

Without excessive concern or needless trouble

By Irina Samokhina

**Charter helicopter flights organised to Grodno Airport from Lithuanian Druskininkai**

An indoor ski complex — unique throughout the Baltic States — is due to open at a Lithuanian spa resort, enabling Belarusian tourists (who usually attend local famous mineral spas) to enjoy snowboarding, skiing and sledging.

Just over 50km separate Druskininkai and Grodno, taking a bus less than an hour. Once a helicopter route is launched, it will take around several dozen minutes — no time at all. Lithuania has initiated the helicopter flight, with the Head of Belaeronavigation's Grodno branch, Anatoly Kuprashevich, asserting that he sees no obstacles to the idea. Grodno will be able to accept the helicopter without difficulty. "We register charter planes from all over the globe almost every day. Our airport can accept any aircraft, including helicopters. No special sites are needed, so the project should go ahead," he notes.

The railway also plans to simplify travel for its passengers, launching Internet booking by late 2011. Travellers will be able to print their tickets from home up to an hour before departure, avoiding queues.

**Sun's activity creates rare spectacle**

**Belarusian astronomers photograph polar lights without leaving country**

Recently, Belarusians witnessed a sight rare for our latitude. "A powerful burst from the Sun generated a flow of charged particles," explains Victor Malyshchits, from the Belarusian State University's Observatory. He personally observed the amazing sight, telling us, "When that solar wind reached the top layers of the Earth's atmosphere and collided with them, multi-coloured lightning appeared in the northern part of the sky."

Such 'shows' are only seen every few years but the Sun's activity is supposed to enhance for a while, so Belarusians are likely to observe the unique phenomenon again. Each lightning flash is preceded by a Sun flare, whose charged particles inspire a strong geomagnetic storm on Earth. Moreover, anyone wishing to enjoy this natural spectacle must travel far from city lights, to gain an unobscured view of the sky.

**QR-codes to help tourists easily find city sights**

Vitebsk is first Belarusian city to launch special codes at museums, hotels and cinemas, enabling tourists to promptly receive information on local sights

By Semen Lesnikov

The barcode of black and white geometric patterns and figures can be scanned by a handset, allowing software to show information on ticket costs, location and opening hours. The director for the gorod.vitebsk.by Internet portal's development, Andrey Lapin, is among the system's designers. Meeting at the Regional Local History Museum, which already keeps codes of Vitebsk's sights, he demonstrates how the system works. "We are now in the city centre," he approaches a poster in the hall, directing his smartphone towards it. After scanning, the necessary information appears. "We can easily find the location of Repin's Zdravnevo Museum-Estate, learning that it takes 28 minutes to go there," he continues. "Additionally, the system shows the route to the site, with the help of a navigator."

Among the project's authors are the Vitebsk City Executive Committee and a mobile communication operator. A single code also takes a user to the mobile version of the website, which provides information on the location of

souvenir shops, cafes, ATMs and amusements. It's also possible to view photos of museum exhibits and no Internet addresses need to be entered by hand, making it more convenient.

The Deputy Director of the Vitebsk Regional Local History Museum, Valery Shishanov, tells us, "Quick access helps increase our number of visitors. A month ago, we visited the *Inter-Museum* Festival in Moscow, where a similar system is only in its infancy. We're pleased to be among the pioneers in the sphere in the CIS."

QR-codes were first developed in Japan in the mid-1990s and are now widespread through France, Germany and Russia. However, until recently, they were used primarily for advertising firms, shops and art projects. No single information system existed for cities, at least in Belarus. With this in mind, the Vitebsk project is unique. In the near future, its developers plan to add economic information which might arouse interest among potential investors. Moreover, the system is expected to cover other large cities of the region: Polotsk, Novopolotsk and Orsha.



Vitebsk is interesting to tourists, being rich in sights

**Sleeping better for us than pills**

By Zoya Nenasheva

**End of July marked a special holiday worldwide: Sleepyhead Day — aiming to draw attention to the health problems caused by insomnia**

"Those who sleep well tend to be happy!" asserts the Scientific Studies Deputy Director of the Republican Research and Practice Centre for Mental Health, Tatiana Dokukina. "When we sleep well at night, we smile in the morning and spend the entire day in a good mood."

Any sleep disorder significantly deteriorates our quality of life, usually inspiring the person to seek medical help. When the usual home remedies of hot baths, herbal tea and relaxing massage fail to work, then assistance is needed. "A specialist can help you to restore your normal



Sleep essential for good health

sleeping habits," promises Ms. Dokukina. "More importantly, you learn to be happy and sleep well."

Neurologist Sergey Kolomiets, a post graduate student at the Department of Nervous and Neurosurgical Diseases of the Belarusian State Medical University, also emphasises the importance of proper sleep. "The amount of sleep and its quality are two differ-

ent matters. Rest ensures health, so you should ensure your bedroom is conducive to relaxation."

The problem of lack of sleep is acute in today's busy world. Lack of sleep can cause fatigue, weight loss and, even, illness. You aren't safe to drive unless you are well rested, asserts Minsk City Executive Committee's State Road Police Inspector Irina Sapunova.

She notes, "Minsk Region roads are mostly transit highways. Unfortunately, many road accidents take place as a result of drivers falling asleep at the wheel. Since the beginning of the year, there have been six such accidents registered in the Minsk Region; one person died and six were injured. The cause was simple lack of sleep and fatigue." Unfortunately, even experienced drivers can be blasé. The human body is not a machine. A careless attitude towards our own health, with just 3-4 hours of sleep, can result in disaster...

Good sleeping habits are an investment in a healthy and happy life — better than any medicine. It's a waste not to use sleep to the full.

**Useful advice**

Adults need 7 to 8 hours a day of sleep, rising with

age. Your mattress should be firm and at least 8-10cm deep, made from natural materials. It should keep a steady temperature and humidity for the whole period of your rest.

When choosing a pillow, keep in mind that its height should be equal to the size of your shoulder. Try to keep your head in one line with your body.

Keep your room ventilated, dark (with curtains where necessary) and quiet.

Be careful not to over-indulge in food or drink before bedtime. However, a light snack can help your body to relax.

The pose you sleep in is individual but it seems that men should not sleep on their stomach, since it disturbs microcirculation in the small pelvis, which can cause early impotence. Sleeping on your side is healthier.