

Safe haven for investors

By Vasily Kharitonov

Alexander Lukashenko demands urgent measures to accelerate construction of Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park.

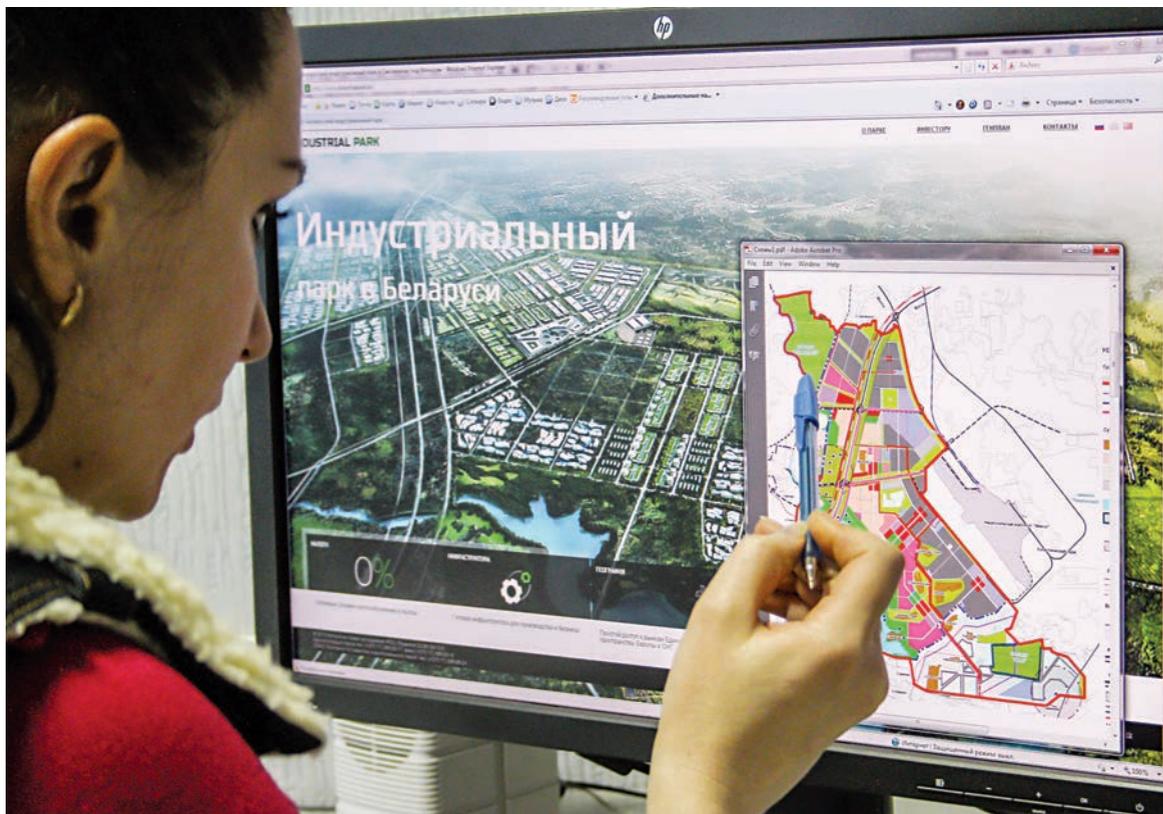
The President focused on the issue during a recent government session, discussing the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park. The idea of setting up a joint industrial zone in Belarus was first raised during a meeting between the President of Belarus and the former Vice President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, during a visit by a Chinese delegation to Belarus in 2010.

During a visit to Belarus by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the National People's Congress of China, Wu Bangguo, in September 2011, an inter-governmental agreement was signed on the establishment of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park, ratified by both countries in 2012.

The Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park is being set up in line with the Decree of the President of Belarus, in the Minsk Region's Smolevichi District. The 8,000+ hectare site will enjoy a special legal regime lasting fifty years.

The structure of the Park's management has been determined, as have its priority areas: electronics, bio-medicine, fine chemistry and machine building. Several framework agreements have already been signed regarding potential residents.

The Head of State is eager to see an objective evaluation and a clear-cut action plan, aiming to accelerate the Park's construction. He remarks that the major project is of special importance,



The Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park will produce goods — demanded worldwide

being a landmark of strategic co-operation with China and an important engine in driving forward the economy.

According to the President, the project opens up prospects for assimilating high technologies as well as cutting-edge international practices in doing business, management, construction, and the management of industrial enterprises. The amount of work involved, as well as the capital investments required, is huge. A new town is being created near Minsk to serve the site: an independent territorial and economic unit housing innovative, export-oriented enterprises and offering comfortable accommodation and associated facilities.

