the Almaty region grew by 3.9 percent and the region ranked fourth in the country in terms of capital investment.

The share of non-performing loans in the Kazakh banking system has declined substantially and was 9.98 percent as of July 1, reported kapital.kz citing the press service of the National Bank. Over the past five years, the level of non-performing loans grew rapidly. At the end of 2008, the share of non-performing loans accounted for only 5.2 percent, or 476 billion tenge (US\$2.54 billion). A year later, the figure rose to 21.2 percent and amounted to 2 trillion tenge (US\$10.66 billion). In the end of 2013, the level of non-performing loans did not exceed 31.2 percent or 4.2 trillion tenge (US\$22.38 billion).

Property in the amount of 12.332 billion tenge (US\$65.7 million) was legalised in Astana as of Aug. 3, reported bnews.kz. “The commission of the local executive bodies of Astana received 2,962 applications for property legalisation totalling 47.512 billion tenge (US\$253.1 million): 3,781 residential facilities in the amount of 27.422 billion tenge (US\$146.1 million) and 4,165 non-residential facilities in the amount of 19.632 billion tenge (US\$104.6 million), including 482 commercial buildings in the amount 13.952 billion tenge (US\$74.3 million). There were 2,663 objects legalised in the amount of 12.332 billion tenge (US\$65.7 million),” stated the press service of the Astana State Revenue Department.

## Kcell Returns Money to Customers Resulting from Competition Law Violation



By Zhazira Dyussebekova

ASTANA – Kcell, one of Kazakhstan’s biggest cellular operators, received an order to return more than 1.5 billion tenge (US\$8 million) to its customers as a result of violations of the competition law, according to an announcement by the country’s committee on regulation of natural monopolies and protection. Following consideration by the courts, including the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan, the decision was recognised as lawful and justified.

According to the Kcell press ser-

vice, the money will be returned to clients due to the fact the operator did not stop the connection after the customer exhausted his funds, resulting in debt to the network provider.

“Despite the fact that the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan confirmed the right of the operator to stop or not stop the connection (radiotelephone conversation and the Internet) in the case of customers running out of money, the claim of the antimonopoly authority has not been cancelled. In this connection, Kcell will be-

gin to return money to customers for not disconnecting,” reported Tengrinews, citing the company’s representative.

“The investigation in respect to Kcell was launched on the basis of customers’ complaints and was completed in early 2014. The investigation by the antimonopoly authority found that the operator abused a dominant position (Article 13 of the law “On Competition”) and did not disconnect radiotelephone conversation or Internet access when the customer’s balance reached zero,” said in the committee’s official response.

Funds will be returned for the period from 2012 to September 2013. For the period from October 2013 until now, the company decided to return funds on a voluntary basis. The operator said customers will receive a text message or written notice, but the exact number is still unclear.

“As the refund will be made for actually-rendered services, Kcell JSC income tax liabilities will decrease in the amount of up to 1 billion tenge (US\$5.33 million),” said the company.

Kcell has operated in the Kazakh market since 1998, providing mobile and Internet services. Telia-Sonera, the Swedish-Finnish telecommunications holding, owns most of the company’s ordinary shares.

## Kazakh, Russian Small Businesses Take Advantage of EAEU

Staff Report

ASTANA – The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is already drawing benefits for two Kazakh and Russian businesses, allowing Russia’s Aivengo-4, LLC and Kazakhstan’s Partner Sales Network BMC Sales, LLP to sign a seven million tenge (US\$37,338) contract on July 20 for the supply of garment products.

“I’m sure it is only the first step in our partnership, which became possible due to the integration within the EAEU. It is very important today. Business took such a level of integration as a reliable basis for its work and replied

with the growth of the initiatives, and this is a real economy,” said Aizhan Shebanova, president of the International Fund Eurasian Dialogue and head of the Kazakh Diaspora of the Ivanovo region.

Shebanova initiated the idea, which was then supported by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the Russian Federation and the administration of the Ivanovo region.

“In the former Soviet Union, the city of Ivanovo was known as a textile cluster, but its potential is not limited. Our plans include both economic and cultural-humanitarian cooperation of the Ivanovo region with the cities and regions of Kazakhstan. For example, our universities are willing to accept stu-

dents from Kazakhstan for training in specialties that are in demand in Kazakhstan. And representatives of the business community of our region are interested in supplying Ivanovo with fruits and vegetables from the South Kazakhstan, Zhambyl, Kyzylorda and Almaty regions. The Ivanovo region is part of the Central Federal District, and therefore offers opportunities for deliveries to the largest metropolis – Moscow,” said Shebanova.

The administration of the Ivanovo region mentioned during a visit by a Kazakh delegation in May to celebrate Entrepreneurs Day in Ivanovo the possibility of signing a sister city agreement between the cities of Ivanovo and Shymkent.

## Soft Car Loans Encourage Sales of Kazakh-Produced Cars

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Soft car loans financed by the government are encouraging the operation of all Kazakh car plants and becoming a better alternative to loans offered by commercial banks. Citizens have the opportunity to purchase cars with a very low interest rate of 4 percent.

“In fact, after the programme started sales of cars produced in Kazakhstan increased more than two times. In April before the programme started, 1,161 cars were purchased and in May, when the programme was operational, 2,611 cars were sold. In June, 2,427 cars were bought,” reported AllurGroup press service.

One good example of the soft car loan’s popularity is the approximately 40 calls made by potential buyers to Peugeot and SsangYong dealerships before the government programme started and the 90-100 calls made by potential buyers after it began. The number of customers at the dealerships increased three times and opening hours were extended one or two hours.



Experts of the Kazakhstan Automobile Business Association consider the low sales of Russian-produced cars are causing the high demand for cars manufactured in their country, according to AllurGroup press service.

Kazakhstan Development Bank has executed 3,571 transactions totaling 11,255 billion tenge (US\$60.2 million) which were transferred to commercial banks under the soft car loans programme.

Nearly 46 percent of the cars pur-

chased under the programme were produced in Kazakhstan. The proportion of cars manufactured in the country increased from 12 percent to 27 percent in May and hasn’t decreased, which shows high buyers’ interest. Ironically, the increase has occurred in summer, typically a slow season for car producers and dealers, and experts forecast growth of the demand in autumn.

The SsangYong Nomad, Peugeot 301 and Geely models are the most popular cars produced by Al-

## Trans-Caspian Rail Route Launched



Kazakhstan Temir Zholy President Askar Mamin (R) and Azerbaijan Railway Chairman Dzhavid Gurbanov getting off the NomadExpress train during their meeting Aug. 3 in Baku.

By Irina Bektiyarova

BAKU – The trans-Caspian rail route was launched 65 kilometres from Baku in the city of Alyat, a new Azerbaijani seaport on the Caspian Sea, on Aug. 3. The event was critically important for Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, China and other countries, as it provides excellent opportunities for transportation of goods between Asia and Europe.

Azerbaijani Deputy Prime Minister Abid Sharifov and Vice Minister of Transport Arif Askerov, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy President Askar Mamin, Azerbaijan Railway Chairman Dzhavid Gurbanov and Georgian Railways chief Mamuka Bakhtadze participated in the event. They met at the NomadExpress train, traveling the Shikhezi (China)–Dostyk–Aktau (Kazakhstan)–Alyat seaport route and ending in Kishly, a suburb of the city.

The train covered more than 3,500 km from China through Kazakhstan and the Caspian Sea in five days, delivering caustic soda to Azerbaijan. The transport route was created under Kazakhstan’s Nurly Zhol new economy policy and China’s New Silk way programme.

In his remarks, Mamin emphasised that the trans-Caspian route has great development potential, making Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan a bridge between Asia and Europe. He stated that putting the Kars–Akhalkalaki route into operation will give impulse to the development of cargo carriage and become a very important part of the trans-Caspian route.

“The high level of cooperation between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan became possible thanks to agreements made by the Kazakh-

stan and Azerbaijan presidents. We plan to organise a container train from China to Istanbul through Azerbaijan and Georgia before the end of this year. As of today, major corporations with plants in China and Southeast Asia monitor our cooperation and are very interested in transportation of their goods using the route,” he said.

His Georgian colleague agreed with him and noted Korean and Japanese companies are very interested in the route.

Gurbanov noted the achievement and thanked the Kazakh party for its active participation in the development of the important international project, which will contribute to an increase in cargo transport to the Caucasus states, Turkey and Europe. It is very symbolic that the first train on the route was carried to the city by the first locomotive produced in Astana. TE33A, the fifth generation locomotive of the Evolution series, was supplied under a financial leasing agreement and funded by Kazakhstan Development Bank under export support policy provided under the Nurly Zhol programme. It was the first Kazakh international deal related to supplying goods produced in Kazakhstan and using lease financing.

“Kazakhstan is a reliable supplier of railway machinery, including locomotives, electric locomotives, turnouts and other railroad equipment. We concluded contracts to the amount of \$350 million,” said Mamin.

Lokomotiv Kurastyru Zauyty, a locomotive producing plant in Astana created in partnership with GE, plans to export 10 modern locomotives to Azerbaijan. Kazakh-made locomotives are successfully used in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Turkmenistan.

subsidiary of the company, is the only plant in Kazakhstan manufacturing cars using a completely knocked-down assembly method, which is much more advanced, he added.

Yelena Philipova works as a financial expert and is sure the soft loan is the most profitable offer available. She used the programme to buy a SsangYong New Actyon.

“This programme was an optimal financial tool for me to buy a new car. Even more, I bought a car which I really wanted to buy and I purchased it in an official dealership. It was very important for me to buy a brand new car and have a warranty for it. I calculated that the overpay will amount to only 400,000 tenge (US\$2,140) in five years, which shows that the loan’s interest rate is very low. I advise my friends and relatives to take part in this programme and I often explain its conditions and advantages to them.”

“As I know, Kazakhstan Development Bank has already spent 75 percent of all its monetary funds under the programme. Kazakhstan citizens are ready to buy cars using the soft loans, but I am not sure that they will have the opportunity after the bank spends all its money. For example, my pen pals want to use this programme to purchase a new car, but they plan to do it in autumn. I am afraid that they won’t be able to use the loan, because the monetary funds will be spent,” she said.

lurGroup. The Nomad is the leader due to its low price and multitask capability.

“As of today, we are working on an increase of local manufacturing content, because it became obligatory for car producers after the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) by Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus. Under its legislation, only models which have at least 30 percent of local manufacturing content have the right to be sold in the territory of the common market of EAEU. The local manufacturing content includes welding and painting. Starting July 1, 2018, EAEU car producers have to increase local manufacturing content to 50 percent. There are plans to increase the aggregate capacity of all automobile plants in Kazakhstan to 200,000 vehicles per year up to 2018, which will enable the creation of approximately 20,000 jobs in the field,” said a representative of AllurGroup press service in a July 23 interview.

AllurGroup plans to speed up production and invest in the assembly of automobile components in the long term. Saryarkaavtoprom, a sub-

# EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## The Way to Remember Hiroshima Is to Redouble Nuclear Disarmament Efforts

The dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima 70 years ago this week was a terrible, seminal moment in human history. The justification for the decision including the likely large loss of life on both sides if the war continued have been endlessly debated. But what is clear is that Truman's reluctant 'rain of ruin from the air' began the nuclear age with all its horrors and fears.

Such was the scale of destruction that accurate figures on casualties have not been possible. But it is estimated that as many as 60,000 people died either instantly from the blast or over the next few hours. As many again died from their injuries or radiation poisoning in the weeks and months which followed.

None, of course, who developed that first bomb or gave the decision to use it knew for certain about either its immediate destructive power or its longer-term damage to human life. This is not, however, an excuse our generation can use.

We now know not only from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where the second bomb was exploded three days later, but also from decades of nuclear testing across the world of the appalling consequences of radiation. Kazakhstan, more than a generation since the Semipalatinsk test site was closed, is still suffering the long-term health and environmental impact of the nearly 500 nuclear explosions that took place above and under our territory.

Our collective knowledge has sadly not prevented countries developing nuclear devices thousands of times more powerful than those exploded over Hiroshima. Even after the reduction in warheads in recent years, we still possess enough warheads to destroy the human race many times over.

The memory of the destruction caused in August 1945 has, however, so far proved an extraordinarily powerful barrier to their military use again. Historical record shows how close we have come to nuclear disaster over the last seven decades. But even in the tensest of times or when technological failure has falsely raised the fear of a nuclear attack, political and military leaders have stepped back from the abyss. They understood the use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic for our world.

We would be very foolish to rely on reason and humanity to always protect us. But the threat to our survival from

nuclear weapons has been made more dangerous with the rise in recent years of violent extremist groups with no regard for human life. They are actively trying to acquire the knowledge, technology and raw materials to build weapons of mass destruction. If they succeed, they will not hesitate to use them to take as many lives as possible.

It is why we must use this sombre anniversary to dedicate ourselves to reducing and, eventually, eliminating the threat from nuclear weapons. This means strengthening non-proliferation and stepping up security measures to prevent dangerous materials falling into the hands of extremists groups. Ultimately, our ambition must be a world in which nuclear weapons have no place.

These are all goals, of course, which have helped define Kazakhstan from its earliest days as an independent country. President Nursultan Nazarbayev's decision to give up the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal and close the Semipalatinsk test site was driven by our first-hand knowledge of the impact of nuclear weapons.

For the same reason, Kazakhstan has campaigned tirelessly for a universal ban on nuclear testing. Given the shared history, it is fitting that Japan and Kazakhstan are to jointly chair the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Conference to see how this ambition can be realised. Kazakhstan has also used its experience of working with other countries to dispose of its nuclear warheads and secure nuclear material and sites to urge new safeguards are put in place to counter the threat of extremist groups.

But it was not political or military leaders but thousands of ordinary citizens who were the victims of the attack on Hiroshima. It is the collective voice of their counterparts around the world which can be the most powerful force for change. Through The ATOM Project, which Kazakhstan launched, they are being provided the opportunity to urge their leaders to take the steps necessary to end nuclear testing permanently and legally and move towards a world in which nuclear weapons belong to history.

The 70th anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb was rightly marked across the world. But the best memorial to those who lost their lives is to step up our efforts to ensure that no other place or people suffer the fate of Hiroshima.

## Global, Concrete Action Can Still Help Reverse Climate Change

The United States is, by most measures, still the largest economy in the world. According to the World Bank, its carbon monoxide emissions per capita over the last five years, although on a downward trend, remain the highest of any large economy. Without decisive action in Washington, hopes of successfully tackling climate change are slim.

That is why U.S. President Barack Obama's Clean Power Plan, outlined Aug. 3, rightfully received praise as a "game changer." A 2030 target of cutting carbon emissions by almost a third below 2005 levels was a remarkably bold statement, particularly given the strength of climate change scepticism that remains in America.

But the scale of the challenge and threat demands such ambition. Explaining the need for such drastic action, President Obama pointed out that all but one of the 15 hottest years on record have occurred this century. Climate change with increased temperatures and more frequent severe weather is not a threat for the future but the reality today for many regions, including Central Asia.

