

Communal autonomy makes daring challenge

Dom Park residential district to be built in Minsk's Sokol suburb, generating own electricity, heat and water while selling excess of heat and electricity to state

By Svetlana Devyatkova

Let there be light!

To receive cheap electricity, various alternative energy sources are being united under a single hybrid system called 'Pargues'. It will ensure that the Dom Park (House Park) residential district can produce its own light and heat from a unit combining wind and hydraulic power generators. The buildings are to be of an unusual shape, like a cross or windmill from above, allowing wind from any direction to be 'caught' and channelled to rotate a wind turbine. An aero-hydrodynamic turbine will join the process, activating an electrical generator to produce electricity. It's planned that the residential district will completely satisfy its own needs for electricity and heat. This will save the state \$35m over 25 years, since utilities are currently subsidised.

ing launched at a Belarusian residential block, with communal waste processed beneficially, turned into synthetic gas via special units.



New residential district at Minsk's Sokol suburb to demonstrate its advantages

Biogas prospects

The world has long understood the benefit of recycling waste; in Belarus, discussions on organic waste processing began in 2007. By 2008, the first bio-gas units had come into operation, designed to process sewage to generate heat and electricity. The first such unit is now be-

Convenient parking

Not only heat and electricity influence our quality of life; clean drinking water, fresh air, modern conveniences and a pleasant environment play their role. Dom Park residential district is being built on a hill, not far from a water reservoir, and is sur-

rounded by woods. Water is to be taken from two wells while fresh air will be taken from the upper level of the buildings, being purified and recirculated through the buildings via the recovery system.

Serpentine car parking areas are envisaged at the centre of the build-

ings, with each resident able to park on their own floor. Seven playgrounds are planned for the residential district, as well as roller-ski tracks with an underground recuperative speleo-complex, a fountain with cascades, public gardens and greenery. Last year, the project won the

Republican contest for innovation.

Project price

The site is to be constructed using investment capital, with injections of \$44.2m. Dom Park enterprise has already allocated \$1.4m, with construction to be launched next autumn.

Festive lights set to be vivid

Energy-saving bulbs for pre-New Year garlands and shops forbidden to close for cleaning

The forthcoming New Year holidays are to be held boldly despite rising energy prices. Of course, street garlands and festive holiday decorations in shop windows consume much costly electricity; many are concerned as to how authorities can save money on holiday illuminations.

"The holiday will be organised regardless," promises the Deputy Director of the State Standardisation Committee's Department for Energy Efficiency, Vladimir Komashko. "Decisions on terms and volumes of street illuminations for the festive period are to be adopted by district and city authorities independently, with expenses covered from local budgets."

We need to save money but specialists promise that this won't be done to the detriment of the New Year mood. Energy-saving bulbs help reduce electricity usage, so will be used to decorate streets on the eve of the New Year.

The Trade Ministry promises to do everything it can to help Belarusians buy gifts for relatives and friends in good time; over 5,000 sites are to extend their opening hours, with shops and markets, as well as public catering facilities and public services, being forbidden from closing for repairs, inventory, cleaning or other similar actions.

Second life of popular 'Khrushchevka' flat

By Lilia Nenasheva

Typical room in typical flat unveiled at Lida Historical and Art Museum



The 'Khrushchevka' was a low-cost, cement-panelled or brick three- to five-story apartment building developed in the USSR during the early 1960s, when Nikita Khrushchev directed the Soviet Government. The reproduction of a typical room from a flat in such a building is the idea of research officer Tatiana Nikiforova, who aims to show

how Soviet suburban residents lived in the 1960s. A local newspaper story from 1967 helped staff create the exhibit. That year marked the 50th anniversary of the USSR's foundation, with Soviet achievements, including those relating to living conditions, being covered by the media.

Staff brought in artefacts from their own homes and those of friends and family to decorate the flat. Some were found in places where old buildings have been demolished. Locally made goods are also part of the display: from Neman Glassworks, Lida Footwear Factory, Lida Plant of Electrical Goods and Lida Milk Canning Plant.

The display gives senior Lida residents a real sense of 'déjà vu': a metal bed and foot-powered sewing machine stand near the window, while a hooked napkin is placed under a radio-gramophone. There is a black-and-white TV set and a legendary string-bag. Bottles of milk hang near the entrance door, vividly reminding them of their youth. The younger generation are sure to find the exhibit fascinating, comparing the past and the present.

Much achievable in five hours



Young programmers show their mettle at Olympiad

By Nikolay Zhemanov

Belarusian students acknowledged best at All-Russian Programming Olympiad

Youngsters from the Gomel Region's Mozyr have performed brilliantly in the finals of the 12th All-Russian Programming Olym-

piad in St. Petersburg — organised by several leading Russian universities. Our young programming teams from Gomel and Mozyr captured gold medals and 1st degree diplomas, beating almost two hundred teams from countries such as Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Latvia and Tajikistan. Their success is espe-

cially significant considering that, to reach the finals, each team had to pass regional selection rounds and an Internet tournament.

"The conditions were really tough," notes the Head of the Gomel Regional Executive Committee's Education Department, Sergey Poroshin. "Each team was provided with a single computer to solve eleven complicated tasks in just five hours. Our youngsters solved almost every task with the minimum time penalty. The team taught by famous Mikhail Dolinsky, Yelena Minyailova and Alexey Borunov was acknowledged best in the CIS."

Pleasingly, other Belarusian teams — including from a Svetlogorsk gymnasium — won 2nd and 3rd degree diplomas at the international event. Each member now has the chance to enter the St. Petersburg National Research University of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics without taking an examination — or can choose to study any IT related specialty at any Russian university.