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Under New Visas, Mind the Fine Print

By Nikolaus von Twickel
THE MOSCOW TIMES

Those who believe in the U.S.-Russian “reset” despite disheartening rhetoric in both countries recently may want to celebrate on Sunday when a landmark visa agreement comes into force.

But before you put the Champagne bottle on ice, read the fine print carefully.

The agreement makes three-year multiple-entry visas allowing stays of up to six months the standard for both tourists and business travelers from each country. Written invitation requirements, fees and

minimum waiting times will be slashed, and visa applications will be handled by any consulate in the world — by and large regardless of an applicant’s place of residence.

That’s how things should work in theory. What will happen in practice won’t be known before Monday, when both countries’ consulates start implementing the new rules.

The implementation is more demanding for Moscow because Russian consulates hitherto gave single-entry visas only for the exact travel dates, while U.S. consulates already give two-year

multiple-entry visas to most applicants.

Somewhat surprisingly, Russia is opting for a dual system, giving travelers a choice of applying for a visa “old style” or “new style,” said a senior Foreign Ministry official.

“The old style will stay in force for one year,” said Vadim Savelyev, head of the consular section in the ministry’s North America department.

One reason why applicants might opt for the old rules is that they offer little uncertainty. The Foreign Ministry has not yet published its implementation recommendations to consulates.

Observers said this made some of the agreement’s effects hard to gauge. “As long as we do not have those recommendations, we have no idea how consulates will handle this,” said Yekaterina Elekchyan, an associate with Baker & McKenzie’s Moscow office.

Savelyev said that recommendations would be published on consulate websites by Sunday or Monday. But he said that while invitation requirements will be eased for business travelers, the procedure for tourists will remain the same. “They

See VISAS, Page 2

Putin Jokes About Orgy and Pussy Riot

In his first interview since inauguration, the president jokes about Pussy Riot’s name and one member’s orgy. **Page 2**

Court Tells Aeroflot To Pay Whistle-Blower

The airline is fined for retaliating against a union leader who complained that pilots were overworked. **Page 3**

Charges Filed in Hockey Jet Crash

Investigators press forward in an inquiry into the Yaroslavl jet crash that killed the local hockey team. **Page 3**



Independent Media’s Leader to Step Aside

The departure of the CEO is not expected to affect The Moscow Times. **Page 5**

Putin Says WTO Is a Factor in APEC Talks

The president said the talks should take into account “new realities such as Russia’s accession to the WTO.” **Page 5**

Kindergarten Defeats Trees in Court Battle

A Moscow court upholds a property developer’s right to build a new kindergarten at an 18th-century park. **Page 7**

Russian Forest Firm Receives \$200M

Russian Forest Products is the target company that will receive what could be a more than \$200 million injection. **Page 4**



President Vladimir Putin sitting in a motorized hang glider next to a Siberian crane on the Yamal Peninsula, where he took part in a flight under a program devised to lead the endangered cranes on their migration to Asia. He made the flight on his way to the APEC summit in Vladivostok. **Story, Page 3.**

Leadership 101: Learning to Talk Like Putin

By Lena Smirnova
THE MOSCOW TIMES

Josef Stalin spoke with a Georgian accent. Leonid Brezhnev slurred words. Mikhail Gorbachev’s southern twang made some ordinary words sound almost foreign.

Although Russia’s experience with orators has not been without extremes, current President Vladimir Putin is topping

the charts for speaking skills, and some Russians think he is worthy of imitation.

Putin is consistently rated as one of the best orators in the country. He topped the list of best Russian orators in 2011 at the Kiev-based J.F. Kennedy Institute of Rhetoric, beating out actor Ivan Okhlobystin and leader of the Liberal Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

Another 2011 rating named him the sixth-best orator in the world, behind

Hugo Chavez but ahead of Hillary Clinton.

“[Putin’s] speech technique is ... difficult to find fault with,” said Dmitry Ustinov, a rhetoric coach at the Syntone Training Center in Moscow and personal speech coach to one of the post-Soviet prime ministers. “There is clear sentence structure [and] word emphasis and a skillful use of pauses. It’s almost clean speech with a minimal amount of trashy words.”

Ustinov includes Putin among the list of the best orators to study. Other speech experts praise the combination of humor and aggressiveness in the president’s speaking.

The Putin technique is already trickling down to the masses. Some government officials, particularly younger ones, and businessmen have a tendency to copy

See PUTIN, Page 2

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ALEXEI DRUZHININ / RIA-NOVOSTI / AP

Putin flying in a motorized hang glider alongside two Siberian white cranes Wednesday on the Yamal Peninsula.

Soaring Putin Leads a Flock of Cranes

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Vladimir Putin flew in a motorized hang glider to lead a flock of young Siberian white cranes, but only one followed him on his first flight.

Dressed in a white costume meant to imitate an adult crane, Putin was taking part in a project to teach the endangered birds, which were raised in captivity, to follow the aircraft on their southern migration to Central Asia.

The flight in the hang glider proved to be a test of Putin's leadership skills. He

attributed the lone crane on his first flight to high winds, which caused the hang glider to travel faster than usual, RIA-Novosti reported. On the second flight, five birds followed Putin, but after a few circles only two had stuck with him for the full 15-minute flight.

Putin stopped off at the Kushavet ornithological research station on the Yamal Peninsula on Wednesday en route to the APEC summit in Vladivostok. Once at the station, he paired up with a pilot, who sat behind him in the hang glider as they took the birds for a spin.

Putin's flight, given many minutes of airtime on state television, provoked an array of contemptuous jokes on the Internet, one of the most popular being "So Putin is off to wintering with cranes. Does this mean he's not going to be back before spring?"

Art gallery operator Marat Guelman wrote in his blog that the flight shows Putin "has lost faith in us. He sees our treachery, greed, cowardice and cruelty. There's nothing to love in us anymore. Dolphins, cranes, horses — that's a different thing."

Court Orders Aeroflot To Pay Whistle-Blower

By Natalya Krainova
THE MOSCOW TIMES

A Moscow court has ordered Aeroflot, the country's largest airline, to pay compensation and reinstate a pilot who helped 46 other pilots win almost \$220,000 from the company for unpaid overtime.

The city's Presnensky District Court on Thursday ordered Aeroflot to pay more than 2.2 million rubles (\$69,000) to Igor Deldyuzhov, president of the Sheremetyevo Trade Union of Flight Personnel and a pilot who was fired from the airline in March, and to reinstate him, Deldyuzhov's aide, Igor Obodkov, told The Moscow Times.

Deldyuzhov was fired for repeatedly misstating the time at which he started work every day in reports to his bosses, Obodkov said.

Obodkov called the grounds for Deldyuzhov's dismissal "insignificant" and said they were a pretext for punishing him for his having fought to win compensation for other pilots.

Deldyuzhov, in his role as president of the Sheremetyevo Trade Union, helped win compensation from Aeroflot for 46 pilots who are members of the same trade union in a court case in June.

In that case, Moscow's Nagatinsky District Court ordered the airline to pay more than 7 million rubles (\$220,000) to the pilots in unpaid wages for working at night and in harmful or strenuous conditions, the Sheremetyevo Trade Union said in a statement in late August.

Deldyuzhov is to return to work Friday, according to the terms of Thursday's court ruling, Obodkov said.

Aeroflot said in an e-mailed statement that it would reinstate Deldyuzhov but would not allow him to fly. It was unclear what duties he would be given when he goes back to the company.

Aeroflot said that Thursday's court ruling was based on Deldyuzhov's activ-

ities in his union but failed to take into account the fact that the pilot was fired over "multiple violations of work discipline" that were "directly linked to flight safety and Aeroflot's responsibility for the lives and health of passengers." Aeroflot said it will appeal Thursday's ruling.

Moscow courts have repeatedly fined Aeroflot's leadership for underpaying pilots for overtime.

Prosecutors have conducted checks of the airline as a result of complaints by the Sheremetyevo Trade Union, Obodkov said.