These heatwaves, droughts and storms are, however, just a taste of what is to come. Experts predict that anything beyond a two-degree rise in temperatures may have uncontrollable and irreversible consequences. On our present trajectory, we will be taking this huge gamble with our collective future.

It is why so much attention has been focussed on the international climate change talks to take place in Paris at the end of the year. Getting global agreement on the steps needed first to slow and then halt climate change when countries are at different stages of the development path will be incredibly difficult. But the U.S. plan has raised hopes that a breakthrough can be made.

So too, have the promises from China, the world's greatest producer of greenhouse gases. China has vowed that emissions from its fast-growing economy would peak by 2030 if not earlier. This means ending its dependence on coal to drive its continued prosperity.

The steps and stance of the United States and China are crucial because they together produce around two-fifths of all greenhouse gases. In comparison, Kazakhstan emits just one percent. But like many oil producing countries, our per capita emissions rates are high. And holding down temperature rises also requires every country to move to low-carbon development.

This is a responsibility which Kazakhstan has accepted. We may have rich resources of oil and gas, but firm plans,

backed by concrete actions, are in place to cut emissions. A target has been set to reduce greenhouse gases by 15 percent in 2025 and 25 percent in 2050 below 1992 levels, when our economy was many times smaller.

The key to meeting these targets will be to maximise the country's potential to generate clean energy. We are starting from a low base with our renewable energy industry generating less than one percent of our electricity. But four solar farms, 13 wind farms and 14 hydro plants are already being built with the aim that eight percent of the country's energy will be generated from these sectors within five years. This is just the start with a target of 50 percent of electricity from renewable sources by 2050.

Clean energy also encompasses nuclear power. As the world's largest producer of natural uranium, Kazakhstan is ideally placed to develop a civilian nuclear energy industry in the coming years to reduce greenhouse gases and accelerate the move to a low carbon economy.

Such expansion of clean energy will need major investment. But Kazakhstan has not fallen into the trap of believing that the choice is between a green or prosperous economy. Instead, it is forecast that the move to low carbon development could add as much as 3 percent to our country's GDP, giving a very significant return on up-front costs.

Hitting these targets and earning these returns also depends crucially on improving energy efficiency. There is both huge potential and a desperate need to achieve this aim. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found that post-Soviet economies, with their legacy of inefficient industries, buildings and networks could half energy use by adopting higher standards.

It is a shift that we believe EXPO 2017 can help drive. It was a sign of the country's determination to maximise the opportunities for green development that the theme of Future Energy was chosen for the exhibition in Astana less than two years from now. Not only will it provide the opportunity to showcase and share the latest global technological developments in green energy but is also intended to help embed higher standards across the country.

This is important, of course, for our future prosperity. But the fight against climate change is also essential for the wider well-being of humanity and our planet. As President Obama said, we are not only the first generation to experience the impact of climate change but may be the last that can halt it. In the last few months before Paris, it is something that all countries must remember.

## Rio 2016: the Greatest Sport Festivity in the Heart of Brazil

By Dilma Rousseff

We are still one year away from it, but Brazil's heart is already beating faster.

The Brazilian generous heart leaps up when confronted with two of its passions: welcoming people from all over the world and competing with enthusiasm and fairplay in a superb sport performance.

We have seen it happening during the FIFA World Cup. It will be like that again, beginning on August 5, 2016, when we will light with the Olympic flame our passion for sport and will hoist the flag bearing the five interlocking rings at our magnificent Maracanã stadium.

It is not by chance that Brazil was given the honor of being the first South American country to host the Olympic Games.

Brazil is worldwide known for its impressive and diversified landscape. We are also a country with a history of tolerance and respect for diversity which has become an international symbol of sociability.

Indeed, we have welcomed different peoples and cultures with hospitality and happiness.

Our people – our workers, businesspeople, students, scientists and artists – managed to build one of the most open nations in the world, thanks to their creative capacity, friendliness and solidarity.

We have built a vigorous culture of peace and work. That set of values guides our hard work to turn these coming Olympics into the best ever world sports festivity.

We have achieved it during the FIFA World Cup and we have everything it takes to repeat it at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

This is a major challenge which we are overcoming day after day, hour after hour, long before the competitions actually start.

The preparation process for the Games began with investment in the most important asset of all: our athletes.

It went on with massive investments in sport infrastructure and will reach its peak with the great ongoing urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro – doubtlessly the most beautiful natural landscape for the Olympic Games since Ancient Greece.

Throughout the last years we made huge public investments to ensure adequate material support to our athletes, their coaches and teams, with such programmes as the "Athlete Scholarship" and the "Brazilian Medals Plan".

Our outstanding athletes have succeeded in continuously improving their performances with each competition. They are our great stars and source of inspiration. The results achieved by Brazil in the last Pan American Games are a concrete example of the drive of our athletes.

These investments in people and infrastructure will bring far reaching results in future years, beyond the time frame of the Olympic Games.

Indeed, we are disseminating sport practice in our country among the young, with investments in sport facilities for a wide range of sport modalities throughout



the country. This will be the greatest legacy which we will reap from the Rio 2016 Games. We believe that education and sport are our best allies to ensure social inclusion and integration. Through them we stimulate young people to fight for their goals, to experience the joy of breaking limits, to learn teamwork and respect for their competitors.

Sport inspires in us a culture of cooperation, of honoring, ethic and hard work as means to reach our goals and celebrate our achievements. Combining it to the natural joy and self-esteem of our hospitable and welcoming people will produce the greatest legacy of the Rio 2016 Games.

We will also have the monumental legacy of urban modernisation of Rio de Janeiro, one of the most beautiful cities in the world and our national postcard.

Two thirds of the financial resources allocated to the Rio 2016 Games are being invested in urban infrastructure works for the city.

A wide range of infrastructure works are under way: a new metro line, a tramway connecting the whole of downtown Rio and express lanes for buses which will interconnect all competition venues. The aim of much of this investment is to improve public transportation and commuting for people during and after the games, in particular people who live in the most remote quarters and need public transportation of high quality.

Urban transformation is not all.

The Rio Harbour area, for example, will become a new leisure and culture quarter for local population and for thousands of tourists which we receive each year.

In the future, "Porto Maravilha" will house new office and residential buildings. We are recuperating the brightness of the Marvelous City which has enchanted the world ever since it was the capital of our country.

The Rio 2016 Olympic Games strongly attracted investments from the Brazilian private sector – and not only for sponsoring or for building and modernizing the new hotel network.

For example, the Barra Olympic Park was built to a great extent with private investment, including works on local infrastructure.

The Olympic Village, that will host athletes from all over the world, is also being constructed by the private sector, which has begun to sell these apartments. It is possible to state, therefore, that the Rio 2016 Games will receive one of the highest levels of private investment if compared to previous Olympic Games in the last 20 years.

The Deodoro Sport Complex, one of the competition

venues, located in the middle of a deprived area and having the largest concentration of youngsters of Riode Janeiro, will become a space for local population to practice radical sports. It will also be a training stage for our best athletes.

The Barra Olympic Park will be the foundation for the future Olympic training center, responsible for preparing the country's future high level athletes.

It will also enhance sport cooperation with other countries, especially with our neighbours from South America.

This effort is being stimulated by investments all over Brazil. In total, there are 12 training centres and 261 sport initiation centres, in addition to the 46 official athletics tracks. The investment in the sport legacy in Rio and in the country sums up to \$1.2 billion.

We are also providing for the cost-efficiency as well as the sustainability of the facilities. One example is Future Arena, the venue of the handball competitions at the Olympic Park. The Arena is made with temporary modules, which will be dismantled after the Games and converted into four schools.

Ensuring the smooth operation of this great project has required constant attention and a joint effort by the local, state and federal government, as well as the Organising Committee and the Olympic Public Authority. All parties will remain fully committed until the end of the Paralympic Games in September 2016.

An event with such complexity also requires constant attention to details. Rio's infrastructure and Olympic projects are already being tested with the first events taking place throughout the city. By early 2016, we will have held competitions in 40 sports modalities.

Brazil is fully prepared for the upcoming Games. In cooperation with the event's organizers, we will proudly show the world the recent accomplishments of a strong and well-functioning democracy which is committed to reducing social inequalities through economic development and investment. This is the collective effort of an entire country.

Our energy to overcome challenges will be demonstrated to all the 15,000 Olympic and Paralympic athletes, the thousands of spectators and the billions of viewers.

Athletes and tourists will be warmly welcomed by the Brazilian society, as it happened in the 2014 World Cup, when the country charmed the world with its festive atmosphere and overall safety and efficiency.

At that time, all those watching our festivities on TV certainly wanted to be here in Brazil.

In 2016, do not just long to be in Brazil – come enjoy all the good that the Olympic Games can give you during this one-time event – and all that a country like Brazil can offer you at any time: peace, love, joy, and lots of happiness! We are waiting for you with open arms and hearts.

The author is the President of Brazil.

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# OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Let's Use UN World Day against Trafficking in Persons to Help End This Crime

By Yury Fedotov

Conflict, terrorism, economic turmoil, natural calamities, disease: we are living in an era of unprecedented crises and troubles, as United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned.

Record numbers of people are fleeing war and persecution, and the international community is grappling with acute migration challenges in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, in the Andaman Sea, Latin America and Africa.

For human traffickers, these hardships represent business opportunities.

Many millions of vulnerable women, men and children are being cruelly exploited – coerced into working in factories, fields and brothels or begging on the street; pushed into armed combat



or forced marriages; trafficked so their organs can be harvested and sold.

More and more detected victims of trafficking are children, especially girls under the age of 18. No place in the world is safe: the latest Global Report on Trafficking in Persons by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime found that the trafficking victims identified in 124 states were citizens of 152 different countries.

And the traffickers are getting away with it. Over the past decade there has been no significant improvement in the overall criminal justice response to this crime. In the period covered by the Global Report, some 40 per cent of countries reported less than ten convictions per year. Some 15 per cent did not record a single conviction.

The world is facing many grave challenges, and our resources are strained. But we cannot allow criminals to exploit these crises and take advantage of desperation and suffering.

You might wonder what one person can do about an entrenched and pervasive crime like human trafficking. But we can all do our part.

As a first step, you can educate yourself about human trafficking and help others become aware of the problem. You can find out more on our website for World

Day against Trafficking in Persons, [www.unodc.org/endht](http://www.unodc.org/endht).

You can urge lawmakers and businesses to take this crime seriously, and to take action.

For governments, that means joining the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol on trafficking, and putting these frameworks into action in national legislation.

Effective implementation of the Convention and Protocol – backed with the necessary resources – can help to protect trafficking victims, promote cooperation between countries and ensure that criminal traffickers, wherever they are, are brought to justice.

As a consumer, employee or business owner, you can advocate for measures to prevent the use of forced labour in operations and supply chains, and eliminate abusive and fraudulent recruitment

practices that may lead to trafficking.

Finally, you can encourage governments, companies and individuals to support the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons.

Financed solely through voluntary contributions, the Trust Fund works with NGO partners across the globe to identify women, children and men who have been exploited by traffickers, and give them the assistance, protection and support they need.

Since 2011, the Trust Fund has helped some 2,000 victims annually, providing shelter, basic health services, vocational training and schooling, as well as psychosocial, legal and economic support.

The Trust Fund has been able to assist girls like Skye, who was trafficked to India when she was just thirteen. After escaping back home

to Nepal, she sought help from NGO Shakti Samuha. She went after her trafficker in court and went back to school.

Skye won her case and graduated, and now works as a staff member at Shakti Samuha, helping other trafficking victims become survivors.

There are many more young girls and trafficking victims like Skye who need and deserve our support.

July 30 is United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons, established to raise awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promote and protect their rights. This Thursday, let's take this opportunity to give hope to trafficking victims, pledge to do our part and help end this terrible crime.

**The author is the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.**

## Ongoing Reforms Begin to Show Results

By Alikhan Baimenov

In the Plan of the Nation 100 Concrete Steps on the implementation of five institutional reforms, President Nursultan Nazarbayev primarily outlined the problems of the formation of modern professional and independent state apparatus.

The efficiency of a response that the state can give to the global, regional and country challenges largely depends on the effectiveness of the state apparatus. The increasing understanding in the world is that sustainable development of countries and the welfare of peoples, along with the “invisible hand” of the market, depends on the quality of the “visible hand” of the state.

I want to note that the head of state has attached great importance to the improvement of the state apparatus since the early days of independence. That is why international experts describing the evolution of



civil service in Kazakhstan note the logical continuity and consistency of reforms in this area. At the same time, they emphasise that a key factor in the success of the reform is the political will of Nursultan Nazarbayev. Thus, during the second half of the 1990s Kazakhstan was the first among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries that adopted a special law and implemented a system of mandatory open competition to enter civil

service and separated civil servants into political and administrative layers, as well as created a special authorised body. As a result, the World Bank recognised Kazakhstan as a leader of reforms among the CIS countries.

The status of a leader commits to go ahead. Based on the analysis of the problems of our civil service and modern global trends, Nazarbayev approved the Concept of a new model of public service in 2011. Its implementation allowed Kazakhstan, once again the first in the CIS, to create a Corps A management layer, strengthen the role of personnel management services and start work on the development of tests based on competence.

This stage of reforms also received high international evaluation. In particular, the report of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Anti-Corruption Network in October 2014 recognised Ka-

zakhstan as a successful example of the promotion of professionalism and meritocracy in the civil service. It is no wonder that our experience is actively studied in the region. In this regard, United Nations (UN) Deputy Secretary-General Helen Clark noted in her letter to Nursultan Nazarbayev that “the establishment of Public Service Regional Hub in Astana and its success became possible because countries like Kazakhstan are ready to share its experience in carrying out reforms.” By the way, more information on the regional hub can be found at [www.region-alhub.org](http://www.region-alhub.org).

Thus, continuity, progressiveness and sequence of reforms prepared the way for the transition to a career model. The tasks set by the President regarding institutional reforms on the formation of a modern, professional and autonomous state apparatus and the transition to a career model, in turn, have become a new

qualitative stage of civil service development in Kazakhstan.

On the basis of these tasks, the National Commission on Modernisation developed proposals on the implementation of the first 15 steps of the Plan of the Nation.

The representatives of the Kazakhstan National Academy of Natural Science (KazNANS) actively participate in the activities of the relevant working group. A number of the academy members' recommendations have already been approved by the national commission. These include legislative separation of powers between political officials and senior executives of the administrative civil service, including executive secretaries and heads of the departments. It should enhance the effectiveness of management in the government agencies. Also, there are proposals to reduce the gap in wages between the upper and lower positions of the administrative civil service.

For a variety of historical reasons, in Kazakhstan as well as in other countries in the region, the practice in the field of public administra-

tion and civil service is ahead of science. In this regard, Nursultan Nazarbayev set a task to actively develop the Kazakh scientific school of public administration and civil service. This trend was identified as one of the priorities by KazNANS.

In addition, there is an expected signing of a memorandum among KazNANS, the Regional Hub and the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan on promoting the development of the national scientific schools. The hub already has partnerships with leading educational organisations and international institutions.

