

# Regional scale for business

How is Belarusian Vitebsk helping Europe's medical services? Soon, the streets of Milan, Paris and other European states will welcome new ambulances re-equipped in this Belarusian regional centre

By Sergey Golesnik

Yuri Lyubimov, the General Director of joint limited liability company Grandiscar, recently told us that a decision had been made to set up a Russian-Italian-Belarusian venture to equip ambulances. The company — which opened at Vitebsk's free economic zone — has showcased its first models of specialised vehicles and latest novelties to the public during the International Investment and Innovative Forum, traditionally held in Vitebsk.

In Vitebsk, Belarusian-Russian Grandiscar presented its specialised mobile laboratory (suitable for working with radioactive materials), reanimobile and intensive care ambulance. Nizhegorodets has been long and successfully operating in Russia's Nizhny Novgorod; Mr. Lyubimov is its First Deputy General Director. The company produces over 500 models of special transport, converting leading global brands. Among them are micro-buses, ambulances and re-



Grandiscar's products



Yuri Lyubimov demonstrates the inside of the ambulance, equipped in Vitebsk

equipped cars (meeting defence and law enforcement agencies' requirements). A similar facility worth \$15m is to be built in Vitebsk over the coming five years, able to produce 5,000 re-equipped vehicles annually, with most sold to Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

Belarusian and Russian businessmen also have ambitious plans to conquer European markets. "Our joint project with the Italians envisages production of medical furniture and salons for ambulances, meeting European standards," explains Mr. Lyubimov. "Famous Italian company Balanti is giving us its developments and 2m Euros of equipment for installation in Vitebsk. The whole project will cost around 4m Euros."

Vitebsk's intensive care ambulances re-equip Ford-Transit vans, while its mobile laboratory for radioactive

materials uses a Volkswagen Crafter. For several months, Belarusian border guards have been delighted with the performance of the latter. Soon, Grandiscar is to gain certification of its Iveco buses. "We believe that our manufacture will enjoy huge demand — owing to low prices. At present, elite hospitals in Russia, Belarus and Europe are ready to pay up to 100,000 Euros for a first-rate ambulance, while we can offer a well equipped vehicle for just 50-60 thousand."

Grandiscar presented its designs at the 6th International Investment and Innovative Forum in Vitebsk, attended by representatives of business circles from over ten states. Some were visiting Belarus for the first time, with the aim of learning more about the local business climate and the Vitebsk Region's local pro-

grammes. Meanwhile, some had been coming to Vitebsk for five years, establishing competitive production facilities in the region. These tend to focus on production of automobile oil additives, cable products, goods made from aluminium and polyvinylchloride, modern clothes and footwear and food.

Dried milk whey is to be made at a regional cheese making plant — much in demand in Europe, while other new projects include those dealing with local fuels: shale, peat and wood chips. Chinese guests have confirmed their interest in the energy sphere. "We are at Vitebsk's forum for the third time," said a representative of the Chinese Embassy to Belarus. "Our company is involved in constructing a hydro-electric power station in the Vitebsk Region and we are also interested in innovations. We

want to learn more about the developments of Belarusian universities and enterprises. New joint projects might emerge in the future at Vitebsk's free economic zone."

Germany sent a delegation to Vitebsk this year, including REMONDIS (involved in waste utilisation) and BE.ST (supplying equipment for oil processing). "I think this visit will be interesting to our businessmen and to the companies in the Vitebsk Region. We plan to visit some of them," commented the Head of the Representative Office of the German Economy to Belarus, Vladimir Avgustinsky. "The innovative component is vital. Belarus is interested in export oriented manufactures which are in demand in Europe. Meanwhile, Germany is a leading supplier of innovative products and technologies worldwide."

## EU, SAR and Chile companies ready to apply for leasing terms

National leasing operator receives \$70m of applications for leasing of Belarusian machinery

"Demand for Belarusian vehicles abroad is high. We are finding ways to sell on leasing terms despite the difficult situation on the Belarusian currency market," asserted Promagroleasing Director General, Pavel Krupnov, at a press conference. Over the past year, the company has been actively promoting Belarusian agricultural and automobile machinery to Russia, Ukraine, some European Union coun-

tries and the South African Republic. There are plans to penetrate the Kazakh market, while BelAZ rock haulers could be leased to Chile.

To enhance competitiveness of Belarusian machinery sold under leasing terms abroad, Promagroleasing is eager to offer more advantageous conditions to its customers — such as discounts and payments by instalment. Moreover, the leasing company and manufacturers are trying to offer lower prices on new markets than competitors.

Promagroleasing is the CIS' only company to specialise in export leas-

ing. It also operates on the European market and Mr. Krupnov believes that its work over the last few years shows its maturity as an export company. "We are often scolded for moving slowly but, as our authorised fund includes state money, it's dangerous to make mistakes," he explains. With this in mind, Promagroleasing is working with Belarusian exporters in a consistent and systematic fashion, studying new markets on which to promote Belarusian products. At present, it accounts for 37 percent of the Belarusian leasing market.



Pharmaceutical industry among strategic branches of economy

## Partners strengthen interaction

Brest Region's Kamenets District visited by representatives of Hanseatic Parliament — an international trade organisation

The Hanseatic Parliament, headquartered in Hamburg, currently unites around 50 trade-industrial and craft unions of Europe while representing the interests of about 450,000 small and medium-sized

enterprises. This civil-legal association is descended from the medieval Hanseatic League — an association of merchant guilds, jointly solving problems of international trade.

The Brest branch of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry joined the Hanseatic Parliament, aiming to expand its range of partners and promote Belarusian goods on foreign markets, while re-

ceiving the opportunity to take part in EU financed programmes to develop international entrepreneurial co-operation. The Brest State Technical University has already joined the Baltic Sea Academy, organised at the Hanseatic Parliament, allowing it to participate in the *Qualification, Innovation, Co-operation and Key Business for SMEs* international programme.

## Concrete medicine-related plans outlined

By Nadezhda Radivonova

Belbiopharm Concern to realise joint projects with Cuba in field of medical biotechnologies

A delegation of Cuban scientists recently visited Belarus to discuss Belarusian-Cuban co-operation in the medical sphere, in addition to the creation of modern innovative medicines and di-

agnosing substances.

Belbiopharm notes that Cuban scientific and medical organisations have achieved much success in the development and production of biotechnological drugs. Belmedpreparaty and Farmland are liaising with Cuba's CIMAB S.A., aiming to launch production of drugs in Belarus, developed by Cuban specialists.