Rector Gunned Down in Leningrad Region

THE MOSCOW TIMES

A St. Petersburg university rector was shot dead late Wednesday in an apparent contract killing with few leads.

The killer had waited in ambush for the rector, Alexander Viktorov, 61, to return home and shot him dead soon after he exited a chauffeured car, investigators said Thursday in a statement.

Viktorov's wife, a deputy rector, sustained a bullet wound to her right hip.

The incident occurred in the St. Petersburg suburb of Vsevolozhsk around 7 p.m. Viktorov had worked at the St. Petersburg State University of Service and Economics.

Criminal Case Filed In Hockey Jet Crash

By Jonathan Earle
THE MOSCOW TIMES

On the eve of the anniversary of the plane crash that devastated Yaroslavl's Lokomotiv hockey team, investigators have charged an airline official with causing the tragedy.

Vadim Timofeyev, a former deputy director at Yak-Service, which operated the Yak-42 charter jet, allowed pilots to fly without proper training or documentation, making him directly responsible for the crash, an Investigative Committee spokesman said Thursday.

"If Timofeyev had conscientiously carried out his professional responsibilities ... the tragedy wouldn't have occurred," Vladimir Markin said in a video posted on the committee's website.

Timofeyev will face up to seven years in prison if convicted of violating transportation safety rules.

Forty-four people, including most of Lokomotiv's roster and coaching staff, were killed when their Yak-42 crashed on takeoff in Yaroslavl on Sept. 7, 2011.

The dead included foreign sports stars, such as the team's Canadian coach, Brad McCrimmon, 52, a former blue-liner for the Detroit Red Wings, as well as Kazakh-born German Robert Dietrich and Slovak legend Pavol Demitra.

Aviation investigators blamed the crash on multiple pilot errors, including sedatives in a pilot's blood and inad-

quate training that led to a crucial instrument mix-up.

Having trained on a different airplane, at least one of the two pilots mistakenly placed his feet on the brakes as the plane thrust down the runway, preventing it from gathering enough speed.

The crew had been scheduled to undergo retraining Sept. 5-17 but instead were flying, investigators said Thursday.

Locals and relatives have expressed skepticism about the official explanation. Speculation has swirled that the plane's takeoff was rushed to make way for officials arriving for a forum hosted by then-President Dmitry Medvedev.

Last year, a small group of victims' relatives hired prominent Moscow lawyer Igor Trunov to challenge the official version.

The crash sent shock waves through the hockey world and sparked a new round of soul-searching and finger-pointing about Russia's dismal aviation safety record. Eight fatal crashes last year killed 120, with Russia surpassing even the Democratic Republic of Congo in the number of aircraft-related fatalities.

Analysts blamed deep-running problems such as poor aircraft maintenance, a lack of pilots, poor flight training, aging production facilities and state negligence.

Victims' relatives and loved ones will mark the anniversary in a private ceremony at a local church, followed by a gathering at the crash site on Friday.

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Forest Firm Gets \$200M From RCIF

THE MOSCOW TIMES

Russian Forest Products is the target company that will receive what could be a more than \$200 million injection from the Russia-China Investment Fund, marking the first investment by the joint sovereign fund.

Details of the deal involving Russia's second-largest logging company will be released in a statement by the fund at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Vladivostok on Friday.

The fund will announce that it reached a tentative agreement to buy equity in Russia Forest Products in a deal that will allow the logging company to produce plywood and other products of greater added value than the logs it now exports chiefly to China.

The statement doesn't name the size of the stake that will change hands, but says the fund will become the largest single shareholder in the company.

Russia Forest Products accounts for 10 percent of the country's total timber exports to China.

The fund is a joint venture between the state-backed Russian Direct Investment Fund, or RDIF, and China Investment Corporation that was announced in October of last year. The partners agreed to contribute \$1 billion each to the joint fund and raise a further \$2 billion from outside investors.

RDIF general director Kirill Dmitriev said earlier that the fund was discussing many projects, including in the pulp industry with a Malaysian fund.

Putin Sees Empowerment at APEC

He believes the discussions in Vladivostok should focus on freeing up trade and investment flows to stimulate economic growth.

REUTERS

President Vladimir Putin, who hosts an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Russia's east coast city of Vladivostok this weekend, said the talks should take into account "new realities such as Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization."

"Membership in the WTO gives us the ability to participate more broadly in setting the global trade rules — an issue that has been a focus of attention for APEC in the past," he wrote in an article for The Wall Street Journal's Asian edition.

Russia will use its membership in the World Trade Organization to help shape global rules to address a crisis in world trade, Putin said.

The country became the 156th member of the WTO last month. The \$1.9 trillion Russian economy, the world's ninth-largest, had for years been the biggest outside the trade rules club.

"The very principle of free trade is undergoing a crisis. We regularly observe recurrences of protectionism and veiled trade wars instead of lifting barriers," he said, adding, "it is imperative that we develop common approaches."

Putin also said APEC states should work together to address "the crucial challenge" of supporting sustainable growth by promoting innovation and the exchange of ideas, according



SERGEI KARPUKHIN / REUTERS

The president sees WTO membership as increasing Russia's influence in setting trade rules at the APEC summit.

to a Kremlin transcript of the article for publication on Thursday.

"We suggest that the dialogue in Vladivostok focus on freeing up trade and investment flows to stimulate economic growth," Putin said. He offered no details about his plans for the WTO, but said a customs union and common economic space linking the former Soviet republics of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan would "play an active part in shaping the regional and international agenda."

The European Union and the United States have reacted coolly to those groupings, while Russia has similar reservations about the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade initiative backed by Washington.

U.S. President Barack Obama and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk will miss the Sept. 8-9 summit of the 21-member APEC in Vladivostok, on the Sea of Japan near the North Korean and Chinese borders.

Russia has spent more than \$20 bil-

lion on roads, bridges and renovations for the summit in the city 6,450 kilometers east of Moscow, which is meant to underline Russia's interest in wielding more Asian influence. But it still faces a colossal challenge in making its Asian reach more profitable, a Russian tycoon said. Russia will miss out in the booming export markets of the Pacific Rim if it fails to build infrastructure and cut red tape urgently, shipping and commodities billionaire Ziyavudin Magomedov said.



IVAN SEKRETAREV / AP

Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov, left, and Economic Development Minister Andrei Belousov walk past a FIFA 2018 promotional display as they make their way to a news conference at the APEC summit on Thursday.

ExxonMobil CEO Lauds Rosneft Partnership

REUTERS

VLADIVOSTOK — The head of ExxonMobil held up a partnership with Rosneft as a model for the rest of the world on Thursday.

ExxonMobil's Rex Tillerson, flanked by Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin, was the first foreign CEO to greet Putin ahead of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit held in Vladivostok.

In April, ExxonMobil and Rosneft unveiled an offshore exploration partnership that could invest up to \$500 billion in developing Russia's vast energy

reserves in the Arctic and Black seas.

Under the deal Exxon and Rosneft will seek to develop three fields in the Arctic with recoverable hydrocarbon reserves estimated at 85 billion barrels in oil-equivalent terms.

"For the world, the political leadership, policy partnerships that have made our relationship possible serve as a model illuminating the path to a better future," Tillerson told Putin during a presentation.

"For Russia this relationship is already bearing fruit in terms of new investment, innovations, new possibili-

ties," Tillerson said.

He said ExxonMobil and Rosneft would work in "challenging circumstances" seeking to meet the growing global energy demand, which he expects to grow by 30 percent by 2040.

Tillerson said seismic studies at the Arctic Kara Sea oil exploration project with Rosneft were ahead of schedule and he expected drilling to commence in 2014-15.

"With this data on the Kara Sea in hand and analyzed we expect the drilling of an exploration well in the 2014-15 time frame," he said.

Sechin Takes Time-Out on Possible TNK-BP Purchase

COMBINED REPORTS

Rosneft has taken a time-out in talks on acquiring a stake in TNK-BP to avoid falling foul of a shareholder's agreement between its current owners, BP and a group of Russian tycoons known as AAR, Rosneft chief executive Igor Sechin said Thursday on a trip to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Vladivostok.

