



New flax-picking technologies improve working conditions in Dubrovno District and reduce enterprises' costs

# Short route to long flax fibre

## Mogilev Region carries out modernisation and optimisation of flax branch

By Svetlana Svetlova

Until recently, seven enterprises in the region produced flax fibre. Today, Chausy Mill and Krugloe Mill are closed. Meanwhile, the linen mill in Shklov is to merge with Mogilevoblenn export-sorting base. The Director General of Mogilevoblenn, Viktor Geidel, explains, "The association will allow us to save money and time. We sometimes expe-

rienced ridiculous technical situations and unnecessary extra paperwork — such as Shklov linen having to be delivered elsewhere before coming to us for export!"

The managing company will be based in Shklov and will become part of the enterprise, which is at the heart of flax processing in the Mogilev Region and one of the most advanced manufacturing sites countrywide. Modernisation has doubled

capacity, while reducing the amount of electricity used and raising the quality of processed flax.

The Chief Engineer of Shklov Linen Mill JSC, Anatoly Builo, tells us, "Our processing is producing three times as much long fibre; we deliver 65 percent of our production to Orsha Linen and demand for our flax fibre is growing — not only in Belarus but in Russia, the

Baltic States, China and Japan. We'll continue our modernisation, updating any 'old' areas remaining."

New technologies have also improved working conditions, reducing the amount of noise and dust: harmful fibres are filtered more effectively now. Happily, automation and computerisation of processes haven't led to dismissals, since workers have been simply relocated to other sites.

Naturally, the success of the branch depends not only on technical equipment, but on skilful organisation and careful observance of correct operations. Other enterprises processing flax fibre are found in Mstislavl, Khotimsk and Gorki while unprofitable Chausy and Krugloe mills are to be converted to other uses. Many of their staff have been transferred to Shklov Linen Mill.

Mr. Builo adds that the region's mills process about 70 percent of the local, high-quality flax, and are working at full capacity. Mr. Geidel admits that the state is focusing on developing the flax industry, which seems to have a promising future, despite being labour intensive. Man-made fibres are less popular than they once were, with many customers now choosing natural linens, leading to ever increasing demand.



Such terminals soon to appear even inside taxis

## More possibilities for non-cash payments

By Vladimir Samsonov

**National Bank of Belarus suggests establishing payment terminals in taxis and on agro-estates**

The National Bank has suggested to the Ministry of Taxes and Duties that more sites install card payment terminals — including taxis, fitness and leisure venues, and places hosting sports events, besides cultural venues, auto-repair shops, spas and agro-estates.

"People should enjoy the choice of whether to pay with cash or otherwise," notes Lyudmila Stefanovich, who heads the Bank Payment Cards and Electronic Money Development Department at the National Bank. She adds that mobile payment ter-

minals are cheaper to purchase than fixed devices, which makes them a good option for taxis, individual entrepreneurs in markets, and those running Internet shops.

As of 1st January, 2014 Belarus had 82,000 card payment units and 240,000 cash registers (as registered with tax agencies). Meanwhile, the number of bank payment cards in Belarus rose by almost 1.5 million in 2013, being used for 16 percent of non-cash payments (retail and services). "Many international experts rank a country's economic development by the share of payments made in cash; the higher the volume, the lower the rating," notes Ms. Stefanovich. "In the European Union, for example, 90 percent of payments are made by card, so Belarus has far to go."

## Serious projects — worth millions of Dollars

### ZTE Corporation ready to invest in joint manufacturing enterprises at Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park

By Andrey Fiodorov

Minsk recently hosted a meeting between Belarus' Prime Minister, Mikhail Myasnikovich, and the ZTE Corporation's Senior Vice President, the Head of ZTE's Global Financial Centre, Shao Weiling. The latter underlined that the ZTE Board of Directors is keen to invest in Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park manufacturing enterprises involved in high technologies and in information and communication technologies.

Mr. Myasnikovich noted that ZTE boasts ultra-modern manufacturing, catering to a significant segment of the market. The Belarusian Head of Government visited the Corporation in January 2014, seeing its capabilities first-hand. He asserts, "The company is now entering the Belarusian market rather confidently and the major projects being discussed are very welcome."

Among such projects is an RFID system for monitoring logistics and the modernisation of infrastructure for the country's largest state-run cable operator. The Belarusian PM notes that we already have appropriate legislation for the RFID sys-



Chinese company ZTE known all over the world

tem, with governmental resolutions passed to guide the new technologies aiding logistics and trade. He emphasised that both projects are being looked at holistically, regarding 'intellectual capital and the possibility of the company becoming an investor'. Naturally, the projects are complex and expensive: estimated at \$300m.

ZTE Corporation was founded in 1985 and is a global leader in

manufacturing telecommunication equipment and in providing finished networking solutions. The Chinese corporation has been working on the Belarusian telecommunication market since 2001. ZTE supplies telecommunication equipment to Beltelecom, and GSM and 3G mobile phones to such mobile companies as Velcom, MTS, and Life, as well as Internet access equipment.