I believe the implementation of these and other measures will make a significant contribution to the quality of implementation of the Plan of the Nation and will enhance public confidence towards the state apparatus.

**The author is chairman of the Committee of the Public Service Regional Hub in Astana and a member of the Kazakhstan National Academy of Natural Sciences Presidium.**

## The Unusual Partnership of Singapore, Kazakhstan

By Kishore Mahubani

Singapore is small and resource poor. Kazakhstan is huge with vast reserves of natural resources. Yet the Kazakhs feel they have much to learn from the Singapore story, spurring deep bilateral engagements.

The eminent historian, Professor Wang Gungwu, has come out with a new perspective on human history in a brilliant new book, *The Eurasian Core and Its Edges*. In it, Professor Wang questions the Sino and Eurocentric views of ancient world history.

He argues, instead, that it was the contests between the nomadic societies of Central Asia and the agrarian ones of Europe and China that have shaped the development of world history.

The significance of this new perspective was brought home to me when I was recently in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, the biggest and most successful country in Central Asia. As the gateway for China's “New Silk Road” to Europe, Kazakhstan also promises to emerge as the region's most important country, economically and geo-strategically.

I was there to attend the first graduation ceremony of Nazarbayev University (NU). For the last three years, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore, has been working closely with the new university to establish the first graduate school of public policy in Central Asia. Its inaugural class of 19 Master of Public Policy students were among the 450 students who graduated that day.

Friends of the LKY School are often surprised when I tell them of our deep involvement in Kazakhstan. Why would a Singaporean institution be interested in Kazakhstan and vice versa? Singapore and Kazakhstan could not be any more different. While we are small and resource-poor, Ka-



zakhstan is huge (all of Western Europe can fit into Kazakhstan). It has vast reserves of oil, gas, uranium, coal, zinc, copper and many other natural resources. Kazakhstan is also one of the world's largest wheat producers.

Singapore is one of the most densely populated countries in the world; Kazakhstan's population of 17 million makes it one of the least. Singapore's success owes a great deal to its port and its status as an entrepot along one of the world's busiest shipping routes. Kazakhstan is land-locked and also lacks the navigable rivers that have enabled other land-locked countries like Hungary and Austria to prosper through trade.

Besides geography, Kazakhstan is also handicapped by its Soviet history legacy of central planning. Singapore, in contrast, has always subscribed to free trade. Hence, Singaporeans instinctively understand the power of markets and commercial incentives.

Yet despite the significant differences in context and circumstance, the LKY School has developed a deep portfolio of engagements with the highest levels of the Kazakh government.

We have conducted courses for over 700 senior officials from Kazakhstan, including the Prime Min-

ister and his Cabinet, deputy ministers, and permanent secretaries in all branches of the government. Some of our faculty members have advised national leaders in Kazakhstan on policy and governance reforms. I have also been invited to serve on the international advisory panel of a commission that was recently established to advise on civil service modernisation.

Over the years, there have been at least five major programmes in Kazakhstan that reflect some learning from Singapore's experience. The first is the Bolashak scholarship programme which sends Kazakhstan's best and brightest to study abroad on government funding. It is similar to Singapore's well-developed public service scholarship system.

A second example is the establishment of Kazakhstan's sovereign wealth fund – Samruk Kozyna – which has drawn lessons from the experiences of Singapore's Temasek Holdings and the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC).

Thirdly, Kazakhstan has also studied Singapore's education system. It has sent its senior officials to study our polytechnic and technical education system as well as university governance. Kazakhstan has also established its own version of our gifted education programme.

A fourth example is the establishment of the Kazakhstan Corps A – an idea similar to Singapore's Administrative Service. It has also been studying carefully other practices of our civil service.

A fifth example is pension reform, where Kazakhstan has borrowed ideas from our Central Provident Fund system. More recently, Kazakhstan has expressed an interest to learn about how Singapore has become the financial hub of our region. The governor of Kazakhstan's central bank – whom I met on this trip – recently told Bloomberg News that he would like Kazakh-

stan to become the Singapore of Central Asia.

So why does Kazakhstan find Singapore's experience useful? I think there are at least three reasons.

First, there is a growing recognition among much of Kazakhstan's governing establishment that the country needs institutional reforms, especially in building a meritocratic civil service, in strengthening the rule of law, and in developing an independent judiciary.

Previous government-led initiatives in industrialisation, economic diversification and higher education were held back by the lack of implementation capacity, and also by corruption and clientelism. President Nursultan Nazarbayev and the reformers in his Cabinet have concluded that Kazakhstan's modernisation has to start with the modernisation of the state. This is something that Singapore has done remarkably well over a short span of time.

Second, Kazakhstan's geopolitical environment, not unlike Singapore's, is also challenging. In one of my lectures, I observed that Kazakhstan was able to maintain good relations with both Russia and China (partly because the West had succeeded in driving Russia into China's arms). In the longer term, Russia could view China as a threat. If that were to occur, Kazakhstan would face some difficult choices.

Unlike many of its neighbours, Kazakhstan has enjoyed peace and prosperity because of the skilful diplomacy of its founding President Nazarbayev.

Like Singapore, Kazakhstan also has to focus on succession planning in leadership. Also, like Singapore, Kazakhstan needs to develop long-term policies that will motivate great powers to develop a strong stake in its independence and success. So far, Singapore has been successful in doing this, partially by strengthening ASEAN's role as a

vehicle for great power engagement in South-East Asia.

Third, there is a great deal of admiration and goodwill for Singapore and what we have achieved in the last 50 years. In May 1991, Mr Lee Kuan Yew visited newly independent Kazakhstan at the invitation of President Nazarbayev. Mr Lee left a deep and lasting impression on the Kazakh President.

In his memoirs, President Nazarbayev singled out Mr Lee and Charles de Gaulle as his role models. In 2013, on the occasion of Kazakhstan's national day, Mr Lee received the highest award given by the Kazakh government.

Significantly, the PM of Kazakhstan, Mr Karim Massimov, flew to Singapore to attend Mr Lee's funeral. President Nazarbayev sent a message saying, “Kazakhstan will never forget the great contribution of Lee Kuan Yew to building strong friendly relations between our countries.” Such is the reservoir of goodwill that Singapore has developed in Kazakhstan.

The Kazakh officials that I met were also impressed that Mr Lee's passing did not affect our markets or our economy. The smooth leadership transitions Singapore has had, the absence of corruption, and our strong institutions are key elements of the Singapore story that have impressed the Kazakh leaders. All this creates an opportunity for the Singapore Government, its academic institutions and the private sector to deepen their engagement with Kazakhstan.

At the LKY School, our partnership with the NU has produced a number of benefits. First, it has given us the confidence that we can compete with the best academic institutions in the world. NU is very selective in its choice of partners. The other partner institutions are Cambridge University, University of Pennsylvania, University College London, Duke University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and University of Warwick.

In fact, we are the only academic institution from Asia that NU has chosen to partner.

The second benefit is that it has forced many of our professors to ask the “Kazakhstan Question”: How does a country overcome its legacy and its geographical handicaps to develop rapidly? Somewhat paradoxically, resource-rich countries often face a natural handicap. The resource curse drives up costs and makes the rest of the economy uncompetitive.

The few countries that have developed rapidly in the decades after World War II have done so through export-led industrialisation. This was how Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore did it, and how China has been succeeding in the last three decades. But geography and a low population density make it extremely difficult for Kazakhstan to pursue the same development strategy.

Contemplating the “Kazakhstan Question” should also help Singaporeans realise that both geography and history have not been completely unkind to Singapore.

When one goes to Kazakhstan and understands its developmental challenges, one can appreciate Singapore's geographical advantages. History, too, has had a mostly benign influence on us.

The British established Singapore as a free port. They also endowed us with a workable administration and the rule of law. The first generation of Singapore's leaders built on that legacy and created one of the most effective states in the world. This achievement is now a source of growth and learning for other countries, as the LKY School is discovering in Kazakhstan.

**The author is Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. This opinion first appeared in The Straits Times and is reprinted here with permission.**

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Nurly Zhol Programme Helps Connect Continents

Alexander Tarakov

Kazakh transport workers celebrated their professional day on Aug. 2. On the eve of the big day, The Astana Times talked to Askar Mamin, chairman of the Kazlogistics transport workers union and president of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ), the national railway company, to discuss the development of the transport industry and Kazakhstan's integration into the global market of transport and logistics services.

*As stated by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, "the transport infrastructure is the circulatory system of our industrial economy and society." The drop in demand and prices on world markets has surely had a negative impact on our economy. How has this affected the transport sector in general and the work of KTZ? How does the company plan to cope with global challenges?*

The transport sector provides services for domestic and international trade and as a result is affected by market demand for manufacturers' products. The global economic and geopolitical trends have a direct impact on its activities.

The slowdown in economic growth of the region, deterioration of the pricing environment and reduction in the trade turnover have led to a decrease in the total cargo turnover of the transport industry from 493.2 billion tonne-kilometres in 2013 to 487.4 billion tonne-kilometres in 2014. In addition, the scope of traffic increased by 3.7 percent, or 3.6 billion tonnes.

With the general decline in cargo turnover, KTZ managed to close 2014 with a profit from operating activities of 163.5 billion tenge (US\$872.2 million) and 73.5 percent higher net income than the planned target by attracting additional volumes and increasing the share of commercial transit cargo, as well as reducing consumption to 56.5 billion tenge (US\$301.4 million) and implementing programmes enhancing the effectiveness of the KTZ group of companies.

Additionally, container traffic attracted to and from China to Europe provided the opportunity to increase revenue traffic to 13.7 percent in 2014. As a result, the share of transit traffic in the company's total revenue reached 25 percent. Our task now is to increase this figure in the medium term up to 50 percent.

The downward trend in turnover is being observed in 2015, too. At the same time, we continue to increase the capacity of transit cargo in new operations.

By the end of the year, we plan to carry 42,000 containers in the China-Europe-China direction, which is almost 40 times greater than in 2011.

Growth in new segments of the market confirms that the company has been on the right track in recent years in implementing development strategy of the new multimodal competencies.

*Do you mean the creation of a transport company of international standards based on KTZ in the context of Kazakhstan becoming an international transit hub and renewal of the Silk Road?*

Exactly. On instructions of the President of Kazakhstan, KTZ is appointed as transport and logistics operator of the project with the goal of combining land, sea and air modes and transforming the company at the international level. Therefore, assets including the seaport and airport infrastructure and transport and logistics centres were integrated into a single transport and logistics holding based on KTZ.

Today, the company provides rail and sea transportation of goods, as well as services for ports and airports, logistics operation and terminal infrastructure for different types of transportation. The company is developing new competencies in partnership with leading international operators such as Dubai Port World, Zurich Airport International and Swissport International.



Askar Mamin

The strategy is aimed at the market of transport and logistics services in the Eurasian continent and the reorientation of freight traffic from sea to overland routes through Kazakhstan.

In this matter, the company forms an international transport and logistics chain in alliance with global and local market participants and offers integrated transportation services which are successfully competing with alternative proposals.

The company has started the formation of a network of terminals and logistics centres on the coasts of the Pacific and Indian oceans and gulfs of the Baltic and Black seas. In 2014, the first external logistics terminal network started operating in the Chinese port of Lianyungang. It has become the main point of consolidation of cargo flows to or from Kazakhstan and a key transit port for transshipment of cargoes to and from Central and SouthEast Asia, as well as inland ports in China.

The project has already shown its effectiveness in the first six months of 2015. The terminal has processed 142,000 20-foot container equivalents (TEUs) and storage of 318,000 tonnes of bulk cargo and by the end of 2015 the amount of cargo is expected to increase up to 250,000 TEUs, followed by a two-fold increase in 2020.

Because of the supply of transportation services in the market that allow regular container trains to go through Kazakhstan with the speed of 1,119 kilometres per day, we are strengthening our market position and successfully compete with global operators.

Having gained the marine dry cargo, competence was achieved and transportation on the Caspian Sea was organised. They were integrated with transportation by rail and through the port of Aktau.

The company plans to develop east-west and north-south marine transportation segments and transport corridors with cooperation in the Caspian Sea and Indian Ocean.

We develop innovative transportation and logistics solutions in the multimodal mixed communications rail-sea and rail-air according to the "one-window" principle that has the optimal price-quality ratio for the targeted market segments.

The presence of consolidation and distribution of international traffic in the centre and offering competitive transport products provides geographic expansion of key international transport corridors passing through Kazakhstan from various countries.

*How are the intensive development of the Kazakh transport and logistics infrastructure and the projects planned within the framework of the Nurly Zhol new economic policy connected?*

The plans to increase the amount of transit traffic to 1-1.5 million containers a year and the corresponding development of the long distance and terminal transport-logistics infrastructure of all modes of transportation in Kazakhstan are necessary, as well as its integration into the global network.

The formation of a Western Europe-Western China transcontinental road corridor is almost finished. New railway lines, such as Zhetysay-Korgas, have also been built connecting Kazakhstan with the second railway border crossing with China, as well as Uzen-Bolashak, which connects Kazakhstan's railway network with lines in Turkmenistan and Iran. We have also built the Zhez-

kazgan-Beineu and Arkalyk-Shubarkol lines that are optimising domestic and international routes going north-south and east-west.

The completion of the three terminals for general cargo types, containers and grain will increase the capacity of the port of Aktau.

The core of Nurly Zhol is the development of infrastructure. Within the programme, the company is implementing projects such as construction of the second track on the Almaty-Shu line, the Borzhakty-Yersai railway line and a ferry complex at the Kuryk village on the Caspian Sea, development of the Khorgos-Eastern Gate logistics hub and reconstruction of the Astana International Airport passenger terminal on the eve of EXPO 2017.

The plan also provides for a significant amount of work on developing the road network in the main directions from Astana. It involves reconstruction of more than 6,000 kilometres of roads. The total investment will amount to 2.5 trillion tenge (US\$13.3 billion), with plans to put about 600 kilometres of roads into operation by the end of the year.

A separate issue is the commercialisation of transport services and introduction of the toll system. Nowadays, the 211 kilometres of the Astana-Borovoe road are operating as a toll road. In 2014, fees collected on the road amounted to more than 1 billion tenge (US\$5.3 million). As a result, the quality of service has improved and the number of traffic accidents decreased three times. The toll system is expected to cover about 7,000 kilometres of roads with maximum traffic until 2020.

There are plans to create 260 objects of roadside service by 2020. The national operator will be assigned to coordinate the development and implementation of the national standards for roadside services.

The first Class A transport and logistics centre in Kazakhstan was launched in Astana in July during the national teleconference with the participation of the President. Which characteristics does it have?

The largest Class A transport and logistics centre (TLC) in Central Asia meets strict requirements for the architecture of the warehouse, width of span, height of shelving storage, temperature and location of the warehouses on the basis of multimodal transportation, plus strict security requirements including fire safety.