"It seems to me we need to take a break on this issue. As far as I understand, there are corporate agreements that do not allow third parties to stick their noses into the issues you are talking about. At the moment we have these limitations," Sechin told reporters.

The Rosneft chief also reiterated his position that Russian Urals crude should have a separate benchmark. "We need to strive for fairer, clearer pricing for Russian grades," he said.

Sechin also said Rosneft is suggesting to Japanese companies that they consider taking part in the development of six oil and gas fields in the Irkutsk region.

"We have proposed jointly working with Japanese companies at six license areas in the Irkutsk region, and a number of other interesting projects," Sechin said after a meeting with Mitsui management and the Japanese ambassador in Russia.

Sechin also said he had not discussed Rosneft's possible purchase of ExxonMobil's stake in the West Qurna-1 project in Iran with the head of ExxonMobil, Rex Tillerson, during their recent meeting.

Meanwhile, Sechin announced that Rosneft will invest 173 billion rubles (\$5.36 billion) to build a petrochemical plant in the Far East.

"Today [the construction] will start," Sechin told President Vladimir Putin during a presentation of the project in Vladivostok. (Reuters, MT)

Norilsk, RusAl Mulling Indonesia

THE MOSCOW TIMES

Norilsk Nickel and RusAl have broad potential to invest in Indonesia in the next few years, Alexander Ivanov, the Russian ambassador to Indonesia, was quoted as saying by the Jakarta Post at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Vladivostok.

"There is very broad potential [for investment]," he said.

He added that the companies had not yet applied to Indonesia's Investment Coordinating Board.

Norilsk Nickel is considering building a copper smelter and a non-ferrous metal smelter, with investment of up to \$2 billion, while RusAl, the world's largest aluminum company, is considering setting up a facility to process bauxite or other non-ferrous metals, he said.

Meanwhile, Russian Railways plans to build a railway line in Indonesia's East Kalimantan to support coal delivery with an anticipated investment of \$2.4 billion in 2013, with operations set to begin in 2017, Ivanov said.

Lending Might Slow As Capital Dwindles

REUTERS

VLADIVOSTOK — Lending by Russian banks will have to slow or their capital strength could be dangerously eroded when it is difficult for them to raise new money, the head of the country's second-largest bank said Thursday.

Andrei Kostin, the chief executive officer of VTB, said that banks could need more capital next year but that options for raising cash are limited.

"[Rapid lending growth] will require, sooner or later, more capital for the banks. And there is no access to capital markets, and that might be a problem," Kostin said in an interview on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

Credit rating agency Standard & Poor's also warned last month that Russian banks would need to limit lending growth this year to reduce risks of a further decline in the banking system's capital level.

Banks are generally required to keep a minimum capital adequacy ratio, based on a percentage of a lender's risk-weighted assets, to absorb possible shocks and support lending.

The Central Bank requires a minimum capital adequacy ratio of 10 percent, and banks can lose their licenses if they do not meet this requirement.

VTB has begun to rein in lending growth in some areas.

The bank is trying "not to expand too fast" due to possible problems with export-oriented companies that might suffer weak demand from a slowdown in Europe, Kostin said.

"We already see that the [commodity] prices are stagnating or going down, and demand is not very strong. ... So we are very cautious now in enlarging any loans to the clients," Kostin said. He did not name any companies or sectors.

RusAl, the world's largest aluminum producer, for example, will cut capacity 3 percent by year's end as it grapples with weak prices and rising power costs.

Rapid lending growth has already eaten up almost 5 percentage points of the banking system's overall capital since the start of 2011, bringing it to just above 13 percent as of Aug. 1.

VTB's capital adequacy ratio stood at 11.3 percent as of Aug. 1, versus 13 percent at closest rival Sberbank.

By the end of July, corporate loans were up 7.2 percent while retail lending rose 21.8 percent, and the overall banking system's capital had grown only 6.3 percent since the start of the year, Central Bank data showed.

Kostin said the domestic banking sector was not at risk from the European debt crisis because it has almost no exposure to the region's debt, but it could face a problem from falling capital.

"Not now, but maybe next year [the problem may arise]. The banking sector is developing quite quickly; lending growth is substantial," Kostin said.

But with equity markets currently not offering attractive prices for share offerings to boost capital, banks are having to look to the bond markets instead for money.

State-controlled VTB raised \$1 billion in a perpetual bond this summer, the first deal of its kind in the country. Since the start of 2012, Russian borrowers have raised more than \$31 billion in eurobond deals, more than in the whole of last year.

Sanoma Independent Media CEO Out

By Howard Amos
THE MOSCOW TIMES

The chief executive of Sanoma Independent Media, Elena Myasnikova, resigned Thursday in what appeared to be an ongoing tussle between foreign owners and local management at Russia's biggest publishing house.

Founded by Dutch expatriate Derk Sauer in 1992, Independent Media was bought by Finnish media holding Sanoma in January 2005. Sanoma Independent Media is the parent company of The Moscow Times.

"They are strengthening the power vertical [and] making the company more centralized," Myasnikova said in an interview published in Bolshoi Gorod on Thursday. "I ended up in a situation in which I could not do what I enjoyed."

Some employees at the company arranged a *chyorny chetverg* (black Thursday), coming to work wearing dark-colored clothing in an expression of support for Myasnikova.

In a statement published on the company's website, Sanoma said it regretted Myasnikova's decision.

No information was available about a conflict between management and shareholders, said Robin Janszen, vice president for communications at Sanoma Media in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe. "Let's hope that this is an isolated incident," he added.

But executives at Sanoma Independent Media told a different story.

"Her [Myasnikova's] departure sends a clear message to the owners that maybe something is wrong with their management," said Derk Sauer, who founded Independent Media and The Moscow Times in 1992 and is now chairman of



Moscow Times founder Derk Sauer in the parking lot at Independent Media on Vyborgskaya Ulitsa in 2001.

the supervisory board. "It's very bad news."

Myasnikova has worked at Independent Media since 1992 and in 2007 replaced Sauer as chief executive. Sauer said the shareholders had been "chipping away at the authority of local management" for about a year and a half.

"Lena has been taking all the [expletive], and she decided she could not take it any more," said one source close to the company's management, who requested anonymity to speak freely. "When big companies buy smaller companies, this is exactly what happens a few years after the acquisition."

Sanoma does not reveal separate fi-

ancial results for Russia, but executives said the Russian operation was profitable and expressed bafflement over the motivations behind head office interference.

About 50 publications are controlled by Sanoma Independent Media, including Vedomosti and the local editions of Cosmopolitan, National Geographic and Esquire.

There was confusion within the company Thursday about whether Sauer, whose contract expires on Dec. 31, would remain in his position or follow Myasnikova.

"They definitely have not asked me to stay," Sauer said.



Myasnikova became CEO in 2007.

Marubeni Mulls \$3.58Bln Pulp Plant

REUTERS

Japanese trading house Marubeni is in talks with Angara Paper to build one of the world's largest paper pulp plants in Russia, the Nikkei reported.

The plant is valued at about 280 billion yen (\$3.58 billion), the business daily reported.

If the negotiations are successful, Marubeni will design, build and procure equipment for the plant in the central Russian region of Krasnoyarsk, the paper said.

The plant's annual capacity is estimated to be 1.2 million tons, and it will be fully functional in late 2017, the Nikkei said.

Japan currently imports most of its softwood pulp from North America and northern Europe. Japanese paper companies will be able to cut transportation costs by switching to supplies from Russia, the paper said.

About 80 percent of the plant's pulp output will be exported to China, Japan and other parts of Asia, the paper reported.

Gazprom's Q1 Profit Plummet 24%

REUTERS

Gazprom said first-quarter net profit fell 24 percent as sales dropped and it paid back European clients who had said prices were too high, though the fall was not as sharp as expected.

Gazprom had agreed to tweak long-term deals with major European customers and pay rebates. Those retroactive payments exceeded 78 billion rubles (\$2.4 billion) in the first quarter, the company reported Thursday.

