

Targeting new giant

Not long ago, Zhodino's plant, near Minsk, produced its 500th BelAZ dump truck, with 220 tonne capacity. It headed for customer delivery immediately on leaving the assembly line. The plant now outlines ambitious new plans...

By Yevgeny Pimenov

The 220 tonne dump truck is among the most popular models, being used in quarries in Russia, Australia, China, the South African Republic, Venezuela, Serbia and elsewhere. The plant's designers are already planning a 420-450 tonne vehicle, although it's hard to imagine this giant. Against the recently manufactured dump truck, a person looks rather like a character from the film *Jurassic Park*.

BelAZ JSC currently boasts a third of worldwide sales for dump trucks, offering the widest range of quarry machinery. The Belarusian plant even has plans to outstrip its closest rival: American Caterpillar. General Director Piotr Parkhomchik explains that tough times

in the domestic economy have pushed the factory to focus more attentively on potential exports, with advertising strengthened and specialists personally visiting promising markets to promote goods. Some rivals are now envious of BelAZ's success, as it has enhanced its production volumes and now exports not just to Russia (its former primary partner) but to almost every quarry mining company around the world. It produces a whole range of quarry machinery for mining, as well as dump trucks, and machinery for underground use is being developed.

"The positive foreign trade balance in the first quarter of the year stood at around \$100m," notes Mr. Parkhomchik. "Against the same period of 2010, our exports rose by



Production of 500th dump truck, with 220 tonne capacity, is a landmark event for BelAZ staff

30 percent. In the first three months of 2011, our vehicles were supplied to Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia, the SAR, Venezuela, China, Mongolia, Vietnam and Iran. Deliveries to Chile are now planned." This year, BelAZ has, for the first time, offered transport leasing to foreign buyers, with non-CIS states able to pay for expensive heavy trucks in instalments over 3-5 years. "This

year, our first delivery of the kind headed for the SAR: seven vehicles worth over \$12m. Promagroleasing acted as an intermediary," says Mr. Parkhomchik. "This was a pilot project which has proved profitable for both our state and our company."

As regards the future 450 tonne dump truck, Mr. Parkhomchik and the plant's chief designer, Oleg Stepuk, are convinced that the de-

sign is possible, tapping into the global mining trend to raise cargo capacity. The use of such vehicles reduces costs and prime cost per tonne-kilometre, but such a giant has never before been attempted; finding wheels of the necessary size could prove a challenge, as none suitable are manufactured at present. However, Belarus is unlikely to view this as an obstacle; there's a first time for everything.

National treasure nurtured

By Lyudmila Satsenko

New Soligorsk chemical facility for high level processing of chlorine-based materials

The new chemical plant is to be launched at Belaruskali JSC, with plans currently being drawn up. During his working trip to Belaruskali JSC, Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikov noted, "We plan to set up production of chemicals using potassium and sodium-nitrogen derivatives. In 4-6 weeks, construction of a chemical facility should begin, manufacturing alkalis, chlorine, hydrogen and a range of other chemical products needed for



Belaruskali's production facilities

our further economic activity." He believes such production will allow Belaruskali to significantly expand its capacity, while diversifying its manufacturing and raising revenue.

Mr. Myasnikov tells us that the second construction stage envisages the establishment of a complex facility to produce polymerised vinyl chloride — PVC — (a polymeric material used to produce doors, windows, linole-

um and other products which Belarus currently imports. Explaining enhanced interest in Belaruskali's projects, Mr. Myasnikov notes, "These projects originate with the National Academy of Sciences; we've worked on the technologies, using pilot plants, creating projects which, at full scale, will be a national treasure... the ideas themselves and the production of ready-made products."

Prominent scientist voices his authoritative opinion

By Yelena Stasyukova

Science in Belarus reaches incredible heights, rivalling that of Russia

Nobel Prize winner in physics, Zhores Alferov, has recently lectured for Grodno students, saying that the level of science in Belarus is very high, rivalling that of Rus-

sia. He especially stressed the fact that Belarusian scientists' new technologies in physics, agriculture and other areas are in demand — domestically more than abroad.

The famous physicist personally supports talented young people, having initiated the *Global Energy Prize* and is the Rector-Organiser

of the new Academic University. He has also established a fund to support education and science, assisting talented students, facilitating their professional growth and encouraging creativity in scientific research across priority areas. Two representatives of the Grodno Yanka Kupala State University are fellows of the fund.

Planks instead of logs

Forestry industry focuses on export of processed timber

By Denis Mironenko

Processed timber should bring in more revenue than sales of logs. According to the Belarusian Forestry Industry, 2m cubic metres are annually sold abroad, with all timber expected to be processed internally by 2015. To achieve this goal, Bellesbumprom Concern is currently constructing eight factories, specialising in manufacturing woodfibre, chipboard and fibreboard, as well as cellulose, pellets and briquettes. "As a result, we'll receive export-oriented goods, boasting higher value added," explains Belarus' Forestry Minister, Mikhail Amelyanovich. "Over the last 2-3 years, we've technically modernised over 70 wood processing facilities, while launching production of new goods: flat-cut, wood mouldings, ready-made parallel bars and sawn timber."

The industry plans to raise revenue from the sale of by-products abroad, including seeds, seedlings and plants, frozen berries and honey. In 2010, export of forestry goods and services almost doubled, to reach \$106m. Over the first three months of 2011, this figure rose to \$30m — up 1.5-fold on the same period of the previous year.

The volume of investments into the forestry industry has increased since early



New technologies come to wood processing industry

this year, with money injected into timber cutting. The purchase of highly efficient equipment for onward development of wood cutting is a priority. The Forestry Ministry plans that, in five years' time, each region will have its own joint timber cutting enterprise, boasting capital from individual entrepreneurs and foreign partners. The total amount cut will stand at 2m cubic metres of timber.

The Ministry is also investing in the creation of joint ventures, manufacturing fuel from wood chips in those regions where greatest demand exists: primarily the Vitebsk and Gomel regions. The es-

tablishment of a fuel pellet factory in the Polotsk District is currently being discussed with a Swedish company; annual capacity could reach almost 44,000 tonnes.

A joint company is also planned for the Smorgon District, attracting capital from the international Kronospan Corporation. Its manufactures will include woodfibre, fibreboard and cellulose. The task of the forestries is to supply raw materials. Meanwhile, Austrian Egger Company plans the manufacture of laminated wood boards in the Minsk Region's Borisov District, aiming for a capacity of 700,000 cubic metres.