

Efficient solutions rocket to necessary heights

Specialists from Belarus demonstrate their achievements at International Aviation and Space Show in Zhukovsky

Although Belarus has no own aviation industry, almost every craft manufactured across the CIS uses Belarusian high-tech components; the share is especially great in the instrument making industry and in various control systems.

Moreover, Belarus has several large aircraft repair plants,

which have long become an example of maintenance service, boasting a reputation in the world of aviation.

Designing and constructing pilotless aircraft is a recent development in Belarus, with interest growing worldwide, as seen at the International MAKS-2011 Aviation and Space Show in Zhukovsky.



Belarus demonstrates its pilotless helicopter at Zhukovsky show

Belarus demonstrated its latest and, according to specialists, very successful I.N.SKY pilotless helicopter. Weighing no more than 140kg, it can remain airborne for five hours, within a distance of 100km. The pilotless aircraft can carry diverse surveillance equipment, fixed to a double-axis gyro-stabilised platform.

It is a wonderful example of Belarusian skill and expertise which aroused interest not just from Russian visitors.

The IDELA-INS system manages the helicopter, controlling its flight in automated mode. It uses a terrestrial control station suitable for normal vehicles and ships.

Meanwhile, BELTECH

HOLDING demonstrated its intelligent surveillance and defence systems — of interest to private security firms and larger organisations, such as the Emergency Ministry and border guards.

The Display Design Bureau from Vitebsk brought its automated fire surveillance and control systems. Remark-

ably, its ADUNOK system has been installed on Russian Tigr (Tiger) armoured vehicles; its creators view it as a very promising development.

The Belarusian stands at MAKS-2011 were far more striking than in previous years, showing that Belarus' high-tech industry is building on its high potential.



Never too late to study computer literacy

Rural women actively mastering Internet

Pensioners from Vasilishki agro-town, in the Grodno Region's Shchuchin District, realise that computer literacy is possible at any age

By Yekaterina Krivosheeva

Some elderly people are taught how to go online by their grandchildren but those from Vasilishki can go to the Shchuchin Selchanka (Rural Woman) Association. The *Rural Women and Village Development* project — run as part of the Netherlands Foreign Ministry's MATRA programme — has helped launch English language and computer literacy courses for women of all ages in the village. "Women living in rural areas don't have to limit themselves exclusively to their professional, family and daily routine," stresses Selchanka's Chair, Yadviga Shirokaya. She owns Lebedka guesthouse, which is quite popular locally. "There are many possibilities, especially for pensioners with lots of spare time," she adds.

Vasilishki's women are now actively learning computer skills, while

mastering the Internet. Of course, it's more difficult to learn when you are in your sixties compared to being a schoolchild, but teacher Irina Myslivets uses plain language to help her older pupils understand. They become advanced users in just a few months, able to use email, pay for services, surf the Net for information, check their bank accounts and communicate via Skype.

Speaking about available Internet access points, they explain, "Some of us have access from home while others use Selchanka's office." Of course, the classes don't just teach computer skills — however useful these may be. In overcoming their initial fears of technology, the women gain in confidence. Moreover, they make new friends by attending the classes — an asset which is truly priceless at any age but especially valuable for those who may be living alone.

Brest lamplighter perceived as visitor from past times

Victor Kirisyuk is no magician but, on touching a button on his jacket, the dreams of city residents tend to come true

By Nadezhda Ivanenko

Each evening, Mr. Kirisyuk — an electrician boasting over 30 years of experience — lights kerosene lanterns along pedestrian Sovetskaya Street in Brest. The tradition appeared two years ago and has already become the calling card for the city on the River Bug. Local residents and tourists gather to see this romantic show; it's even said that touching the button of the lamplighter's jacket will make your dreams come true. Mr. Kirisyuk is confident that realising our innermost wishes requires human will rather than magic but, as another seeker of happiness touches his button, he smiles, allowing them to believe.

"When I learnt that I'd be a lamplighter, I could hardly believe it; there were over 70 candidates for the post, but, for some reason, I was chosen," notes Mr. Kirisyuk, still rather surprised.

When he was younger, he served several years as an electrician on a submarine, before repairing street lighting. Two years ago, he transformed into a romantic lamplighter on the eve of Brest's 990th anniversary.

He is known everywhere, wherever he goes, even when dressed in other clothes. People greet him like an old friend, asking after his health. However, the most popular question is how he manages to work



Brest's lamplighter

all year round without weekends, in any weather.

Moreover, the process is always the same; those watching know exactly when to wait for their favour-

ite character and what to expect. Mr. Kirisyuk appears in Sovetskaya Street at a certain definite time, relating to sunrise and sunset. At present, he extinguishes the lanterns in the morning (at 5.30am) and returns in the evening (at 8.50pm) to light them again. It's already a tradition that when the last, seventeenth lantern is lit, the city's lights are immediately switched on.

The Brest lamplighter is also known abroad, with many foreigners especially visiting the city to take pictures with this representative of the rarest profession. Tourists from across Europe, Canada and, even, the South African Republic, arrive. Adults and children alike watch him with great delight.

"Everyone thanks us that such a beautiful tradition — unrivalled worldwide — has appeared in Brest," asserts Mr. Kirisyuk. Many invite him to their cities and towns, which have no lamplighter. Little children often ask him for permission to use his ladder to light the kerosene lanterns themselves. He then has to find kind words to explain why it's not possible; it's too high — more than 1.2m. However, he allows them to stand on the first step, which brings them great delight and pleasure.

"I always have reserve fuel with me," he tells us. In summer, lamps can actually run for two nights on one fuel reserve, since the hours of darkness are shorter; in winter, more kerosene is needed.