Even so, the European Commission opened an investigation this week into Gazprom's practices in eastern and central Europe, on concerns that the natural gas producer was abusing its dominant position in the region's upstream gas-supply markets.

Gazprom's January-March net profit attributable to shareholders fell to 358 billion rubles from 468 billion rubles in the same quarter a year ago, though it exceeded the 345 billion estimated in a Reuters poll of analysts.

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Appointments

PEPELIAEV GROUP STRENGTHENS ITS REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION PRACTICE

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Alexey specialises in real estate and land law, providing legal support for construction and investment projects. Under his charge, the number of services offered by Pepeliaev Group's Real Estate and Construction Practice has increased more than threefold, as has the size of the practice. The Practice's clients include Shtokman Development AG, Hals Development, Hines International, Dresdner Bank, MICEX, and Omya Russia.

The Pepeliaev Real Estate and Construction Practice won the 2011 Real Estate Market Records Award.

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The Russian-built Bushehr nuclear reactor in Iran is now at full capacity but remains a sore point with the West.

Russian Firm Suspends Iran Work

REUTERS

LONDON — A Russian firm has decided to stop verifying safety and environmental standards for one of Iran's biggest shipping groups, a letter showed, making it the latest international company wary of being caught up in Western sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

Iran is under growing pressure over its disputed nuclear program, and companies are cutting ties with its vital shipping sector, which transports most of its crude oil, for fear of losing lucrative U.S. business.

Moscow opposes concerted trade pressure on Tehran by Washington and its allies, making the Russian company's decision unusual. A letter seen by Reuters showed that St. Petersburg-based Russian Maritime Register of Shipping, or RS, among the top 13 global ship classification societies, had decided to suspend its activities in Iran after being urged to pull out by U.S. pressure group United Against Nuclear Iran, or UANI.

A targeted campaign by UANI, which includes former U.S. ambassadors on its board and is funded by private donations, has already led to other classification societies exiting Iran. Without certification from classification societies, vessels are unable to secure insurance cover or call at most international ports.

"The decision has been made to suspend RS activities in Iran," chief executive, Mikhail Ayvazov, wrote in a letter to UANI dated Aug. 31. "Since its foundation in 1913, RS never was a political organization and didn't carry out any tasks connected with realization of any political interests of other organizations and states," Ayvazov said in a separate note.

RS officials could not be reached for comment. Ayvazov said in the letter that the firm was suspending all certification and related services to the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines' vessels as well as offshore platforms including drilling rigs.

"Activities of RS do not contradict provisions of resolutions of the UN Security Council concerning sanctions against Iran," Ayvazov said. "The process of suspension will be completed as soon as practical and possible."

Accusation of 'Blackmail'

Russia blasted the latest round of U.S. sanctions against Iran last month, calling them "overt blackmail," and said they would harm Moscow's ties with Washington if Russian firms were affected. UANI

chief executive Mark Wallace said, "It is significant that Russia's leading classification society will now refuse to do business with the IRISL."

Western sanctions have targeted Iran's oil industry, a vital source of government revenue, aiming to ratchet up pressure on Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to halt nuclear work, which Tehran says is for peaceful purposes rather than military. "Iran will find ways around it, but it's getting harder for them every day," a ship industry source said.

Iran Firms Under Fire

Sanctions pressure has led to the near-collapse of an Iranian-led shipping venture called Irano Hind Shipping, while Iran's biggest tanker operator, NITC, is increasingly targeted by Washington.

An IRISL official, who declined to be named, said Wednesday that the operator had no information yet about withdrawal of services by RS. It has been on a Western blacklist of sanctioned entities for a number of years. It has denied any wrongdoing.

Ayvazov said in the letter the suspension of services included IRISL's oil tanker the Tour. Shipping sources have said the Tour was among vessels used to transport crude from Syria to Iran as part of Tehran's moves to bolster Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's rule in the face of an armed revolt against him.

A small number of Russian companies have pulled back from business with Iran, including LUKoil, but trade unrelated to sanctions, such as grain and food exports, remains buoyant.

There are more than 50 classification societies. Members of the top 13, including Germany's Germanischer Lloyd and France's Bureau Veritas, have left Iran recently after being targeted by UANI. Others, such as Britain's Lloyd's Register, have pulled out, citing Western sanctions.

A South Korean ship classifier, one of the only societies in the top 13 still providing services to Iranian companies, has sidestepped calls to halt its verification work, saying it was concerned that vessel safety and protection of the marine environment could be compromised.

"The kind of pressure UANI brings doesn't stop Iran's oil from being transported by sea. It just stops it from being transported responsibly, in a manner where the crews are safe and the associated risks to the environment are minimized," another ship industry source said. "I worry that there will be a price to be paid for these actions, and it likely

won't be paid in Iran or by Iranians."

Warning Repeated

On Thursday, Russia starkly warned Israel and the United States against attacking Iran, saying Moscow sees no evidence that Tehran's nuclear program is aimed at developing weapons, the Interfax news reported.

"We warn those who are no strangers to military solutions ... that this would be harmful, literally disastrous for regional stability," Interfax quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying.

An attack on Iran "would set off deep shocks in the security and economic spheres that would reverberate far beyond the boundaries of the Middle East region," Ryabkov was quoted as saying.

Russian officials have issued similar warnings in the past, but Ryabkov's remarks appeared to underscore Moscow's concern about the possibility that Israel might attack Iranian nuclear facilities.

Heightened Israeli rhetoric about the facilities, which Western powers believe are part of a program to develop a nuclear weapons capability, has stoked speculation that Israel may attack Iran before the U.S. presidential election in November.

Ryabkov said there were no indications of a military nuclear program and suggested that monitoring by the UN nuclear agency was a strong guarantee.

"We, as before, see no signs that there is a military dimension to Iran's nuclear program. No signs," Interfax quoted Ryabkov, Russia's point man for diplomacy on Iran's nuclear program.

"We see something different, that there is nuclear material ... in Iran that is under the control of inspectors, specialists of the International Atomic Energy Agency," he said. "This nuclear material is not being shifted to military needs. This is officially confirmed by the [IAEA]," Ryabkov added.

His remarks appeared to be at odds with mounting concern voiced by the UN atomic watchdog about possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program.

The IAEA said last week that Iran had doubled the number of uranium enrichment centrifuges, which are not yet operational, in an underground bunker, showing that it continued to expand its nuclear program despite sanctions and the threat of an Israeli attack.

The agency also said it was "increasingly concerned about the possible existence in Iran of undisclosed nuclear-related activities involving military-related organizations."

Kindergarten Defeats Trees in Court Battle

Yeugenia Kleiner

SPECIAL TO THE MOSCOW TIMES

Moscow's Presnensky Court has upheld property developer Terra Auri's right to build a new kindergarten on the territory of an 18th-century park, where an office of the Federal Drug Control Service and an existing but unused kindergarten are also located.

The court dismissed a case brought by preservationists to stop the Terra Auri project in the Lefortovo district's Stroganov Estate park. Located on the Yauza River embankment, the park used to be referred to as "The Versailles on the Yauza."

Construction on the park's land is prohibited by environmental protection and cultural heritage laws, said Alexandra Andreyeva, a deputy of Lefortovo's municipal assembly.

She said the court's decision was "predictable."

"There was strong will from the authorities to build the kindergarten anyway," she said.

It's not a problem stemming from the pursuit of profit but one of political power, Andreyeva said.

"The authorities want to show that the residents mean nothing, and that they should not impede public projects," she said.

Due to a lack of grassroots organization in local communities, such sites can only be saved if an order from a high official is received, she said. Moreover, suc-

ceeding in court against a government department is difficult because of the executive branch's interference in judicial proceedings, Andreyeva added.

Terra Auri has also chopped down 350 trees in the area in violation of a ban stipulated by local laws, she said.

A spokesman for Moscow's department for natural resources and environmental protection backed up Terra Auri and said the project "will not harm the surrounding nature."

