Designers invent economy class automobile

Pavel Konnovich, a master's degree candidate at the Belarusian State Academy of Arts, designs prototype

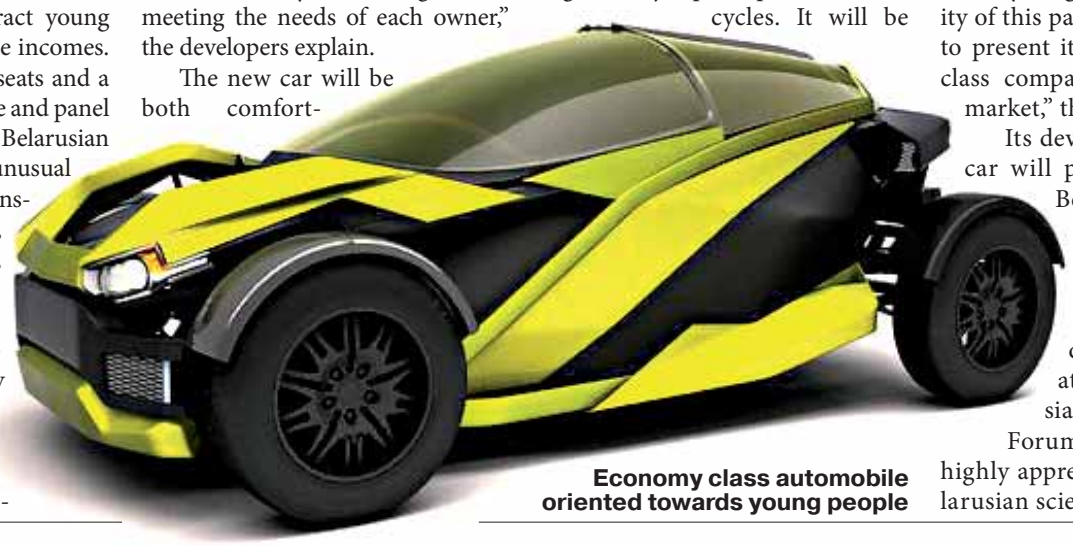

VITALY GIL

Concept-car developer — Pavel Konnovich

By Olga Bestuzheva

The car aims to attract young people on low and middle incomes. It is compact, with four seats and a rear-engine, using a frame and panel body, as is common in Belarusian industry, but has an unusual shape. Its removable transparent dome is a sunroof, a windscreen and a door, creating an interesting feature. The design optimises space and functionality while considerably reducing costs. Being of modular construction, buyers can purchase the basic model and add upgraded features at a later date. "This allows flexibility of car usage, while meeting the needs of each owner," the developers explain.

The new car will be both comfortable and ultra-modern, built using the major principles of motorcycles. It will be bright, dynamic and oriented towards young people. "The flexibility of this passenger car enables us to present it as a completely new class compared to rivals on the market," the Academy notes.


Economy class automobile oriented towards young people

Its developers hope that the car will prove popular among Belarusian young people. A business plan is to be elaborated, with investors sought for the project. Pavel's design was presented at a recent Belarusian Youth Innovation Forum in Minsk and was highly appreciated by famous Belarusian scientists.

Warding off Internet viruses

By Anna Leskova

Brest State Technical University develops intelligent software to protect against harmful programmes and viruses

The new software can detect both well known and unfamiliar harmful programmes and computer viruses, with more success at detecting the latter than rival software.

It can detect several harmful programmes and computer viruses simultaneously without needing to be updated constantly, being able to independently adapt. This enhances information security.

Libraries to embrace latest technologies

By Yulia Pototskaya

All school libraries to become centres of information and media resources

The Programme for General Secondary Education Development for 2007-2016 aims to update all school libraries, explains Belarus' Deputy Education Minister, Kazimir Farino. A list of information resources and electronic educational means (recommended for the provision of school libraries) has been prepared. "In addition, a catalogue of software recommended for use in education has been prepared; it is being regularly updated, duplicated on CDs and sent to educational establishments," he notes.

Preferences make Park attractive

By Olga Bogomazova

Belarusian enterprises to receive privileges for business development at China's Changchun Technopark

The Park encourages enterprises working in such fields as photo-electronics, lasers, new materials and energy, agriculture technologies and bio-technologies, and informatics. "On becoming a resident of the Belarusian-Chinese Technopark, our producers will receive a range of rewarding privileges and preferences, in addition to access to a huge sales market and business expansion," explains Marina Tsives, who heads the Belarusian Centre for Sci-Tech Co-operation with Chinese Provinces, at the Belarusian Scientific Technical University Polytechnik's Technopark.

Those situated in the high-tech innovative zone (in the city of Changchun) pay income tax at a rate of just 15 percent, with a mere 10 percent for those whose export volumes exceed 70 percent of their entire production (during any year of activity).

Additionally, established enterprises are exempt from profit tax for a period of two years from entering 'normal' operational levels. New joint ventures (established jointly with China and using foreign capital) whose period of activity under contract exceeds 10 years are exempt from income tax for their first two years of receiving profits.

Priceless marshes fall under investigation

Natural treasures being assessed worldwide over recent decades now include Belarus' beautiful wetlands

By Alexander Kopylev

An experiment of the kind has been for the first time conduced in Belarus, as part of the United Nations Development Programme / Global Environment Facility's project — entitled *Creating Conditions for Sustainable Functioning of the System of Protected Marshlands in Belarusian Polesie*, which is supported by the Ministry of Nature Resources and Environmental Protection. Daniel L. McFadden's method for analysing discrete choice is being applied, for which he has won a Nobel Prize.

Zvanets marsh in the Brest region, the largest European lowland bog (covering 16,500 hectares), is being studied. Zvanets received global recognition in the late 20th century when a small bird believed to be extinct — an aquatic warbler — was discovered. At least 30 percent of the world's aquatic warblers global live in Zvanets. In the mid-1980s, many feared for their habitat, since regular haymowing had ceased, causing the open spaces loved by the aquatic warbler to become overgrown with bushes and reeds. Measures are to be taken to actively protect the birds' environment, with brush cut regularly. Both farms in the region, and local villagers, lack any economic motivation for haymowing at the marsh; they are satisfied with the hay collected from the existing fields.


BELTA

Preservation of marshes' ecosystem important not only for nature protection

Specialists from the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus have joined staff and volunteers from the APB-BirdLife Belarus Public Association and foreign consultants in defining the financial benefits of preserving these unique open marshlands. Local people were asked to choose from various scenarios regarding welfare, with each being described with a range of characteristics, including 'value'. The results have been used by the project to suggest four variants for Zvanets' protection, each with its own 'cost'.

The current value of Zvanets — as voiced by 570 Belarusians — is about $30,000 per hectare per year. This figure seems quite possible for the largest natural marsh in Europe. Taking into consideration that most respondents had never been to Zvanets, the lion's share of this perceived value is unrelated to any utilitarian use of the bog; rather, the figure reflects its intrinsic value. The preservation of the open marsh's ecosystem is important not only regarding nature protection but also from the point of venue of potential tourist revenue.

Assessment of this area of natural beauty is to continue, as stipulated by a new strategy to preserve and sustain biological diversity, running from 2011-2020. State bodies and organisations involved in nature preservation will use the results to guide them in ensuring that such national treasures are utilised to the utmost.