Everything, including warehouses, equipment and technology meet the highest international standards. Automation of infrastructure accompanies the process in real time. The system automatically displays information about filling the warehouses; for example, where and what goods are situated, shelf life, when and to whom to give them and the priorities when moving. In addition, the system provides commands to operators, such as which products need repackaging or when to ship.

The TLC in Astana stands on the principle of multimodal transportation: receipt and shipment of goods from the train to cars and back is organised. There are five kilometres of direct drive-up railway lines to the warehouse.

This year, there are plans to launch a similar TLC in Shymkent. In the framework of the Nurly Zhol programme, transport and logistics centres will be built until 2020 on the main Kazakh transport corridors in Aktope, Uralsk, Atyrau, Aktau, Kostanai, Pavlodar and Semy.

Thus, a chain of hubs will be

created in key centres. The central hub of the region is planned to be in Astana.

We are working on attracting potential investors to participate in the above-mentioned projects.

*Not long ago, the President declared 100 Concrete Steps to implement the five institutional reforms of the Plan of the Nation for joining the 30 most developed countries. What measures will be taken to implement the tasks assigned to the company?*

Development of the transport and logistics infrastructure in Kazakhstan and formation of global supply networks using our infrastructure have created basic conditions for maximising the transit potential.

But it is also necessary to create a favourable climate of logistics and institutional conditions of transcontinental transport passing through Kazakhstan. To this end, under the 100 Concrete Steps we have proposed initiatives such as improving the legal framework for mixed transport, creating coordinating committees within transit corridors and enforcing Kazakhstan's obligations regarding the decision of the Eurasian Economic Commission for preliminary informing of customs bodies, as well as the creation of a flexible tariff policy in railway container transportation and provision of tax incentives for shipping companies.

Overall, implementing the projects for Kazakh integration into the international transportation and communication flows and the creation of a multi-modal transport corridor to move goods from Asia to Europe will add 1 percent to the GDP growth, create about 15,000 new jobs in logistics and increase transit by all forms of transport from 18 to 50 million tonnes in 2030.

*Within the 100 Steps, the President announced the need to integrate KTZ and Air Astana. How will a synergy of two types of transport be accomplished?*

According to IATA data, in 2014 the total amount of world cargo transportation by air was 51.3 million tonnes, including 19.6 percent along the Asia-Europe route.

The cargo transit through Kazakh airspace (an average of 23,000 freight flights) is 1.5 million tonnes per year, of which about 90,000 tonnes was handled at the country's airports.

Since much of the time-sensitive transit cargo is transported by foreign airlines, one of the most promising solutions is rail-air transportation via a Kazakh transportation scheme. In the past year, we have tested cargo delivery from China to Europe to ensure optimum cost and delivery time.

KTZ Express, in cooperation with Hewlett-Packard, as well as logistics partners DB Schenker and KLM, has conducted a rail-air pilot project from Chongqing to Amsterdam. For transportation of expensive electronic equipment, KTZ Express purchased specialised 45-foot containers with climate control.

This project will increase the speed of delivery of goods (covering 9,900 km in seven days) as well as reduce the cost of transport in comparison to rail transportation.

The goal of KTZ is to further increase the amount of traffic using the rail-air system through the creation of coherent multimodal solutions, building competencies and the acquisition of its own fleet.

Currently a feasibility study is being done on a joint venture in the area of air transportation.

*KTZ is implementing a business transformation programme initiated by the Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund. What is the business transformation for you and what are the first results?*

Focusing on the best international practices, we carry out the transformation of the entire organisation (structure, management, production and support processes) and culture through the development and change of the personnel's attitudes, technology and modernisation of production assets. At that, the KTZ operating

model involves development of a rapidly-growing new business in the segment of multimodal transportation based on the traditional railway business of the KTZ group of companies.

The sphere of cargo business provides optimisation of the planning process, sales, traffic management and maintenance of carriages and trains with the introduction of automated control systems, as well as the transition from tonnage to a scheduled model of transportation-process organisation that allows us to offer a valuable product with a contract period of delivery. Transformation of passenger traffic includes measures to improve the process of ticket sales, expanding ranges of highspeed, optimisation of structures and schemes and reducing unproductive expenditures.

The automation of processes and introduction of saving technologies are also provided in the area of operation and maintenance of infrastructure and are aimed at increasing productivity.

The strategic performance of the KTZ company was developed and approved as part of the transformation. The criteria include added economic value, customer satisfaction, corporate governance rating, transport safety, rating of social stability and the impact on the environment.

*Guarantee of social programmes, development of corporate culture and health insurance are important factors for the employees and their satisfaction level. How do you assess the current social policy of the company? Does KTZ implement all its obligations as an employer?*

In accordance with international principles of corporate governance, the company is guided by the policy of social responsibility towards employees and society as a whole. Spending on social programmes in 2014 amounted to 11.4 billion tenge (US\$60.7 million). The funds are being allocated as various kinds of financial aid to the employees. There is financing of social programmes in the following areas: housing policy, support of young professionals, material support of large families, single mothers, pensioners and veterans, health care and promotion of physical culture and sports in the workplace, as well as various charity events and projects.

In order to attract highly-qualified personnel, KTZ provides an attractive environment for potential and existing employees, as well as ensures social protection, professional development and personal growth.

As part of the housing programme, our employees have been provided with more than 3,000 apartments since 2008.

From 2008 to 2014, the average monthly wage of workers in the KTZ group of companies has doubled from 70,000 tenge (US\$373.03) to 134,000 tenge (US\$714.10).

In addition, the company pays great attention to workers' health care. KTZ organised three medical trains, Salamatty Kazakhstan, Zhardem and Densaulyk, which have visited 97 stations since they were initiated.

*A powerful division of railway engineering has been formed in KTZ holding and an engineering cluster was created from scratch in Kazakhstan. What are the prospects for the development of this sector?*

The government attaches the highest importance to the development of transport infrastructure and railway engineering. The accelerated formation of a world-class transport and logistics system, which is supported by the creation of a knowledge-based economy in Kazakhstan, is one of the strategic directions for achieving the national goal of becoming one of the top 30 developed countries.

Historically, the production of machine-building products for the railway transport of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries was developing in the territory of Russia and Ukraine.

The high level of wear and tear obsolescence of the company's production assets formed a significant need to update its rolling stock and infrastructure-producing resources.

Given the public policy of industrialisation and import substitution, as well as the backwardness of the producers of the CIS technology, our company has taken the path of asset modernisation by means of organisation of its own manufacturing.

In conditions of high investment barriers in creating new engineering industries for private business companies, KTZ, as one of the largest economic entities and consumer of products, has managed to establish the production of machinery products.

In partnership with world leaders such as General Electric, Alstom, Talgo and others, plants to manufacture freight, passenger and electric locomotives, wagons, large car casting and hardware infrastructure were built and are operating.

Today, the volume of production is 200 billion tenge (US\$1.1 billion). Domestic enterprises are assimilating new production and localisation of manufacture has increased. A total of 5,200 railway product items are planned for production, while the level of localisation of manufacture should reach at least 50 percent by 2017.

By the end of the year, the first Kazakh rail certified in accordance with the technical regulations of the Eurasian Economic Union will be released by the Aktobe plant.

The products of our plants have considerable export potential and are already being delivered to the markets on the Eurasian continent.

At the same time in accordance with a comprehensive privatisation plan developed by the Samruk Kazyna Fund and approved in the past by the Kazakh government, our company's production facilities are subject to transfer into the competitive environment through the implementation of the auction in 2018.

*In recent years, KTZ has launched high-speed passenger trains based on the Tulpar-Talگو cars, which significantly reduced the travel time between Kazakh cities. There is improvement not only in speed performance, but also in service. What are the plans for the further development of passenger traffic?*

To improve quality of passenger services, a development programme of high-speed passenger services has been implemented, resulting in the reduction of travel time of trains on the average of two times.

Currently, high-speed passenger trains composed of Tulpar-Talگو cars travel eight routes: Almaty-Petropavlovsk, Astana-Aktope, Astana-Atyrau, Almaty-Atyrau, Almaty-Aktope, Almaty-Ust-Kamenogorsk, Astana-Ust-Kamenogorsk and Astana-Kyzylorda.

Work is also continuing on the launch of additional high-speed trains and in the second half of 2015 there are plans to launch additional high-speed trains: Astana-Uralsk, Almaty-Aktope, and Astana-Ust-Kamenogorsk.

We are also working to improve the level of comfort and services on the long-distance trains and commuter trains. The rolling stock is being renewed, new routes are introduced, the range of branded trains is being increased and conditions are being provided for passengers with disabilities.

In addition, modern forms of passenger service are actively being introduced, such as ticket sales through the Internet and terminals as well as transportation with electronic tickets. Since November 2014, a system of flexible pricing for travel on Talگو high-speed trains that depends on the depth of sales and demand has been functioning. This innovation allows passengers from alternative trains and other modes of transport by providing an opportunity to buy cheaper tickets for the majority of passengers, including pensioners, students and other individuals.

# Nation & Capital

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**SOCIETY**

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Kazakh Special Olympics Team Exceeds Expectations at Los Angeles Games

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## Galymzhan Moldanazar, Break of Reality Offer Cross Cultural Musical Collaboration



Galymzhan Moldanazar (C) performs in New York together with Break of Reality in May 2015.

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – American band Break of Reality (BoR) and Kazakh artist Galymzhan Moldanazar met in Almaty in February. The musicians rehearsed and gave two concerts together at-

tended by hundreds of residents and guests of the city. The band arranged Moldanazar's visit to New York in May, inviting him to come earlier and perform in their concert in Manhattan's Highline Ballroom. Moldanazar arrived May 26 and to-

gether they performed one of the Kazakh musician's original songs, "Akpen Birge" (which can be loosely translated from the Kazakh as "Be on the Better Side").

While in Central Asia, the band visited Turkmenistan,

Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan as part of their programme to collaborate with local musicians and make music together, said BoR's percussionist Ivan Trevino in the film "Zhana-York of Moldanazar."

Continued on Page B2

## A Great Gift of Kazakh Nature Attracts Increasing Number of Tourists



By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Alakol Lake is one of the loveliest waterways of east central Kazakhstan, a natural gem which welcomes nearly 4,000 tourists every day. More than 100,000 visitors find recreation on its shores every year.

"Did you know that Alakol is one of the most famous health resorts in Kazakhstan among astronauts since the Soviet times? Every day, 4,000 people come here to relax and the tourist season lasts from June 15-Aug. 20," said

Askarbek Dzhakayev, mayor of the Yrgaitinsk rural district of Almaty region, reported Kazpravda.kz.

Many years ago, the famous Silk Road passed by the water "bowls" known as Alakol. In those days, caravan participants were hoping for refreshing waters to revive them after a tiring journey. What they discovered, however, was the salty waves miraculously restored strength and improved health. Indeed, modern medical research confirms the healing qualities of the lake water.

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## Country Loosens Visiting Restrictions on Tourist Attractions

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan recently amended its regulations to allow foreign tourists to visit popular tourist attractions along its border without a special permit.

The amendment was to 2014 government resolution No. 356, which had expanded the number and width of border areas closed to tourists without a special permit. As a result of that 2014 regulation, most tourists had to enter the administrative districts of the country within a 25-kilometre border zone with China under a special border regime used for departure, temporary stay, residence and movement. This limited the access to tourists to some of the country's most popular attractions unless they first received a special pass issued by the Kazakh Ministry of Interior.

"Foreign tourists have to obtain passes to visit places like Lake Alakol and Big Almaty Lake. And to do that they have to wait around 10 days after applying. We are working with law enforcement authorities to reduce the waiting time. But the mere fact that permits are needed creates even a greater problem than the waiting time and application documents," Rashida Shaikenova, chairwoman of Kazakhstan's Tourist Association, told Tengrinews in 2014.

Timur Duisengaliyev, acting director of a tourism department, also said at the time that the restrictions were having "a negative impact on the image (of Kazakhstan)."

To reverse those problems, the Ministry of Investment and Development and the akimats (local administrations) of border areas created a list of tourist areas to exclude from the 2014 restrictions. The newly amended regulation, which will enter into force after 10 days from the date of publication, adopts those exclusions. Foreign tourists and stateless persons will now be able to visit places in the border zone such as Big Almaty Lake, national nature parks Char-yin, Jungar Alatau, Kolsai Lake, Chimbulak ski resort, the Medeo outdoor speed skating and bandy rink, Kok Zhailau – the stow in the Ile-Alatau State National Park, Ustyurt Nature Reserve, as well as the cities of Aktau, Atyrau, Uralsk, Ridder, Sarygash, Taraz and others without having to receive a special permit.

In related news, a new visa regime was launched last year and recently extended allowing citizens from 19 countries – including Australia, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the UAE, the U. K. and the U.S. among others – visa-free entry to Kazakhstan for up to 15 days.

## Illustrations for "The Book of Words" by Abai Gain Popularity in Social Networks

I RAISED A POP THAT TURNED TO DOG. HE BIT MY CAUL TO BLOOD. I TAUGHT A MAN TO HOLD A CUP AND IN THE END HE SHOT ME DOWN.



ABAI

IF YOU WANT TO BE RICH, LEARN A TRADE. WEALTHY DOMINATES WITH TIME, BUT A SKILL DOES NOT.



ABAI

SLEATH IS THE WORST ENEMY OF THE ARTIST. IT BEGINS MEDIOCRITY, LACK OF WILL, POWER, SHAMELESSNESS, AND POVERTY.



ABAI

HE WHO HAS NO ASPIRATION IS THE WORST OF MANKIND.



ABAI

By Zhazira Duysembekova

ASTANA – An anonymous author has created an Instagram account @abaicartoons with illustrated quotes from "The Book of Words" by famous Kazakh poet, philosopher, educator and founder of Kazakh written literature Abai Qunanbayuli. The account has gained over 6,000 followers since its launch in early July.

A significant figure in Kazakh history, Abai translated the works of Russian and European authors such as Mikhail Lermontov, Ivan Krylov, Alexander Pushkin, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Lord Byron into Kazakh, most of them for the first time. He also worked to develop Kazakh education and was a reformer in the spirit of rapprochement with Russian and European culture on the basis of enlightened liberal Islam. His major and most famous work, "The Book of Words," is a philosophical treatise and collection of poems which encourages Kazakh people to embrace education, literacy and good moral character in order to escape poverty, enslavement and corruption.

"Abai has always been an important part of our cultural her-

itage; Kazakh children grow up memorising his poems by heart from an early age. However, Abai's works have never been presented in a new and exciting format, such as cartoons or comics. I believe that classical literature should be revived in many different ways, because with each retelling, we discover something new about the work and about ourselves. I think the project became popular because everyone loves Abai and my cartoons just made him more accessible," said the anonymous author in a recent interview with The Astana Times.

"I memorised his poem, 'Don't brag until you find knowledge' in fourth grade and it has been stuck in my head ever since. It is a poem about the different traits of human character and as a child I loved its upbeat rhythm and easy rhymes. While studying in college, I read and re-read 'The Book of Words,' writing down my favourite passages in my sketchbook," he added.