The President underlines that the relevant decree grants preferential taxation terms, helping enterprises gain a competitive edge within the Customs Union and the European Union. He explains, "A special public-private mechanism to manage the Park has been created, and the relevant organisational structures have been set up." He remains dissatisfied with the rate of progress in the Park's construction and believes this shows a lack of effort on the part of the government and those responsible: he cites the eight months spent developing and authorising the general layout of the Park. In addition, Mr. Lukashenko is unhappy that some issues of financing continue

unresolved.

"We've agreed that the Park will not be a conglomerate of enterprises already existing in Belarus, simply making commodities," Mr. Lukashenko underlines. "Why do we need a new tractor or truck factory? We shouldn't repeat enterprises that already exist in Belarus. We've agreed that, if we are to set up manufacturing enterprises in Belarus — at the centre of Europe — then they should be cutting-edge. Promising enterprises and internationally recognised brands should be represented."

The President has instructed the Prime Minister to monitor these issues and to report the real state of affairs: in particular, the

number of brands to be hosted by the Park. Mr. Lukashenko has also raised the issue of an information campaign to attract residents to the Park, saying, "The Foreign Ministry has sent 1,500 booklets to embassies and accomplishment reports have been filed. Now, they are just waiting... but what for?"

Mr. Lukashenko has seen a new draft decree concerning the Park and comments, "I'm not against the idea of discussing the decree but I'm afraid it may replicate the previous decree [on establishing the Park] — as signed already." He is curious as to why the new document is necessary and wishes to see an objective evaluation of the situation, in addition to proposals on ways to accelerate the Park's construction. He notes, "If the hotheads who suggested the Park initially have cooled off and believe Belarus no longer needs it, be brave and tell me so. We don't need another free economic zone for its own sake; we need cutting-edge enterprises and factories making products for worldwide sale. We need the most advanced enterprises. We don't even need jobs — as we often remark upon. All our Belarusians are employed; in fact, we lack enough labour."

The President wishes to see more high-performance jobs offered and believes that all conditions exist to create such enterprises in Belarus. "We have the most important elements: people and national stability (as many states lack). Investors say they are on the lookout for safe havens in which to invest their money: for enterprises working calmly and making products which are in demand," stresses Mr. Lukashenko.

From unique meta-materials to Slutsk belts

By Vladimir Samsonov

National Academy of Sciences of Belarus lists top 10 achievements by academician scientists in the sphere of fundamental and applied research

The top 10 include developments in the spheres of physics, biochemistry, economics and humanitarian sciences, including completely unique achievements. For example, in 2013, physicists created a new type of hyperbolic meta-materials — unusual optic materials with curious signs of dielectric capacity in various directions. "On the one hand, these materials are absolutely absorptive while, on the other side, they are absolutely transmitting. Due to this development, a third type of materials has been received in the world," noted Chief Scientific Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, Sergey Kilin.

In 2013, mathematicians developed new models and methods of stability. The proposal uses so



Achievements of Belarusian scientists introduced at the exhibition

called 'junior sigma-index'.

Meanwhile, experts in material sciences have developed technology to receive conductive paint on the basis of silver nano-particles. This technology is designed to create various electronic schemes. Scientists have also developed the technology of the formation of multi-layer film radiation screens to protect micro-electronic items. "This development can be used in the space sphere helping to protect

spacecraft from radiation," added Mr. Kilin.

Speaking about more 'earthly' items, we should mention that agrarians have created new varieties of agricultural plants, including Belarus' first variety of cereal millet 'DoZh'. Previously, it hasn't been grown on Belarusian territory. Also, last year, art experts combined their efforts with painters and historians to recreate the technology of producing Slutsk belts.

Effective studies on equal terms with other students

By Vladimir Samsonov

British Embassy in Minsk hosts award ceremony of education grants in Magna Carta College Oxford

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the UK to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Bruce Bucknell, noted that Belarus and the United Kingdom are now keen to expand co-operation in the education field. "The UK government would like to provide assistance for the education sector in Belarus. As far as the Magna Carta College Oxford is concerned, it's very important that its programmes are also suitable for people with special needs," added the diplomat.

In particular, a scholarship was presented to Minsker, Tatiana Kelikh, an economist-manager at the marketing department of the Estonian-Belarusian JV that develops games and applications for iPad. Although Tatiana has the first disability category, she's managed to write the best essay without using her hands, proving that people with special needs

can be as successful in work and studies as other people. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the ceremony at the British Embassy and was presented her certificate at home.

Tatiana is convinced that the knowledge she will receive during her studies at Magna Carta College Oxford will give a boost to her career, because she works for a company that promotes products on the international market.

The *Global Ambassador Scholarship Programme* of Magna Carta College Oxford was launched on August

20th, 2013. With the assistance of the Belarusian Embassy in the UK, Magna Carta College Oxford is providing over 40 scholarships for Belarusian citizens. Scholarships for distance learning courses are offered to disabled people in wheelchairs, people from dysfunctional families and gifted children from orphanages. Scholarships are also provided to university students and teachers, specialists from state-run organisations and enterprises, as well as to media persons and athletes.