The city spokesman said the project complied with city laws. On April 11, City Hall passed Law No. 12, amending the City Development Code. It allows city-funded daycare centers to be built in protected natural areas, according to the Russian Legal Information Agency. However, Terra Auri began construction in 2010.

One of the conditions of Terra Auri's construction permit stated that at least 60 percent of the project's territory must be planted with trees or grass. Yet only 30 percent of the territory meets this condition, Andreyeva said.

Commenting on the alleged violation of the conditions, Judge Irina Zubova said she was bad at mathematics, which is why she decided to go to law school, according to a tape of court proceedings.

Lefortovo activists will file an appeal with the Moscow City Court.

"Even if they build the kindergarten," Andreyeva said, "I will destroy it anyway."

LUKoil to Invest \$5.5Bln Abroad in 2013

REUTERS

OSLO — No. 2 crude producer LUKoil is vying to bid for rights to tap Norway's vast offshore oil riches jointly with Det norske, Lundin Petroleum and North Energy, a LUKoil official said Thursday.

Andrei Kuzyayev, head of LUKoil Overseas, also said LUKoil would increase investment in foreign projects next year by almost 60 percent, to \$5.5 billion.

LUKoil last year was prequalified as an operator in Norway's offshore areas, opening the door to licensing rounds that could add to the oil company's growing international portfolio. The company seeks to offset a decline in crude produc-

tion at its depleted oil fields in Siberia.

"In December, we will take part in the 22nd round (to bid) for development of hydrocarbon blocks jointly with two Norwegian companies Det norske (and) North Energy and Swedish company Lundin," Kuzyayev told reporters.

He said that LUKoil would create separate alliances with each of the companies to bid for licenses and that it had set aside \$300 million for possible Norwegian investments between 2014 and 2016.

Russian oil companies that lack state participation are barred from holding major licenses to drill in the country's own Arctic waters.

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Searching for Russia's Lindbergh 75 Years On

By Yury Salnikov

A memorial honoring Sigizmund Levanevsky, a Soviet pilot dubbed “the Russian Lindbergh” by the U.S. media, was unveiled at the Khronichev Space Center to commemorate the 75th anniversary of his unexplained death last month. For decades, Levanevsky has been a symbol of Russian-U.S. cooperation in the aerospace field.

Levanevsky and his crew of six went missing over Alaska as they attempted to make the first cargo-passenger flight from Moscow to Fairbanks, Alaska.

Fairbanks was chosen because, at a distance of 6,650 kilometers from Moscow, it fell within the range of the airplane that Levanevsky would fly — a

Sigizmund Levanevsky went missing over Alaska as he tried to set a record.

bomber that had been converted into an N-209 civilian aircraft. The aircraft's designers cautioned that the plane was still untested, but Soviet pilots had established several records on it and planned to demonstrate it to the Americans. A full year was needed to prepare for the flight, but the Soviet official in charge of the project, wanting to curry favor with Josef Stalin, gave only three months.

Unfortunately, under such a tight time frame, the flight crew never got a chance to jell. They made several short training flights, such as a 1,930-kilometer round-trip from Moscow to Melitopol, Ukraine, but didn't fly 30 hours or more nonstop to test the aircraft on distances comparable to the Moscow-Fairbanks route. Neither did they fly blind to test the plane in conditions of poor visibility.

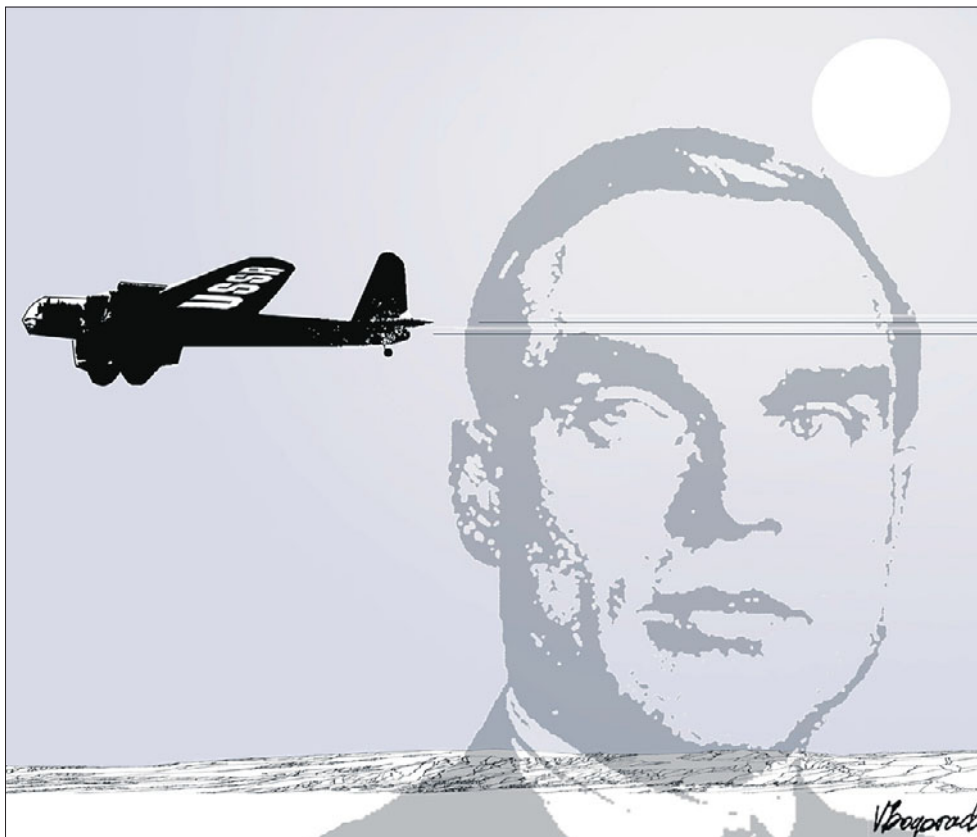
All of this made the crew jittery before the big flight. That is why, as the men set out on Aug. 12, 1937, the crew's radio operator said, half-jokingly, “We are flying to our deaths.”

In a first, Soviet authorities permitted foreign correspondents based in Moscow to watch the take-off. The New York Times correspondent posed a sensitive question to Levanevsky, asking: “My Levanevsky, do you feel lucky this time?”

“I think we were very lucky to be entrusted with this flight,” he responded, “and I believe that people will fly this route — with or without us.”

The four-propeller N-209 took off quickly — in only 35 seconds — but the far-right engine was trailing smoke. Engineers predicted that the engine would soon stop smoking, but 19 hours later, the last radio message received from the crew referred to the same problem: “The far-right engine has quit due to a problem with the oil system. ... Entering overcast skies. ... Elevation 4,600 meters. Will attempt a landing.”

The search began the next day. In Washing-



ton, Soviet Ambassador Konstantin Umansky contacted famed Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who offered to rent three airplanes to fly to Alaska and search along the 148th meridian, which Levanevsky had been following as the plane's route to Fairbanks.

By Aug. 14, two days after the departure from Moscow, three American and one Canadian team started combing the coastal islands of Alaska.

Stefansson, meanwhile, recruited several outstanding men for his search party, including experienced polar explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins. The Soviet Embassy rented a seaplane, and on Aug. 22, Wilkins and his team flew to Alaska and made five long-range flights toward the North Pole before the Arctic Ocean began to freeze over.

Finding nothing, they returned to New York, where they followed Stefansson's advice and purchased the most modern airplane available, the Lockheed Electra. The crew soon flew back to the Arctic.

Wilkins benefited from a string of clear lunar days with good visibility, but he found nothing. The icebreaker Krasin arrived at Point Barrow from Chukotka and delivered several short-range airplanes. The ship was also to act as a radio beacon for two seaplanes. However, the ice soon began closing off all water routes, and the Krasin was forced to return to Chukotka with the airplanes.

Many polar pilots conjectured that Levanevsky's aircraft iced over, went out of control and crashed. Polar radio operators and amateur radio buffs from a number of countries reported picking up an extremely faint distress call from Levanevsky's crew.