"The Book of Words" became an inspiration for the project's creator, who decided to remain unidentified. Followers only know his nickname, DidarKM,

which is written in every illustration.

"I chose to be anonymous because I wanted my followers to concentrate on Abai's words, not me. However, despite my continuous requests to stay anonymous, I am often asked by journalists to reveal personal details, such as occupation, age, hometown and gender. For now, I plan on staying anonymous for as long as I can," he said.

One of the most interesting things about the project is that all the quotes in the illustrations are in English, so the author not only draws Abai in a modern way, he translates his words.

"Translating directly from Kazakh is a very challenging task, as Abai's works include obsolete words or specific Islamic terms that need to be contextualised. I try to concentrate on delivering the meaning as opposed to doing a dry, word-for-word translation," said DidarKM.

Choosing the cartoon format to deliver Abai's words of wisdom to the audience is very unusual combination.

"I was always fascinated with how comics and cartoons can be used to convey complex messages. One of my favourite works

is 'Maus' by Art Spiegelman, the only Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel. 'Maus' showed me that the deceptively-simple format of comics can be used to explain difficult cultural concepts because of their universality. A lot of people in Kazakhstan say they feel like they can find a part of themselves in Abai's works. In my simple, minimalist cartoons, this concept is visualised. We are Abai," said the anonymous artist.

DidarKM said he chooses quotes he thinks are interesting and memorable, while also picking controversial passages that might fuel an interesting discussion.

"I love symbolism, so I choose quotes with concrete objects that I can illustrate," he said.

As the project has gained so much popularity and positive feedback, Abaicartoons' author announced the illustrations will be available for sale as cards. The proceeds will benefit the victims of nuclear radiation in the Semei region, Abai's birthplace.

"It's an opportunity to share my culture's wisdom with the rest of the world in an accessible format. And more importantly, it is something that I love to do," said the cartoonist.

### THINGS TO WATCH & PLACES TO GO

#### NATIONAL MUSEUM

July 23 – August 27 Dialogues with the Great at 10 a.m.

#### ASTANA MALL

August 22 at 5 p.m. Colour Festival

#### CENTRAL PARK ASTANA

August 23 at 10 a.m. Food Festival

#### ICE PALACE ALAU

August 24–30 at 10 a.m. Judo World Championship 2015

## PEOPLE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Galymzhan Moldanazar, Break of Reality Offer Cross Cultural Musical Collaboration

Continued from Page B1

"We had a lot of great musicians but one in particular really stuck out to us ... an amazing singer and songwriter Galymzhan Moldanazar. As soon as he sang his first lyric, everything just stopped ... and we thought this guy is extremely talented. It would be wonderful to collaborate with him beyond just our tour," he said. "This was the first time Galymzhan had ever left Kazakhstan and he didn't speak English, but I think his music is pretty universal."

Moldanazar told Hit TV, Kazakhstan's music and entertainment channel, that he is inspired by his surroundings, people and everyday causalities of life as well as his own life and disposition.

"I often ride public transport and like to observe people and their moods from a back seat," he said.

Moldanazar's music videos were shot as home videos with mobile phones and computer web cameras to show his life as it is.

"I don't think it is important to show what you don't really have or what you really are not," he said in the Telemasterskaya Production House programme.

Before the Kazakh musician became recognised in his native land, he had a long and hard struggle with money, his own place to live and his profession.

"I lived where nobody did ... on the streets for a couple of days when I couldn't pay the rent. Some days my worry was what food I would have for dinner. This year, things started to get better with my work and life with my

family," the musician said in the programme.

"Nobody needed my songs when I was writing and composing them by myself and I was nobody in Almaty, writing lyrics for singers and selling my original records for a very low price," Moldanazar stated in the programme. "People only wanted to take advantage and use my work for their own benefit."

Moldanazar teaches indie, rock and country music to two of his first students and does it only for the sake of music. In the same way, he writes and composes his own songs for that purpose.

"Indie and rock music are not the kinds of music that can earn you a lot of money. I don't think I can perform at weddings," he said. "People were telling me 'be a man and get a real job,' but they did not understand me at all."

The artist stressed music is his only way of life. The ambitious musician would not give up his dreams in the face of obstacles and didn't allow anyone, not even his family, to stand in his way to success. That determination has led him to collaborative offers from the U.S. and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and some European countries.

Moldanazar's music genres span British folk music to today's electronic music, including synthpop, electro pop, Britpop and pop rock. His songs such as "Kim Ol?" "Alistama," "Meniki Emes," "Kosh Bol," "Aldama," and "Berik Bol" broke all the stereotypes of Kazakh stage music. His dream of composing songs in his native language and having

them heard outside Kazakhstan is slowly becoming a reality.

"A new page in life of Kazakh music," "songs in the Kazakh language that are modern, pleasant to hear and lyrics that can be understood and remembered," "first performer who is capable of making foreign nationalities love Kazakh language," and "a revolution in the Kazakh music industry" are some of the comments under his YouTube videos.

Moldanazar was born in the Kyzylorda region and learned to play guitar while in school. As he started to write his first songs, he moved to Almaty to study at Temirbek Zhurgenov Kazakh National Academy of Arts but ultimately left because he didn't find the programme to be suitable.

The artist chose music over his studies, the area where he now devotes all his time and effort. He first performed as a solo act, then formed the band "Moldanazar." The humble and talented musician always tries to improve himself, researching and experimenting in new directions.

"The most important thing is to keep going," he told Art Focus programme on Kazakh TV.

Moldanazar spoke about the transition from soloist to band performer.

"I am a street musician not used to working in a team. I was usually singing with my guitar and stopping anywhere I wanted, but now I have to do everything differently which is difficult but I like it," he said about his collaboration with BoR on the Kazakh Gakku TV music channel.

Trevino gave an interview to

"The Astana Times" about BoR's collaboration with Moldanazar.

**How did Break of Reality get the idea to collaborate with Galymzhan Moldanazar? What were the reasons for it?**

We were first introduced to Galymzhan in the living room of Chaz Martin, public affairs officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Almaty. Break of Reality was touring Kazakhstan through a programme called American Music Abroad and Chaz invited our band and Galymzhan to meet at his home in Almaty. We shared dinner, drinks and played music together. It was a beautiful moment. An American band and a Kazakh singer, speaking different languages, communicating through music. After a few performances in Almaty, we began talking with Galymzhan about flying him to the U.S. to collaborate on a recording project.

A few months later, Galymzhan was in our living room in New York. We recorded a Break of Reality version of his song "Akpen Birge" and also a music video to go along with the track.

Galymzhan is such a beautiful singer and songwriter. His voice is pure, a perfect fit with our band's sound of cello. We love his song "Akpen Birge" and thought an acoustic, more "unplugged" version featuring Break of Reality would be powerful. We also wanted to showcase Galymzhan's talents in front of our American audience. The wonderful talent from Kazakhstan.

**What were your first impressions about Galymzhan?**

The first time we heard Galymzhan sing was in Chaz's living room. The room went silent and everyone gravitated towards Galymzhan. He sat, played his guitar and began softly singing a song. It was beautiful. We had no idea what he was singing about, but we knew immediately that he was a special artist. That night was filled with music. We rehearsed, learned songs together and became friends.

**What are your expectations from this collaboration?**

Our music video and single for "Akpen Birge" is now available across the Internet. People can purchase the audio track on iTunes and can watch the music video on YouTube. Our goal is to reach audiences in Kazakhstan, the U.S. and beyond. While Galymzhan sings in Kazakh, we believe his music is universal and can affect people across the world. We have received so many wonderful comments from non-Kazakh speakers who have been touched by the song.

**Would Break of Reality like to record more songs or an album with Galymzhan?**

While in New York, Galymzhan and I had a great conversation about future projects. We are hoping to record a collaborative EP together; maybe five original songs featuring Break of Reality.

**What are Break of Reality's next steps?**

Our band has a big tour coming up in Brazil. We will be soloists with the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra, performing in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Brasilia.

We are very excited about this opportunity, as it is our first time to perform in South America. Also, we would love to return to Kazakhstan for another tour! It was such a wonderful experience and we felt so welcomed by your audiences. A return to Kazakhstan is definitely in our plans.

BoR is an American cello rock band that originated in Rochester, New York and was founded by Trevino and Patrick Laird when both were students there at Eastman School of Music. Although they were taught strictly classical music in their conservatory, Laird and Trevino's love for rock music drove them to create their own band called "Break of Reality." The group consists of three cellists and one percussionist.

BoR's music style is cinematic rock, cello rock and classical indie. The band combines classic and rock genres, creating their own musical style known as "cello rock" with hard rock and metal elements and often described as "dark" music.

BoR's "Solid Ground," "Helix" and "Reigns of Castamere" are among the band's original works and the one that made them more famous is the cello cover for the theme song of the American television series "Game of Thrones." BoR has released a number of albums, "Spectrum of the Sky," "The Sound Between," "Voiceless" and "Ten."

"Break of Reality developed a sound all their own while growing a fan base full of loyal followers who have stuck by their side for the last 12 years," wrote The Sound Live.

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# CULTURE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Astana Exhibition Showcases Works of Nicholas Roerich

Staff Report

ASTANA – The Russian Centre for Science and Culture exhibition Heart of Asia in Astana is showcasing 25 works by artist and scientist Nicholas Roerich, which were inspired by an exhibition of Central Asia.

During the exhibition, monuments of archeology, literature and the art of the peoples of the vast region were investigated for the first time. That expedition was a real feat of research, expanding the cultural and historical picture of the world by including the nomadic world of Asia.

For the first time in history, works

of art showed the inaccessible region of Central Asia, the greatest mountain passes, the signs of the Great Migration, images of spiritual warriors and heroes of ancient legends. The paintings of Nicholas Roerich are widely known and include such works as “Geser Khan,” “Maitreya,” “The Guardian of the Entrance” and “Mother of the World.” The expedition went through Kazakh lands and the artist was able to witness the majesty and beauty of the steppe landscapes.

The Heart of Asia expedition was prepared by Roerich Society of Astana and is devoted to the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate and the 80th anniversary of the Roerich Pact.



“Geser Khan,” a painting by Nicholas Roerich.

## Timur Bekbosunov, A New Page in Country’s Image Abroad

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

Kazakh-born glam-rock opera singer and interpreter of contemporary and cross-cultural music Timur Bekbosunov got his start in Kansas, United States, where he discovered opera, said pri.org. He has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and a musical project in Kazakhstan, collaborated with numerous notable composers and now tours with his own dark glam-opera band, “Timur and the Dime Museum.”

Bekbosunov was born in Soviet Kazakhstan in 1983 and at 15 was accepted to study English for a year in the U.S., according to pri.org. He stayed with his adopted American mother, Debora Donovan, who he says encouraged him to become a singer.

After graduating from the New England Conservatory of Music and California Institute of Arts, Bekbosunov won a reputation as an interpreter of contemporary and intercultural music in the U.S.

“Timur and the Dime Museum” was formed in 2010 as a result the influence of songwriter Klaus Nomi (who passed away in 1983) and collaboration with American musician Kristian Hoffman. That year, Bekbosunov recorded his debut album “Songs from the



Timur Bekbosunov (C) and other members of his band.

Operatic Underground” with the band. He performed at the prestigious ALOUD series, on the TV show “America’s Got Talent” and numerous venues around Los Angeles, according to the LA Philharmonic Association website.

He worked closely with U.S. composer Anne LeBaron on her large-scale musical project about Kazakhstan, “The Silent Steppe Cantata.”

“She is one of the first American women-composers working with the Sazgen-Sazy and Sary-Arka ensembles of the Astana Philharmonic,” said Bekbosunov in an interview with The Astana Times.

“The Silent Steppe Cantata,” which premiered at Congress Hall in Astana in 2011, was funded through several competitive awards and grants from major foundations in the U.S. and Kazakhstan. According to Bekbosunov, the project’s artists were thrilled to share their peaceful vision with Kazakhstan and hope they will eventually travel to the U.S.

One of his next big projects is “One Thousand and One,” a collection of Kazakh folk-ethnographic melodies by Russian composer and musicologist Aleksander Zatyayevich. Over the course of the

next two years, the piece will serve as an inspiration for American composers to create new compositions and dramatic content, according to Bekbosunov.

His other projects are the non-profit organisation Art of Opera Foundation, inspired by Charles Darwin’s “Origin of Species,” and the operatic multimedia installation “Do Scream” adapted and directed by Bekbosunov and Sandra Powers.

During the interview, Bekbosunov also spoke about the story recently aired by Public Radio International’s “The World,” what he has accomplished to break the “Borat” stereotype about Kazakhstan and his current and future projects.

**Timur, what lead to the idea that foreigners should think about Timur when they hear “Kazakhstan?”**

Actually, the title of the radio story originated from the producer, not from me. It was quite a surprise, nevertheless, to read about it when the feature on “The World” aired around the U.S. On one side, of course, it was very satisfying and pleasing to hear the endorsement on such a personal level; but on the other side, we still have a long way to go in bringing Kazakhstan beyond

the association with Borat and oil explorations.

**What efforts have you made to break this old stereotype about Kazakhstan? What conclusions have you made to consider for yourself?**

I have been taking part in projects about Kazakhstan and beyond from the point of view that would provide an alternative cultural experience to what is found in mainstream entertainment. I would like to reach as much audience as possible by creating projects that focus on unique values.

Once the critical mass that understands and likes my projects was revealed, it became dominant in changing the stereotype. Which is why in my little way I am changing that perception so that when people hear “Kazakhstan,” they would know “Borat” is parody, Timur is real and for instance Kazakhstan’s anti-nuclear movement, search for alternative energy sources and Astana’s architecture are real.

I dived into creating “The Silent Steppe Cantata” project knowing that eventually it will break new ground. The composer’s original approach to redefining a traditional classical music cantata into a multi-lingual cantata for the 21st century,

fusing epic Kazakh poetic forms with hip-hop, should appeal to global music devotees, as well as to the fans of contemporary music at its broadest definition.

**What are your next projects?**

I am beginning to explore my next large-scale work “ONE,” 1,000 ethnographic melodies of Kazakhstan collected by Aleksander Zatyayevich, and my impossible dream is to utilise every single theme notated by Zatyayevich. This project will require a lot of cooperation, support and encouragement and at this moment I am still seeking potential partners and funders.

I am continuing to tour with my band’s interactive video rock-opera “COLLAPSE.” We have performed with a show at Disney Hall’s Redcat Theatre, Miami Light Project and Operadagen Rotterdam Festival and now we are getting ready to open in a very prestigious space of the Brooklyn Academy of Music as part of the Next Wave Festival.

It’s an honour to be selected for this festival; I am thrilled (and scared!) to debut in New York on Sept. 17-20. Next, I dream of bringing this rock-show to Kazakhstan. It’s little bit educational, but also very fun and glam. I mean, how many songs do we know about radioactivity?!

## Kazakh Historical Documentary Presented in Washington

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

Within the celebration of the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate, the Kazakh Research Institute of Culture with the support of the Embassy of Kazakhstan to the United States held the premiere screening of the two-part documentary film “Dasht-I-Kipchak: Secret Signs” at George Washing-

ton University on Aug. 4, according to a Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs press release.

The first part of the film is dedicated to the history of Kipchak language development – ancestor of a significant number of Turkic languages – that was used by all people living on the territory from the Altai Mountains to the Danube River 700 years ago. It was also spoken in Egypt where the Kip-

chaks ruled for some time headed by Sultan Baybars.

The second part of the film is dedicated to the unique book “Codex Cumanicus” (translated as the Book of the Kipchaks) given by prominent poet of the Age of Renaissance Francesco Petrarca to the Venice library in 1362. Now it is stored in the Saint Mark’s Basilica in Venice. Codex Cumanicus is a famous written source of the Kuman language (ancient Kipchak) of the 16th century that has good materials not only for philologists but for historians as well.

The event, which gathered more than 100 representatives of social, cultural and academic circles, has attracted much interest among the American public.

The film was written and directed by expert of Kazakh documentary films Bakhyt Kairbekov, President of the Shacken Aimanov Kazakh-film studios and produced by Director of the Kazakh Research Institute Andrey Khazbulatov.

“The film shows the role of Kazakhstan in world history. The project concept is based on the book of President Nursultan Nazarbayev “In the Flow of History,” where he emphasised, ‘different cultures appeared on the territory of modern Kazakhstan, which made a decisive influence on many world nations.’ I express my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Ka-

zakhstan and personally Minister Arystanbek Mukhamediyul for the support. I hope that thanks to this film, cultural cooperation between Kazakhstan and the United States will strengthen.” Khazbulatov said before the screening.

“I keep a close eye on the evolution of this project and am hugely impressed by the results. I wish to congratulate all Kazakh friends on the Kazakh Khanate’s 550th anniversary. I love to study ancient manuscripts. It’s close to my heart. The same things we do in Smithsonian museums,” Director of the Asian Cultural History Programme at the Smithsonian Institution Paul Taylor said.

Professor at George Washington University and Director of the Central Asian Programme Marlene Laruelle noted that she was impressed by the quality of the documentary and the Kazakh history presented in it. The film is a positive result of the state programme Preservation of Cultural Heritage, thanks to which many great historical facts have been collected, Laruelle said.

“These films dealing with the Kazakh Khanate’s 550th anniversary are vital for the Kazakh people and the whole world. Kazakhstan plays an important role connecting Europe and Asia and reviving the Great Silk Road,” an American producer Raymond Chavez noted.

The film was also shown in New York City on Aug. 10.

## 5,000 Historical Documents Brought to Kazakhstan

Staff Report

About 5,000 documents of historical value have been brought to Kazakhstan and about 160 volumes of books with a 350,000 copy print run have been released since the beginning of the state Cultural Heritage Programme, according to Director of the National Library of Kazakhstan Alibek Askarov. He pointed out that the history and culture of any nation are inextricably linked with the history of neighbouring nations and developed in interaction and mutual influence with them.

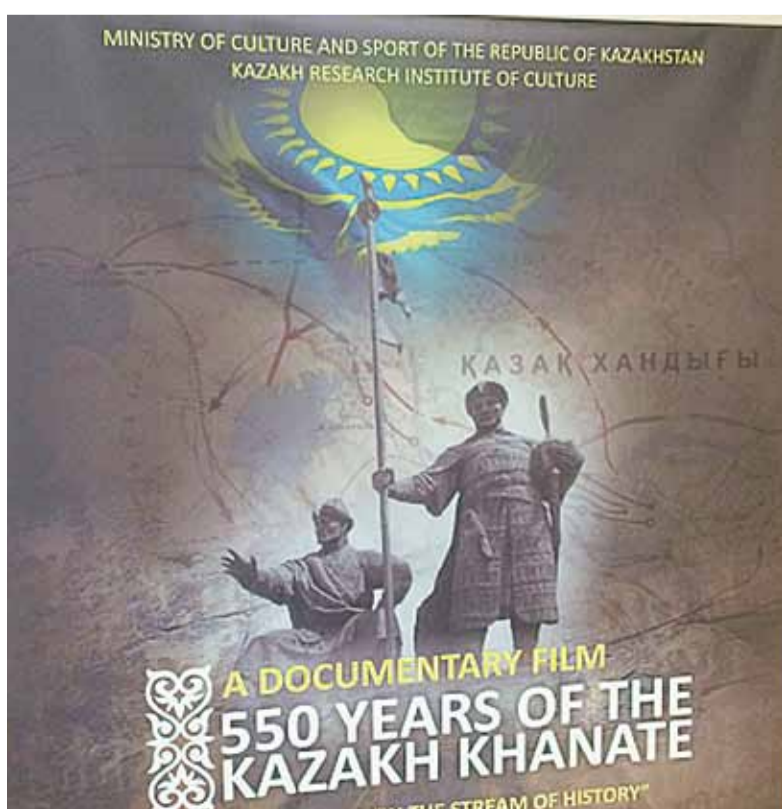
“The data of the written sources, archaeological excavations and findings in the Karaganda region prove the relationship of the peoples of Central Asia, Eastern and Central Europe, Altai, Ural, Volga region, Central and West Asia and the numerous contacts of nomadic and sedentary cultures of Eurasia,” said the Head of Ulytau Cultural and Natural Reserve Museum Bakhtiyar Kozhakhmetov.

One of the monuments testifying to the close and fruitful relations of the ancient nomadic and sedentary peoples is Ulytau. It became the first centre of the Golden Horde, and it is the place directly related

to the further development of new ethnic groups, such as Kazakhs, Nogais, Uzbeks, Tatars, Bashkirs and others. The history of the Kazakh people and archaeological data of the steppe strongly testify that the interaction of cultures is a natural phenomenon of human civilisation.

Another location that proves the rich and varied history of the Kazakh people is the Zhambyl region. There, between the rivers of Shu and Talas Kerey and Zhanibek khans founded the Kazakh Khanate. And that is the place where the main activities to celebrate the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate will be held. The ancient Taraz museum complex and the National Cultural Centre are under construction and the infrastructure of historical monuments is being improved.

“The National Library in Almaty holds a variety of events to celebrate the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate and within the Mangilik Yel (Eternal Nation) patriotic project. For example, since the beginning of the year, we have been inviting everyone to a great exhibition in our library, where more than three thousand manuscripts, books and rare historical documents are presented,” said the head of the National Museum.



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

# National Research Centre for Maternal and Child Health Implements Cutting-Edge Technology



By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – In the mid-1970s, the need existed to provide genetic services to the population by establishing medical-genetic

consultations based on the Scientific Centre for Obstetrics and Gynecology as well as marriage and family consultations. Today in Kazakhstan, there are only three medical doctors (MD) who specialise in medical genetics,

two in Almaty and one in Astana.

“Our lab has several key features. The first is a genetic screening of patients with a history of genetic abnormalities or congenital malformations. The second

large group is determined during the ultrasound examination or the biochemical screening, when chromosomal aberrations of unborn children are found. Of these two groups, we find patients who are sent for laboratory genetic re-

search,” Gulshara Abdildinova the head of the department of laboratory diagnostics and research of the National Research Centre for Maternal and Child Health, told Kazakhstanskaya Pravda national daily.

The laboratory provides professional medical-genetic assistance to the Kazakh population, including cytogenetic and invasive prenatal diagnosis, cytogenetic analysis of bone marrow cells and molecular genetic diagnosis. In addition, the laboratory has begun work on the study of the genetic load in the population from the information system to register congenital malformations and chromosomal and monogenic diseases.

Using karyotypes to diagnose genetic disorders is now the most widely-employed analysis.

“A regular human cell has 46 chromosomes: 44 autosomes, which come in pairs, and 2 sex chromosomes, which specify gender (XX for female and XY for male). Karyotype testing can be done using almost any cell or tissue from the body. A karyotype test usually is done on a blood sample taken from a vein. For testing during pregnancy, it may also be done on a sample of amniotic fluid or the placenta. Individuals could be perfectly healthy, but because of the in-

trachromosomal recombination, their reproductive function may be impaired. With karyotyping, we can identify these adjustments and help our colleagues to diagnose and find out an appropriate treatment to solve the problem of infertility,” said Abdildinova.

The variety of genetic tests has expanded throughout the years. In the past, the main genetic tests searched for abnormal chromosome numbers and mutations that lead to rare, inherited disorders. Today, tests involve analysing multiple genes to determine the risk of developing more common maladies such as heart disease and cancer.

“In today’s world of bad environment, industry and technology development, the mutation rate has increased tenfold compared to 60-70 years ago,” said Abdildinova.

The National Research Centre for Maternal and Child Health is one of the progressive hospitals of National Medical Holding. The capacity is 500 beds and medical service is provided in 31 clinical units with comfortable conditions for patients. In addition to the state volume of free medical care, the centre provides private services and cooperates with national and international insurance and assistance companies, including diplomatic missions.

## Summer Eco-camp in Ust-Kamenogorsk Encourages Children to be Eco-Friendly



By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Krugozor Youth and Tourism Centre, a unique institution based in the most beautiful places of East Kazakhstan, is engaged not only in teaching children and young people, but also gives the skills necessary for environmentally-safe tourism using the best and most up-to-date educational practices. One of its summer programmes is an eco-camp.

“East Kazakhstan has many really good recreation facilities, but we always choose the best and the safest for our children. Health improvement in our eco-camp is based on climatotherapy in combination with health-giving and educational programmes, which include different sport games and competitions, holidays, ship and bus trips with guided tours, discos and language training where our children improve their Russian, Kazakh and English. Children have a really, really good time in our eco-camp, getting new useful skills and knowledge,” said Russian Cultural Centre’s Executive and Director of the Krugozor centre Tatyana Netunayeva in an Aug. 5 interview.

A non-government organisa-

tion, Krugozor Centre is based in Peoples’ Friendship House in Ust-Kamenogorsk. The ecological camp was established in 1996 at a time when the majority of camps went bankrupt and closed. Many children hadn’t had the possibility to go to camps during their holidays. In 1997, the centre initiated cooperation with the Environment Protection Department and took an active part in environmental education, a role which it has continued to this day. Later, Krugozor started its own activity by holding different competitions, brain rings and debates for children and young people.

The Vega student-pedagogic team consists of the best students and teachers from East Kazakhstan universities who are trained to work with children using ecological education and creative development programmes in interactive form and play. The team has its own doctor, physical education teacher and DJ. Vega team members are constantly trained in local and national seminars and upgrade their own skills and experience level.

Netunayeva noted the centre is an active participant in the activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and Peoples’

Friendship House, organising events and trainings.

“Friendship is one of the main ideas of our lessons. We discuss it constantly, which is very relevant during the year of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. We do our best to develop our centre. As a result, we published three books promoting environmental protection among children and young people. We try to make our educational process as interesting as possible,” she said.

The director is concerned about the children’s language problems.

“Some children don’t know Russian well, while another group of children isn’t good in Kazakh. That is why we organise educational games in interactive form, where children with different levels of Kazakh and Russian do their best to teach each other to know both languages. Studying English is always very important for us. We attract English native speakers to teach the language,” she added.

Netunayeva is very proud of Krugozor’s many graduates and said the centre’s teachers are very pleased when their alumni reach adulthood and become successful people. She reminds them not to forget about the centre, visit them and support its operation.

## Kazakh Defence Minister Honours 12 Military Women

By Kamila Zhumbabayeva

ASTANA – Defence Minister of Kazakhstan Imangali Tasmagambetov recently congratulated 12 female members of Kazakhstan’s Armed Forces at an award ceremony of the first national Batyr Arular (Warrior Women) contest, reported the ministry’s press service.

“This contest allowed us to find and learn about women soldiers who devoted their lives to serving their native land on a par with men and whose working days are closely bound to the military service that is an example to follow,” Tasmagambetov said.

Batyr Arular is the first national contest among women soldiers of the Kazakh Armed Forces. Photos and personal profiles of more than 120 applicants were posted on the ministry’s website and garnered a little over 255,725 votes online.

Not only Kazakhs, but also residents of countries such as Russia, the United States, Germany, Indonesia and India voted, the Kazakhstan 5050 website reported.

The contest ran April 1 to May 10 and tested soldiers’ skills in elements such as shooting, throwing

grenades, operating military vehicles and swimming. Contestants also went through combat training elements, such as escaping from counter fire, shooting with machine and handguns, assembling and disassembling Kalashnikov rifles.

“This is not just a job but a lifestyle for women who decided to tie their lives with the army. This contest was a great opportunity to show our skills and love for our career,” Senior Lieutenant of Export Control Department Aliya

Khairullina said. She noted it was a great honour and responsibility to be awarded by Minister Tasmagambetov, kapital.kz reported. “I’m sure all the girls gathered here feel proud to be winners,” she said.

One of the finalists, Asem Sekhimbayeva, said that serving in the Armed Forces as a woman is not as hard as it may seem and that it can be possible to serve in the army, raise children and participate in such contests, Tengrinews reported.



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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## 'The Road to School' Charity Campaign to Help Low Income Children Kicks Off



The children who have been helped to get ready for the upcoming school season by "The Road to School" charity campaign.

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – The eighth annual "The Road to School" charity campaign to help children in need is being held in Astana from the beginning of August until the end of September.

The campaign, which is operating under the slogan "Let's help children together!", seeks to identify children who are not in school as well as to support orphans, multi-child families and secondary school students from low-income families. The campaign also hopes to mitigate social factors which prevent children from attending school.

The campaign is an initiative of the Kazakh Ministry of Education and Science and will include a number of charity events in Astana, such as "The first time in the first grade" (presentation of gifts to first-graders from low-income families), "Friendly hands" (installation of containers in large shopping centres to collect clothes and school supplies), as well as a promotional campaign called "Family helping a family: preparing a child for school."

na, such as "The first time in the first grade" (presentation of gifts to first-graders from low-income families), "Friendly hands" (installation of containers in large shopping centres to collect clothes and school supplies), as well as a promotional campaign called "Family helping a family: preparing a child for school."

**The campaign seeks to identify children who are not in school as well as to support orphans, multi-child families and secondary school students from low-income families.**

Banners with "The Road to School" campaign slogan and contact details of hotlines will be placed across Astana. Volunteers will also distribute informational booklets and public reception of-

fices will operate twice a month in certain schools to provide advice to the public.

In 2014, the campaign raised 68,506,000 tenge (US\$365,000) and assisted 7,667 children.

The start of this year's campaign was marked by an Aug. 3 ceremony at the Conference Hall of the House of Ministries, during which

the Dar Social Foundation gave backpacks filled with stationery to 10 children from low-income families.

"The Road to School" campaign is being held nationwide.

## Secularism and Religious Studies to be Added to National Ninth Grade Curriculum

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Secularism and religious studies will be added to the national education system ninth grade curriculum beginning in September 2016, the Kazakh Ministry of Education and Science recently announced.

Currently, a 34-hour-per-year religious studies curriculum is included for ninth grade students on a voluntary basis.