The crew had taken off from Moscow with a six-week supply of food, weapons for hunting, and sleeping bags. Just before takeoff, they also were given bags containing furs to present to the wives of prominent U.S. officials, a barrel of caviar and letters to mail in the United States. But for some reason, they left their emergency radio behind.

Levanevsky was only 35 years old at the time of his last flight, and his disappearance shook the world. A year after the tragic event, Soviet pilot Valery Chkalov recalled Levanevsky, saying, “You see, only death could keep him from his goal. The skies will make us pay dearly for a long time.” Chkalov himself died several months later while testing a new fighter plane.

In 1989, while working at the U.S. Library of Congress, I was reading old radio messages and found that in the fall of 1937, radio operator Stanley Morgan, who was based at Point Barrow, met with Eskimos from Oliktok Point, an area about 250 to 300 kilometers to the east.

Looking through binoculars, three Eskimos had seen a large flying machine about 15 kilometers north of the mainland and flying at low alti-

tude. It hit the water, pulled up and then crashed into the sea near the Jones Islands. It was a stormy, rainy evening.

The next day, the Eskimos sailed out to the scene of the accident and found an oil slick. One Eskimo, who was also a college student, took note of the incident in his diary. Radioman Morgan informed his superiors of what he had learned.

A year later, a clergyman from California, Homer Kellems, sailed into Barrow on his schooner. Morgan related the story he had heard from the Eskimos, and Kellems used the only tool available to search for the wreckage of the Soviet aircraft — a compass. At one point, a sailor noticed the compass pointing downward and informed Kellems, but he was unable to find anything.

The search for him could symbolize ties between the U.S. and Russia.

Ice soon began forming near the islands, and Kellems quickly sailed back to California. From there, he wrote a detailed letter describing his efforts to the Soviet Embassy, which in turn forwarded his letter and Morgan's radio message to the Foreign Affairs Commissariat, where the documents were placed in the archives.

Then World War II broke out, and the Levanevsky search was shelved.

In 2011, I had the opportunity to meet specialists at the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. In different years and with different teams, they had organized four short expeditions to the site where the airplane was thought to have crashed.

Using magnetometers and sonar from both sea and ice, they managed to scan 5 square kilometers of the 36 square kilometers in question.

Continuing the search will require additional resources, modern geophysical equipment and plenty of young geophysics volunteers. They will be looking for the airplane's four large 900-kilogram engines and other metal parts that probably remain intact, even after the passage of 75 years.

Today, when the United States and Russia are actively working to develop the Arctic shelf, the joint search for the aircraft flown by Sigizmund Levanevsky, a pioneer of the Arctic air route, could become a symbol of scientific collaboration between the two countries.

Only through the cooperative efforts of American, Canadian and Russian enthusiasts will it be possible to establish once and for all whether Levanevsky and his crew went down over Alaska.

Yury Salnikov is a member of the Russian Geographic Society and has made documentary films on aviation history and Arctic exploration.

T H E W O R D ' S W O R T H

English Speakers Tremble Less Than Russians

Cmpax u mpenem: fear and trembling

By Michele A. Berdy

I have a love-hate relationship with the word трепет (trembling, quivering).

I love that the word catches and magnifies the smallest tremble or quiver in nature, like трепет листьев (the trembling of leaves), трепет занавески (the rustling of the curtains), or the old-fashioned трепет ресниц (flutter of eyelashes). When it is used to describe a person's reaction to something, I love that it brings to the surface the most subtle emotions. It's as if the language is so attuned to the world that it notices the passing of the slightest breeze and almost imperceptible human reactions. Or it's as if Russians experience the most subtle emotions so intensely that they express them physically. Great stuff.

But I hate the word's ambiguity. People can tremble out of fear, awe, reverence, joy or tenderness. Sometimes it's clear what kind of trembling is going on because it's spelled out: Я испытывал радостный трепет (I trembled with joy.) But often I can't figure out why someone is quivering, quaking, trembling or shuddering. Russians always seem to know. Is it because they understand the linguis-

tic context better than I do, or they have broader historical knowledge, or they know more about the writer? I don't know, but it drives me nuts.

In any case, because English speakers tremble and quiver a lot less than Russian speakers, трепет is often translated by the emotion that causes it. Я видела, как мой тринадцатилетний сын спокойно и безо всякого трепета обращается с этой машиной (I saw how my 13-year-old son dealt with the car calmly, without a hint of trepidation.) Этот художник не вызывает во мне трепета (I'm not at all awed by that artist's work.) Мы поклоняемся с трепетом и благодарностью Кресту Господню (We bow down with reverence and gratitude before the holy cross.) Прекрасно помню, с каким трепетом я посмотрела этот мультфильм в первый раз (I remember how thrilled I was the first time I saw that animated film.) Эти солдаты вызывали трепет у противника (Those soldiers made the enemy quake in horror.) Старушка с трепетом относилась к этой маленькой, некрасивой собачке (The old woman was so tender with that ugly little dog.)

But what about this: Не испытывая никакого особого трепета, я пришёл в университет на Моховой. I came to the university on Mokho-

vaya Ulitsa without any particular ... what? Fear? Excitement? Awe? Intimidation? Delight? Apprehension? Beats me. If I couldn't get clarification from the rest of the text or an omniscient Russian speaker, I'd probably fudge it: I was pretty calm when I got into the university on Mokhovaya.

The verb to describe trembling is трепетать. Я трепетала при мысли о встрече с ним (I trembled at the thought of seeing him.) This shouldn't be confused with the verb трепать (and its perfective forms потрепать, истрепать), which has a variety of standard and slangy meanings. It can mean “cause something to tremble”: Ветер трепал листья (the wind fluttered the leaves). Or “bring disarray”: Он потрепал её волосы (He tousled her hair). Or “wear out”: Он за три месяца истрепал новые ботинки (He wore out his new boots in three months.) Жизнь его потрепала (Life wore him down.)

Трепать нервы is to get on someone's nerves. Трепать языком is to blab. Потрепать человека is to beat someone up — what I want to do whenever I see трепет in a text.

Michele A. Berdy, a Moscow-based translator and interpreter, is author of “The Russian Word's Worth” (Glas), a collection of her columns.

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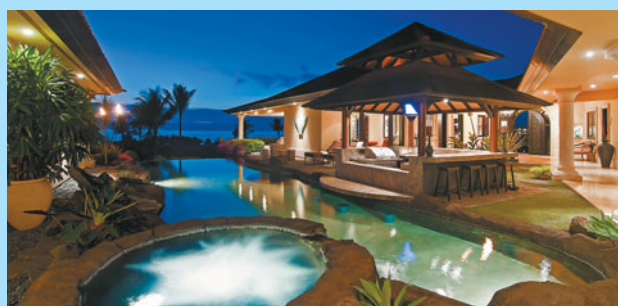
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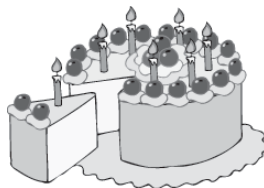
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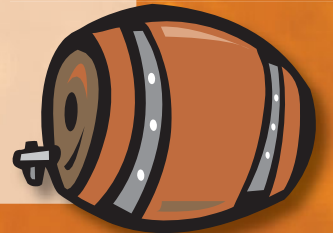
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The Moscow Times

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II ANNUAL VEDOMOSTI CUP SAILING REGATTA Aegean sea, September 8 – 14, 2012

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VLADIMIR FILONOV / MT

Juggling sports and school can be challenging, but this Russian mom taking her son to practice Thursday at the CSKA athletic complex was showing how it's done: bookbag in one hand, backpack with sports gear in the other.