Teachers of the new mandatory curriculum titled Secularism and Religious Foundations will undergo training based on a manual compiled by a team led by Kazakh philosopher Garifolla Yessim.

Secularism and Religious Foundations, according to Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, will

be a set of sciences that study the history of dogma and institutional forms of religious life, religious heritage (religious art, monuments of religious literature, religious education, and research and development), traditional religious rights, the archaeological history of religion, history and the current state of relations between religious doctrines and religious organisations.

The study of religion in the system of higher education is considered to be secular. The subject will include detailed studies of History of Religion, Islamic theology, Christian theology, Qur'an and its studies, Philosophy of Religion, Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Religious Anthropology, Religious Ethics and Axiol-



ogy, Religion and Art, Religion and Culture, Freedom of Thought and Religion, Non-traditional Cults and Esoteric Teachings, State-Religious Relations in Kazakhstan, Islam in Kazakhstan and Orthodoxy in Kazakhstan.

The new curriculum is being instituted under Minister of Education and Science Order No. 281.

## Kazakhstan to Complete National Drug Formulary by End of Year

Staff Report

ASTANA – The Ministry of Healthcare and Social Development plans to complete a national healthcare formulary before the end of 2015 that will give all citizens access to medicines, regardless of their social status, and will limit the maximum price for medicines.

"Our international team of experts worked on many projects, including the first formulary in the world, the British national formulary. But the Kazakhstan national formulary is the first new one having ambitious goals, such as to provide new sources of knowledge, improve the formulary system and contribute to the usage of medical evidences," said Duncan Enright, developer of the British national formulary, which is acknowledged as the best in the world.

Only medicines with proven

clinical efficiency will be put in the formulary. Up-to-date international practices and the best drug treatment approaches will be used in this project. International experts will also help develop the Kazakh formulary.

Kazakhstan hasn't had its own national formulary before. Clinical efficiency, cost efficiency, concen-

sumption level and cost of treatment for every disease will be taken into consideration.

Enright believes the formulary will provide access to medicines for Kazakh citizens and save money through the effective procurement of medicines and the creation of a competitive market. It also will help to forecast demand for medicines.



## Entrepreneurs, Artists Raise Funds for Landslide Victims

By Julia Rutz

Almaty entrepreneurs collected 1 million tenge (US\$5,334) during a one-hour fundraising drive to assist victims of the landslide that struck the outskirts of Almaty on July 23, reported Tengrinews.kz, citing the Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs.

A centre to assist victims has also been established at 160 Dostyk Avenue, which will collect food and clothing.

"In order to raise funds and help victims, we have opened a bank account in RBK Bank, to which every businessman of the country could transfer money for those who appeared to be homeless. We urgently need equipment for pumping water, tractors and volunteers," said entrepreneur Kairat Kudaibergen.

Kazakh artists have also participated in the aid effort, collecting 364,000 tenge (US\$1,941) during a charity concert.

The concert included music groups, such as Al Davai, Der-vishes, Domino, Indigo and solo singers Abdulkarim Karimov, Gadilbek Zhanai, Ali Okapov, Abai Abishev, Aizhan Nurmagambetova, Ainura Eshmanova, Madina Sadvakasova and Dilnaz Akhmediyeva. The ticket price was 2,000 tenge (US\$10).

"We are all equal against natural disasters. It is important to maintain the spirit of friendship and mutual human support during this time. It is also crucial that no one feels abandoned or left without

any help," explained the organisers of the concert.

The artists have also visited the assistance centre, which employs volunteers. According to the front man of Al Davai, Shokan Maratuly, they want to see what people need right now and how to best allocate the money raised.

**After a visual inspection, it became clear that the area's primary dam was intact allowing water to go along the river through two gateways.**

The mudslide hit near Almaty at 3 a.m. local time on July 23. As a result, three districts of the city, Auezov, Alatau and Nauryzbai suffered damage and more than 1,000 people evacuated.

Earlier, the city administration issued photo and video materials, which were taken during the helicopter overflight of the disaster area by the then Akim (Mayor) of Almaty Akhmetzhan Yessimov. After a visual inspection, it became clear that the area's primary dam was intact allowing water to go along the river through two gateways. No more threats are expected for the city. No injuries were reported.



# EXPO 2017

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Vietnamese Officials Confirm Participation in EXPO

By Murager Sauranbayev

HANOI – A visit by EXPO 2017 commissioner and Kazakh First Deputy Foreign Minister Rapol Zhoshybayev July 28-29 was marked by the Vietnamese government's announcement to present a national pavilion at the event in Astana.

The statement was preceded by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's Aug. 10, 2014 letter to Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang inviting the Southeast Asian nation to participate. Vietnam is an active member of the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) and has gathered solid experience through its involvement in previous expos. The country was represented in the recent exhibitions held in Zaragoza (Spain), Shanghai (China), Yeosu (South Korea) and Milan (Italy).

During the trip, Zhoshybayev met with a number of senior Vietnamese government officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Bui Thanh Son and Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Huynh Vinh Ai, Vietnamese companies.

Discussing the state and prospects of cooperation between the two countries, Vu Duc Dam noted the increasing exchange of visits at different levels has contributed to improving the dynamics of Kazakh-Vietnamese relations in all areas.

Talking about EXPO 2017, the Vietnamese official confirmed

that his government has made a formal determination on participation in the event. Zhoshybayev welcomed the decision and underlined Vietnam's presentation at the event would give new impetus to strengthening the partnership between the nations.

A meeting at the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, which is responsible for the country's involvement in expos, was dedicated to discussing the interaction of relevant state bodies from the two countries regarding the event. Deputy Minister Huynh Vinh Ai told Zhoshybayev of his government's readiness to sign a formal agreement and appoint a national commissioner who would visit Astana to discuss practical arrangements.

In addition, the Astana EXPO 2017 company and Saigontourist, Vietnam's leading tour operator, signed a cooperation memorandum.

The two nations also discussed implementing joint projects in the tourism industry, the prospects of opening a direct flight between their capitals and further promotion of Vietnam's tourist attractions on the Kazakh market. The rising popularity of Vietnam as a relatively-new travel destination among Kazakhs has been facilitated since 2013 by direct Air Astana flights between Almaty and Ho Chi Minh City.

The visit included a review of co-operation in cultural and humanitarian areas. Speaking with Son, Zhoshybayev commended Vietnam's achievements in executing social and economic reforms and developing a viable market economy.



Kazakh First Deputy Foreign Minister Rapol Zhoshybayev (L) and Deputy Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Huynh Vinh Ai discuss ongoing progress in preparations for EXPO 2017.

shybayev commended Vietnam's achievements in executing social and economic reforms and developing a viable market economy.

His Vietnamese counterpart noted that as a follow-up to the signing of the agreement on the free trade zone between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Vietnam, accomplished at the May 29 EAEU summit in Borovoye, Kazakhstan, Hanoi is considering unilateral introduction of a free-visa regime for Kazakh citizens.

In addition to the bilateral meeting, Zhoshybayev took part in a

forum on "Doing Business with Kazakhstan" which was attended by more than 70 Vietnamese companies from various industries.

Addressing the Vietnamese audience about key aspects of the Kazakh investment climate and existing opportunities to develop trade and tourist exchange in preparation for and participation in EXPO 2017.

The Vietnamese speakers in turn were particularly interested in discussing new opportunities for bilateral economic cooperation stemming from Kazakhstan's membership in the EAEU and the free trade zone agreement now aligning it with Vietnam.

Vice Chairman of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) Doan Duy Khuong highlighted the fact that in recent years, Kazakhstan and Vietnam have signed a number of framework agreements on economic, trade, diplomatic, education, investment, labour and energy co-operation in recent years, according to a report in Vietnam News, a national English language newspaper.

Speaking about the EAEU agreement, Doan Duy Khuong said that in conjunction with it Vietnam would enjoy export tariff incentives for farm produce, seafood, garments, footwear and wooden furniture, as well as open markets for farm produce, machinery, equipment and transport vehicles. Other commitments cover services, investment, intellectual property, competition, trade protection and dispute settlement in line with World Trade Organisation regulations, he added.

The Kazakh Foreign Ministry press release reported that the country's trade turnover with Vietnam in 2014 totalled \$271.9 million, while the first four months of 2015 have reached \$73.7 million. According to Vietnam News, Vietnamese exports consisted primarily of cell phones and electronic spare parts, machinery and farm produce, while imports from Kazakhstan include ore and minerals.

Vietnam became the 34th country to date to confirm its participation in EXPO 2017. Others include Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Croatia, Cuba, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Grenada, Honduras, India, Israel, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nauru, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Senegal, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Vanuatu.

## EXPO to Benefit Economy Beyond Tourism



Daniel Serzhanuly

By Kamila Zhumabayeva

ASTANA – Experience shows that hosting large-scale events, such as EXPO 2017, helps develop not only the tourist industry but other areas of the economy, General Manager of the Marketing and Promotion Department of Astana EXPO 2017 National Company Daniel Serzhanuly announced during a press conference held in the Central Communications Service July 31.

"A tourist spends money on plane and train tickets, accommodation, food, transportation and all that money will remain with citizens of Kazakhstan," he said. One traveler leaves around \$1,500 in the visited country and provides jobs for about six to 12 people, Serzhanuly said.

"Different areas of the economy and citizens of the country will receive additional income during the EXPO 2017 exhibition as its indirect effect," he added, while noting the importance spreading the event's impact beyond the capital city.

Tourism agencies of Kazakhstan are currently developing new tours for visitors to the EXPO exhibition that will attract tourists to the country's regions, consultant of Astana EXPO 2017 Roza Assanbayeva stated during the same press conference.

"It is being planned that guests of the exhibition will not only visit Astana, but also other regions of Kazakhstan," Assanbayeva said. According to her, the main flux of tourists will fall to the Borovoye resort that can be reached by the Astana-Schuchinsk motorway and the reconstructed Kokshetau airport.

The creation of new tourism offers is currently underway, reported ortcom.kz. "The 'Orient

Express' train is expected to be launched under the EXPO 2017 brand along Kazakhstan's territory of the Silk Road," Assanbayeva stated. According to her, negotiations with the Air Astana company to include the visiting of exhibition pavilions into the ticket price to Astana are underway.

Both local and foreign tourism companies are observed to have a steady interest in the exhibition as several tour operators of Kazakhstan are interested to include exhibition tickets into their travel packages, Assanbayeva said at the press conference.

"One of the world's largest tour operators, Touristic Union International (TUI), is interested in co-operating with our company," the speaker added. The TUI German tour operator services more than 30 million customers per year in 180 countries and has over 1,800 travel agencies in Europe, ortcom.kz reported. Negotiations on the partnership that will allow selling Kazakhstan's travel packages on European markets are under way currently, Assanbayeva stated.

According to her, the Astana EXPO 2017 national company is also forming new travel offers for the exhibition visitors. "New routes will have a 'Recommended by EXPO' sign and negotiations with major tourism websites, such as Booking.com and Tripadvisor to promote and sell the travel packages included in the new register are under way," she said. The job will be carried out together with the recently established directorate Astana Convention Bureau operating at the capital city's Akimat (municipal administration), ortcom.kz reported.

## Kyrgyzstan Mobilises for Participation

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

Participation in EXPO 2017 is of great importance to Kyrgyzstan, said Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Valery Dil during a meeting on the preparations for Kyrgyzstan's participation in the international specialised exhibition, which will be held June 10 to Sept. 10, 2017 in Astana, the official website of the Kyrgyz government reported.

"Special attention in prepara-

tion of the Kyrgyz pavilion should be paid to renewable energy sources and available hydropower potential of our country, which can meet the electricity needs of the entire region of Central Asia," said Dil.

According to him, the exhibition will attract a large number of business people from all over the world.

"Participation in EXPO2017 will allow establishing contacts with representatives of Kazakhstan business circles, which needs

new generating capacity. In this exhibition, we can discuss in detail the prospects for mutually beneficial joint use of border rivers," Dil concluded.

Following the meeting, certain state bodies and the Chamber of Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic were assigned specific tasks concerning preparation for the exhibition and relevant organizational and financial issues.

Earlier, First Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Tayirbek Sarpashev confirmed his

country's intention to participate in EXPO 2017. He said this during the meeting with First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan and EXPO 2017 Commissioner Rapol Zhoshybayev in Bishkek in December 2014. In turn, President of the Chamber of Commerce of Kyrgyzstan Marat Sharsheev expressed interest in attracting Kyrgyz companies to prepare for the exhibition and assured that his country will be well represented at EXPO 2017.

## National Pavilion Construction One Third Completed

Staff Report

Kazakhstan has completed construction of one third of its national EXPO 2017 pavilion, expo officials announced during a media tour of the construction of expo facilities.

"Thirty to 40 percent of the pavilion has already been built and we are confident everything will be done accurately. It is the only building in the world which will have a spherical glass bent at two planes and only three companies in the world produce this type of glass. The glass for the exhibition will be coming from Italy and its

production has already begun," said Gregory Rabitsky, head of HILL-EXPO Project SembolInshaat.

He added that the pavilion's shell will consist of seamless bent glass onto which videos will be projected relating to the exhibition's "Future Energy" theme. The building is an 80-metre ball on which two wind generators will be located along with an object meant to capture and direct wind flows.

"We have 10 buildings which are part of EXPO 2017 and the most important building is named B1 Kazakhstan, where the main exhibition pavilion will be. The



building is unique and unusual in terms of design and functions as a museum. About 12,000 tonnes of metal will be used for the facade of the object," he told journalists.

Developers promise that the eight-story building, including a 26,000-square-metre underground portion, will be built by the end of 2016.

## A Great Gift of Kazakh Nature Attracts Increasing Number of Tourists

Continued from Page B1

The lake is very warm in summer, with an average temperature of 26 degrees Celsius. The water contains sodium chloride and chloride-sulphate-sodium, with mineralisation ranging from 1.2 to 11.6 gramme per litre, and has a high content of fluorine and bromine.

A distinctive feature of the lake in the northeastern part of the harbour is the therapeutic water of the underground salt springs. By contrast, the southern portion is fresh water.

The unique wealth of Alalok Lake is mud used to treat various

joint diseases, radiculitis and skin ailments and aid in recovering from injuries. The composition is close to sea water and the salt has a wonderful restorative effect. Thalassotherapy, healing by taking sea baths, has been successfully used to treat various diseases of the peripheral nervous system.

Many guests appreciate the natural surroundings and incorporate them into their stay.

"Tourists from Russia are traditional ones; however, they prefer 'wild' holidays, choosing places away from recreation areas and breaking camps right on the beach," said the mayor of Yrgaitinsk district.

In order to develop the tourism potential of those who may not appreciate the "back-to-nature" allure, authorities have undertaken projects to improve the infrastructure. The new recreation area cannot yet boast lush greenery, but the comfortable conditions offered for visitors include in-room showers and toilets, air conditioning, cable TV and Wi-Fi.

In addition, before the end of the year a four-season, five-star hotel oriented mainly toward foreign tourists will be built. Construction of the Usharal-Dostyk track as well as repair of the access roads to the recreational areas will soon be finished. A six-

car passenger train travels from Almaty to Alalok and because of the interest, negotiations have begun to increase the frequency of the route. In addition, on instructions of Akim (Governor) of Almaty region Amandyk Batalov, Usharal Airport is being rebuilt and the air route could be open in time for the new tourist season.

The Alalok State Reserve, boasting diverse flora and fauna, has been created to protect the lake area as an important breeding and nesting ground for various wetland birds, notably the very rare relict gull as well as flamingo flocks and 40 other species.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## Kazakhstan Loses Olympic Hosting Bid, Looks Forward to Future Challenges

By Aiman Turebekova

KUALA-LUMPUR – Following final pitches by the cities of Almaty and Beijing to host the 2022 Winter Olympic Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on July 31 at 6 p.m. local time in the capital of Malaysia chose Beijing to host the Games.

The 2022 Beijing Winter Games will be split between three Olympic sites: one in the city of Zhangjiakou, 125 miles from Beijing in Hebei province, another in Yanqing, a mountainous region to Beijing's northwest, and a third in China's capital.

"Winner and a non-winner, we are happy for our Chinese partner and we wish them well," said Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Erlan Idrissov. He added that Almaty came close to winning the right to host the Games and that "there is frustration, however, this is a competition." He concluded that the Olympic movement remains strong.

This was an historic day for Kazakhstan and the International Olympic Committee because it was the first time only two cities remained for the final choice.



IOC President Thomas Bach announced the IOC decision on July 31.

"Today is an historic day and moment because I am staying here and presenting my country," said Denis Ten, 2014 Olympic bronze medalist, during a press conference after Almaty's final presentation.

Despite the fact that Almaty just lost this battle, the Kazakh delegation said it was looking forward to future challenges and wishes its neighbour good luck. It is time to turn the page and reach for new heights, they said.

There are many upcoming events in Kazakhstan's future. In two years, Kazakhstan will host the EXPO 2017 international specialised exhibition and the Winter University Games in Almaty.

## Kazakh Special Olympics Team Exceeds Expectations at Los Angeles Games

By Dmitry Lee

The Kazakh national Special Olympics team won 125 medals and exceeded their targeted medal count by three times at the July 25 through Aug. 2 Special Olympics in Los Angeles, according to the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Kazakhstan.

More than 7,000 athletes from 170 countries took part in this year's Special Olympics. Kazakhstan was represented by 68 athletes in 15 events, winning 28 gold, 49 silver and 48 bronze medals.

"The Special Olympics is a global movement that unleashes the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sports every day around the world. We empower people with intellectual disabilities to become accepted and valued members of their communities, which leads to a more respectful and inclusive society for all. Using sports as the catalyst and programming around health and education, Special Olympics is fighting inactivity, injustice and intolerance," the venue's site reported.

The Games were founded in 1968 and are held every four years under the motto "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."



Fans, friends and relatives greeted the Kazakh Special Olympics team back in their homeland with honours and special attention.

## Kazakh Army Team Takes Third in First CIS Military Sports Games

Staff report

The Kazakh Army team recently won third place in the first military-sports games among armies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), according to the press service of the Ministry of Defence of Kazakhstan. The Kazakh team won 47 medals, including seven gold, 16 silver and 24 bronze.

Three hundred soldiers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Russia, Belarus and Armenia competed in various sports during the competition. Kazakhstan was represented by members of the Central Sports Club of the Army of the Ministry of Defence. Russia took first place overall followed by Belarus.

During the first day of the competition, Kazakh swimmer and a master of sport international class, Junior Sergeant Alexander Tarabrin outscored his rivals. He won gold medals after completing the 50- and 100-metre backstroke. Other swimmers Michael Nikulshin, Georgy Parashutov, Eugene Azaryev and Andrey Zubakov won 5 silver and 5 bronze medals.

Kazakh eleven-time world champion Junior Sergeant Vitaliy Didenko won gold in weightlifting in the weight category up to 95 kg. Judoka Gusman Kyrgyzbayev won gold in the 60 kg category. Meirzhan Kaltayev, Talgat Amrenov, Ashimkhan Kazhy, Kazhymukhan Oteuliev and Assan Mambetkulov won two silver and three bronze medals for their performance on tatami.

## Astana Pro Team Cyclists Take One-Two Finish at Vuelta a Burgos

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Estonian Rein Taaramae of the Astana Pro Team and Italian Michele Scarponi finished first and second respectively in the overall standings at Vuelta a Burgos Lagunas de Neil, Spain on Aug. 4-8, sports.kz reported.

Taaramae has managed to get by his team mate by only two seconds, showing an overall time of 15:56 minutes. Astana's Spaniard Luis León Sánchez won the second and Colombian Miguel Lopez Moreno the fourth stages of the five-stage venue, while the fifth member of the team Spanish Mikel Landa finished 25th.

Final individual standings:

1. Rein TAARAMAE (ASTANA PRO TEAM)	15:56:00	
2. Michele SCARPONI (ASTANA PRO TEAM)	15:56:02	+02
3. Daniel MORENO (TEAM KATUSHA)	15:56:09	+09
4. Miguel LOPEZ MORENO (ASTANA PRO TEAM)	15:56:12	+12
...		
15. Luis León SÁNCHEZ (ASTANA PRO TEAM)	15:59:58	+03:58
...		
25. Mikel LANDA (ASTANA PRO TEAM)	16:12:05	+16:05



## FC Astana Set for Maiden European Football Autumn, Kairat Progresses

By Aiman Turebekova

ASTANA – FC Astana and HJK Helsinki produced a thriller previously unseen at the Astana Arena Aug. 5 in a return leg of the UEFA Champions League qualifications' third round.

Following an incredibly dull goalless draw a week prior in Finland, seven goals were scored in the home team's 4-3 victory. The incredible drama saw their brave comeback from a two goal deficit and reduction to ten men before conceding a penalty with five minutes left. The Finns looked certain to go through on the away goals rule until a stoppage-time header by Evgeni Postnikov left the visitors stunned.

The atmosphere in the arena was fantastic; nobody expected such an exciting game with a positive result for the local favourites. Gennady Golovkin, currently undefeated as a professional Kazakh boxer and IBO middleweight champion, came to support the players, creating great symbolic encouragement for the footballers and fans.

After the match, the stadium reported it sold 27,937 tickets for the game, the second-highest attendance in the 12-year history of the Kazakh team's performance in European club competitions. The figure was topped only by the number of fans who two years ago witnessed FC Shakhter Karaganda's memorable 2-0 triumph over Scottish giants Celtic FC.

The victory means the Kazakh capital will now see its maiden European football autumn as the club has at least secured a place in the group stage of the UEFA Europa League. The team will have six more matches, including three at home, even if they give way to their next opponents in the Champions League playoffs on Aug. 18 and 26. The last European match for FC Astana will take place in mid-December. Naturally, the ambition is to bring the Champions League games to Kazakhstan's young capital instead, but whether that dream will be fulfilled remains to be seen.

A draw at the UEFA headquarters in Nyon Aug. 7 saw the Astana team tied against Cyprus champions

APOEL Nicosia. There are no weak teams left at this stage, a fact confirmed by APOEL's recent experiences in the Champions League. A few years ago they even reached the quarterfinals, where they gave way to Real Madrid only after beating French champions Lyon. Today, the Cypriot club features a lineup that includes a number of strong Brazilians and Spaniards as well as players from the Cyprus national team.

"I know APOEL mainly because of their usual participation in the group stages, but also because they are a Cypriot team," said Astana coach Stanimir Stoilov, who previously coached APOEL's rivals, Anorthosis Famagusta. "They are the favourites to go through, but we will do everything in our power to put on a worthy performance and play well. Football is about who is better on the day and if we can play at a high tempo, then we can be the ones to qualify."

"We will need to play very well in both games against Astana, but also to improve our performances of late. We need to show we deserve to be in the group stage of the Champi-

ons League. I don't think we should necessarily be happy with the draw because all teams at this stage are difficult," said APOEL midfielder Nektarios Alexandrou.

The Astana's heroic deeds of the last fortnight against Maribor and HJK have clearly demonstrated, however, they are now in a mood to continue inspiring fans and upsetting opponents.

The Kazakh football fans' long-awaited joy in the Champions League continued the following evening as FC Kairat Almaty, the country's last remaining representative in UEFA Europa League, also progressed to the next round. The team secured a 3-2 aggregate victory against Scottish club Aberdeen FC.

Aberdeen was heading home with an away goal after the first leg in Almaty July 30 saw Kairat capture a not-so-comfortable 2-1 lead in the tie. In the return match, the North Scottish side's faithful fans provided a sea of red in the Pittodrie Stadium stands and offered quite noisy and dedicated support to their players. Not to be outdone,

a group of Kairat supporters comprised of both travelling fans and Kazakh compatriots in Scotland were also notable to TV viewers.

Despite Aberdeen playing a brave game and pressuring Kairat's defences for large portions of the match, the visiting team's fans celebrated in the end as the game finished 1-1 and a combined victory for the Almaty side.

"The People's team," as Kairat is known locally, is now poised to meet arguably its strongest opponent in decades in the face of French giants Girondins de Bordeaux. Founded in 1881, the six-time French champion and runner-up in the 1995-1996 UEFA Cup, Bordeaux was arguably the side most Kairat fans would prefer to avoid in order to maximise the chances of progressing to the Europa League's group stage.

In a quick comment to sports, kz following the draw, Kairat's 26-year-old Brazilian defender Bruno Soares said the team should not fear their famed opponents.

"I am happy how we played in Aberdeen. We controlled the game

and secured a good result there. Now we only have a step to take if we want to reach our goal, which is to play in a Europa League group stage. In the playoff, we face a very experienced team but we are ready to take it. We want to overcome Bordeaux and to accomplish our goal," he said.

"It would be a big moment in our country's history to have teams get into the group stages of both competitions," added Kairat Almaty's head coach Vladimir Weiss.

The Kairat fans online reactions were mixed with some fearful of the mighty opponents, but most others are welcoming a visit from a side in one of Europe's top five leagues.

"That is why we moved to UEFA after all and that is why we want to progress in the Europa League – to play big teams from big leagues," read one of the comments.

The first match of the Bordeaux vs. Kairat tie will be played Aug. 20 in France. Seven days later, Almaty will welcome the French at the city's Central Stadium.

## CAPITAL

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015

## New Ice Palace Opens as Cup of the President Begins



On a visit to the new facility on Aug. 8, President Nursultan Nazarbayev receives a Barys jersey No. 1 from Askar Mamin, the president of the Ice Hockey Federation of Kazakhstan, as Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, the Akim of Astana, looks on.

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA—A new, multifunctional 12,000-seat and 86,000-square-metre Ice Palace was opened on Aug. 9 as the Cup of the President started in the capital.

The complex will include an ice arena, an ice hockey academy and 50-metre Olympic and artistic swimming pools.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Astana City Akim (Mayor) Adilbek Dzhaksybekov and President of the Ice Hockey Federation of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin were among the honoured visitors at the grand opening on Aug. 8.

According to the President, Astana will focus on winter sports

due to its lengthy winters. He stressed the new facility should be financially sustainable.

“We should be able to organise large-scale concerts, both international and regional tournaments. We are currently working to address this question. The facility could be financially independent due to its various sports events. It

is a very important point. And this refers not only to this building, but to all other sports facilities, which were built in Astana,” the President said.

“Our hockey team is ranked 7th or 8th in the Continental Hockey League (KHL) standings. This is a very good result. I think this stadium will inspire our athletes

and we will host significant world sports events here. Our hockey fans will enjoy watching this courageous sport. So I congratulate all, especially the athletes and young people on the opening of this great, wonderful facility,” he added.

Also attending the ceremony and the inaugural match of the

Cup of the President on Aug. 9 was President of the International Ice Hockey Federation and member of the International Olympic Committee Rene Fasel who praised the arena. He also reportedly said discussions are under way on organising the youth ice hockey world championships for in Kazakhstan in 2017.

## Historical Reenactment Club Develops in Astana

By Yerbolat Uatkhanov

ASTANA – Historical reenactment, focused on promoting and drawing attention to past events, is divided into sport and daily activities. The former emphasises fighting using ancient weapons and armour, while the latter concentrates on efforts to recreate the way of life.

The Temir Tumen Historical Reenactment Club is interested in portraying the time from the middle of 14th century to the mid-15th century. The members do not want anything to be forgotten.

“This period is very interesting for us, because armour was changed. Historical correspondence is very important not only in historical direction, but also in sport direction. For example, using armour or weapons of different periods isn’t allowed. That is why we have to study a lot, analysing numerous sources of information written by historians of different states and at different times. At that, we don’t judge any historian’s facts or events,” said club president Evgeniy Sukhotin in an Aug. 5 interview.

As a non-governmental organization, the club is financed solely by its members. The interest is an expensive one, as the group needs to rent a gym for physical and fighting training and a workshop where weapons and armour are produced.

“We usually don’t claim mon-

ey from the young people of our club. Of course, we try to attract sponsors. State bodies support our club whenever possible and invite us to national events and holidays. They helped us to organise an international competition which took place recently and gathered Kazakh and Russian clubs together. We actively participated in the Astana Days and Nauryz holidays,” said Sukhotin.

Club members usually train three times each week and attend a number of events in Kazakhstan and other countries. Temir Tumen doesn’t have any gender or age limits, because everybody can find something interesting in its offerings. Of course, there are some limitations for fighters, because not every man, even one who is fit, can fight using 30-kg armour and a heavy sword. Everybody must also practice often and become experienced in this type of fighting, because it is very specialised. The fighter can see and hear almost nothing in a medieval hood, and swordcraft is an art, too.

The production of ancient weapons and armour is a very difficult and long process. Chain armour, for example, is made of 10,000 rings and each must be hammered, usually requiring approximately six months to create such a piece.

Temir Tumen organises free shows for city events and other clubs. It held a spectacular show for Astana bikers and has per-

formed in orphan homes, because the members want children to have entertainment, said Sukhotin. The group also wants to provide a diversion for the capital’s residents.

“I see a problem in Astana. This is one of the fastest growing cities in the world and the problem is that its infrastructure hasn’t been constructed as fast as it has. Thousands of people came

here to live, but they don’t have really interesting places to go, to get acquainted with new friends who are as interested in hobbies as they are,” he added.

Sukhotin noted the activity is not a dangerous one, certainly no more than any other sport. The armour is designed to protect against sharp and heavy weapons.

“Only a blunt weapon is permitted in the fighting. But of course,

you have to be brave enough to participate in them where up to 100 very strong and big guys wearing 30-kg armour do their best to hit each other using heavy swords, axes, two-handed swords and backwords. But I don’t know of any fatal cases in the fighting,” said Sukhotin.

The Temir Tumen President spoke about their plans to develop not only swordcraft, but also


archery. He invited everybody to their club but warned that it will take time to become a member, because their team needs to accept every new member.

“It is very important, because we are one family and we go to different events together. We fight together and every club member must be sure about another one, because we cover each other in fighting,” he said.



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