TODAY'S CALENDAR PICKS

The Book of Letters (Pismovik): Marina Brusnikina's stage version of Mikhail Shishkin's romantic novel in letters. *Chekhov Moscow Art Theater small stage, 3 Kamergersky Pereulok. Metro Teatrnaya. (495) 229-8760. At 7 p.m.*

The Emigrants: Sergei Shchedrin's staging of Slawomir Mrozek's play about two lowly emigrants in the West. *Satirikon Theater, 8 Sheremetevskaya Ulitsa. Metro Marina Roshcha. (495) 602-6583. At 7 p.m.*

Mashina Vremeni: rock. *B2, 8 Bolshaya Sadovaya Ulitsa. Metro Mayakovskaya. (495) 650-9909. 9 p.m.*

Baba: intellectual post-modern alco chansons. *Kitaisky Lyotchik Dzhao Da, 25 Lubyansky Proyezd. Metro Kitai-Gorod. (495) 924-5611. At 10 p.m.*

Five Evenings (Pyat Vechevov): Viktor Ryzhakov's modern staging of Alexander Volodin's Thaw-era play about two former lovers who meet again. *Fomenko Studio New Stage small hall, 29 Naberezhnaya Tarasa Shevchenko. Metro Kutuzovskaya. (499) 249-1136. Sat. at 7 p.m.*

Killer Joe: Javor Gardev's staging of Tracy Letts' black comedy about a highly dysfunctional family and a corrupt policeman who enters their midst. *Theater of Nations, 3 Petrovsky Pereulok. Metro Chekhovskaya, Pushkinskaya. (495) 629-3739. Sat. at 7 p.m.*

Novaya Rossiya Symphony

Orchestra performs Mozart's Concerto for two claviers and orchestra, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 and Bykov's Fragments. Soloists **Yekaterina Derzhavina** and **Alexei Volodin** (both piano). *Conservatory Great Hall, 13 Bolshaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa. Metro Pushkinskaya, Biblioteka Imeni Lenina. (495) 629-9401. Sat. at 7 p.m.*

Happy Penguins Bluegrass Band: art rock, bluegrass, country, bossa nova. *Bilingua, 10 Krivokolenny Pereulok, Bldg. 5. Metro Chistiye Prudy. (495) 623-9660. Sat. at 9 p.m.*

Rodion Lyubensky: chansons, cabaret, punk. *Schwein, 12 Lefortovskiy Pereulok. Metro Baumanskaya. (495) 267-4504. Sat. at 10 p.m.*

Foreign-Language Movies

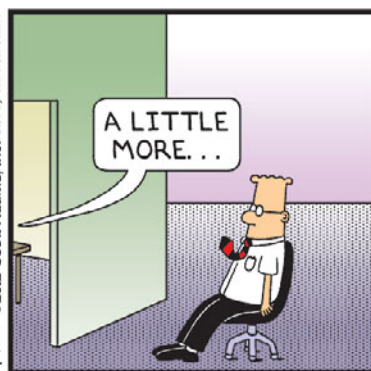
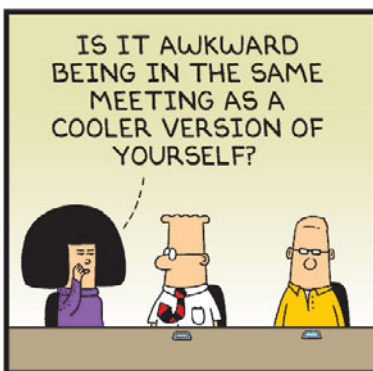
Frankenstein: Miller (2011): Danny Boyle's screen version of the play written by Nick Dear from Shelley's famous Gothic novel. Stars Jonny Lee Miller. *35MM, 47/24 Ulitsa Pokrovka. Metro Krasniye Vorota, Kurskaya. (495) 917-1883. Fri. at 7:30 p.m. In English; Russian subtitles.*

Un Bonheur n'arrive jamais seul (Lyubov s Prepyatstviyami, 2012): A French romantic comedy starring Gad Elmaleh, Sophie Marceau and Maurice Barthelémy. *Pioner, 21 Kutuzovskiy Prospekt. Metro Kutuzovskaya. (499) 240-5240. Fri. at 3:50 p.m., Sat. at 5:10 p.m. In French; Russian subtitles.*

DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS

For more Dilbert comics, see themoscowtimes.com/multimedia/dilbert



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION AND BUDDHISM: Sept. 9, 4 to 6 p.m. at Otkryty Mir, 18 Pavlovskaya Ulitsa. Metro Tulsckaya. Cost 250 rubles. All are welcome. No prior knowledge needed. All teaching in English. (Introductions also available in Russian.) For details, see buddharyana.ru or call +7 (903) 148-2255.

MOSCOW VILLAGE FETE: Sept. 15, 2-6 p.m., St Andrew's Anglican Church, 8 Voznesensky Pereulok. A British fete in Moscow. Fun, food, music, games and prizes for all. Proceeds to Taganka Children's Fund and St. Andrew's Church Restoration fund. Adults, 200 rubles; children, 100 rubles; children in fancy dress, free. Contact jmchoward@gmail.com

Moscow Red Square Dance Club is glad to invite you to join our first **SQUARE DANCE CLUB** in Moscow. We meet every Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. at the American Center, 1 Nikoloyamskaya Ulitsa. Metro Taganskaya. Entrance is free. If you are ready to take part, please send us a message by e-mail: alsu.alyshewa@rambler.ru

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLUB with native speakers. Meetings for Muscovites to practice general and business English, make new contacts or just relax before a new week. Every Sunday from 7 to 10 p.m. at Starbucks, 4 Novoslobodskaya Ulitsa. Just outside metro Novoslobodskaya. Call Christian +7 (916) 283-9629 or George +7 (903) 614-1695.

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Are you a **MOTHER NEW TO MOSCOW?** Join other international moms once a week for a coffee morning. Contact me if you are interested: stacey.weldonking@gmail.com.

For expats seeking to improve their Russian skills, join the **RUSSIAN CONVERSATION CLUB** at Le Pain Quotidien (32 Stary Arbat) at 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays. Metro Smolenskaya. All ages and levels welcome, from zero to hero! This event has been free of charge since its inception in 2009. E-mail Sophie: russianconversationclub@gmail.com.

MOSCOW LACROSSE CLUB practices and plays pickup games every Saturday. We welcome players of all experience levels. Extra sticks and pads are available. Contact David at +7 (916) 394-1248, ddiamonon@yahoo.com.

MOSCOW ART CLUB meetings and weekend programs for English-speaking families and children are held at Romanov Dvor, 4 Romanov Pereulok. For information and reservation, contact Margret Steinberg at moscowartclub@narod.ru, or visit moscowartclub.narod.ru.

CIVIC ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR THE ADAPTATION AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN OF FORCED MIGRANTS is looking for excellent English speakers to be volunteer teachers. If you can offer 1 1/2 hours in the early evening, contact Katya at 350-0427 or smkat@inbox.ru.



HOW TO SUBMIT ITEMS

Community Bulletin Board is published daily. Please submit notices of up to 50 words by 2 p.m. the day before publication. E-mail community@imedia.ru, call 234-3223 or fax 232-6529.

HIKERS, WALKERS AND NATURE-LOVERS meet every Sunday to hike in forests around Moscow. Information about meeting points, distances, etc. can be found at hike.narod.ru. We are an international community and welcome expats as well as short-term visitors.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. CATHERINE THE GREAT MARTYR IN THE FIELD, 60/2 Bolshaya Ordynka (M. Polyanka). Sat. (at 5 p.m.) and Sun. (at 10 a.m., confession at 9 a.m.) in Slavonic. In Eng. the last Sat. of the month. 959-1296, www.st-catherine.ru.

Moscow's English-speaking **JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER** invites you to visit our synagogue, programs, kosher meat and dairy restaurants, and to experience Moscow's vibrant Jewish life. 2nd Vysheslavtsev Pereulok, Bldg. 5A. Metro Marina Roshcha. For more info and Shabbat times, call 768-7392, or visit www.jewishmoscow.com.

WORD OF LIFE, Church of Christians of Evangelical Faith. Russian services with English translation Sat. at 7

p.m. and Sun. at 10 a.m., 1:30 and 5 p.m. Senior Pastor Matts-Ola Ishoel. 2 Ul. Pavla Korchagina. Metro Alexeyevskaya. 223-3035, www.wolrus.org.

ST. ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH MOSCOW, 8 Voznesensky Per. (M. Okhotny Ryad). Sun.: Holy Communion at 8:30 a.m., Sung Eucharist at 11 a.m. with creche for young children. Wed.: Holy Communion at 7 p.m. followed by a Bible study and prayer group. Call Fr. Simon at 629-0990. www.standrewsmoscow.org.

MOSCOW PROTESTANT CHAPLAINCY at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, 8 Voznesensky Per., Sun. at 3 p.m. Child care, Sunday school, youth group for 7th-12th graders. 143-3562.

MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, 9/3 Nagatinskaya Ul. (M. Nagatinskaya, Kolomenskaya). Bible study discussion groups on Sat. at 11:15 a.m. and church service at 12:15 p.m. in English and Russian. See www.moscowchurch.ru.

MOSCOW GOOD NEWS CHURCH meets for four services every Sun. (9 a.m., 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and youth service at 5 p.m.) at 2A Shchyolkovskoye Shosse, third floor (M. Cherkizovskaya). 727-1470, mgnc.org.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY offers English-language services at 11 a.m. at 10 Aviamotornaya Ulitsa (M. Aviamotornaya), in the Avia-Plaza building, entrance at Planeta Fitness, third floor. Sunday school for children 4 to 12 years old and a nursery for those under 3.

(929) 646-8721, www.icamoscow.org.

THE SANTERIA HOUSE OF MOSCOW (La Casa del Santo) is a nonsectarian association of worshippers of Santeria (Afro-Cuban religion). 22 Ul. Klimashkina (M. Ulitsa 1905 Goda). Contact Carlos A. Reyes at aoddun@yahoo.com or (963) 616-3498.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS holds English-language worship services at 9 a.m. on Sundays. 21 Ulitsa Moskvorechye M. Kantemirovskaya, Kashirskaya. +7 (964) 538-3725, www.lds.org.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, an evangelical church in Moscow, welcomes you to English services Sun. at 11:15 a.m. at 1 Nikoloyamskaya Ulitsa, third floor. (906) 093-4801, www.icfmoscow.org.

ST. PETER & PAUL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION, worship services Sun. at 11.30 a.m. 4 Bolshoi Ordynsky Pereulok, Vesta Hall 9. (495) 728-9648, www.peterpaul.ru

English Bible Study and Worship at **GOLGOTHA BAPTIST CHURCH**. 11 Ulitsa Leskova, M. Altufeyevo. Expats and students of English are welcome. Sun. at 2 p.m. in Room 2.6.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES: Cathedral of The Immaculate Conception, 27 Malaya Gruzinskaya Ulitsa (M. Krasnopresnenskaya), Catedra.ru; St. Louis des Francais, 12 Malaya Lubyanka (M. Lubyanka). Sunday Masses: in English 9:30 a.m. and in French 10:30 a.m. Archdiocese: 785-5434, katmos@katmos.ru.

How to Help Orphans to Adapt to Life Outside

Twenty thousand leave orphanages each year but few cope. In Moscow, a number of organizations are trying to help them survive.

By Howard Amos
THE MOSCOW TIMES

“Tinned meat, oil, milk, fish, liver, salt, laurel leaves, black peppercorns, carrots, garlic, dill, spring onions, parsley, dried fruit and cabbage,” read Olga Tikhomirova from a list entitled “Essential food to have at home,” part of a 33-page booklet distributed by the state to children leaving Russian orphanages.

Tikhomirova is the director of Step Up, a center providing supplementary education to 120 orphans incongruously housed in Moscow’s Anglican Church, a short walk from the Kremlin.

Other useful sections of the booklet include how to seek redress if you are fired from work, information about your passport (“a very important document that you must look after carefully and try not to lose”), and a page and a half on the dangers of AIDS.

Amused, Tikhomirova pointed out a lyrical introductory paragraph on what it means to be an adult: “You will learn how to look at yourself with irony,” it read.

Despite some superficial improvements, little has changed in the essence of Russia’s vast orphanage system, nor in post-orphanage care, since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

There are no tracking mechanisms for the 20,000 young adults leaving orphanages every year, and statistics suggest only about 10 percent successfully adapt to normal life. Alcoholism, drug addiction, criminality and suicide take the rest.

As philanthropic traditions become more entrenched, however, the number of organizations that are investing in long-term solutions continues to grow. Such charities use a variety of approaches to help foster social integration, from art projects to mentoring. Step Up focuses on education.

Gennady, 23, grew up in Moscow correctional orphanage number 80 and has been coming to Step Up since 2002. Step Up requested the surnames of its students not be published.

Since he completed Step Up’s educational programs, his visits, once or twice a week, are purely social. He now studies once a week at the Institute of World Economy and Information Technology and works as a logistics manager.

There are nine types of orphanages in the Russian state system, ranging from those for “normal” children, to orphanages for those diagnosed with “oligophrenia,” a severe form of devel-



VLADIMIR FILONOV / MT

A class at the Step Up center, held in Moscow’s Anglican church. Step Up is financed by local fund raising organizations and corporate sponsors.

opmental disability.

“The question is not whether it’s a good or a bad orphanage,” said Tikhomirova, who also works full-time as a high school history teacher. “They just don’t prepare children for the rest of their lives.”

Another Moscow-based charity, Big Change, also uses education to aid social integration. It is visited regularly by 60 young people, aged between 13 and 30.

Big Change head Irina Ryazanova decried an instinctive preference among volunteers and corporate donors for short-term solutions: particularly the material gifts that entrench cycles of dependency.

Present-giving to orphans and orphanages has increased in recent years and is currently at “monstrous” levels, she said.

A particularly clear manifestation of the “parasitism” that this type of philanthropy can help ingrain in those who grow up within the system is the abuse

of the free apartments provided by the state.

About 80 percent of the “orphanage graduates” who receive such accommodation do not use it for living: They move in with friends, renting out their apartments so they do not need to work.

“The issue is not with the ‘problems’ that these children have, but with the fact that they are not given any opportunities to resolve them,” said Anna Ulyanova, Step Up’s psychologist.

Evening classes at Step Up take place in the bowels of St. Andrew’s Church in battered rooms with broken lights and empty bookshelves.

A Russian language lesson visited by a Moscow Times reporter flickered between moments of silent concentration and moments of uproar.

Allowing discussion to occasionally swerve off into good-natured humor to break up the tedium of grammar, Mikhail Sverdlov, who has taught at Step Up for a decade, responded in kind. He told one student his answer was like “a basketball that rolled around and around the hoop before bouncing out.”

Most of the children who come to Step Up live in correctional orphanages, a middle bracket of orphanage straddling those with behavioral disorders and developmental delays, who are routinely educated only to the equivalent of the 5th grade of normal school. They are then assigned to technical colleges for compulsory vocational training, where most have little interest in the profession that they end up studying.

Olga, 21, one of the students in Sverdlov’s class, has attended Step Up for three years. “I have grown up a lot since I started coming here,” she said. “If I didn’t like it I would never have come back after the first time.”

The aim is to widen horizons, said psychologist Ulyanova. “We mitigate their estrangement, their mentality that they’re different and will remain different forever.”

But sometimes the opportunities can be too much, and the drop-out rates at

‘The issue is not with the problem these children have, but that they are not given any opportunities to resolve them.’



VLADIMIR FILONOV / MT

Charities say that long-term solutions are needed to foster integration.

all organizations working intensively with orphans are high.

“If you’ve spent your whole life being told what to do and then you land up in a ‘free’ place like this, people can lose themselves,” Ulyanova said.

The financial base of organizations like Step Up and Big Change has been widening in recent years as traditions of corporate giving and private charity spread in Russia. But similar set-ups are still extremely rare in regional cities because of the difficulty of finding funds.

Western companies working in Russia have long provided the bulk of Big Change’s approximately \$320,000 of annual funding, said Ryazanova, but now the balance is tipping towards Russian companies.

Step Up’s annual \$145,000 expenditure comes from fundraising foundations including Action for Russian Children (ARC) and the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), as well as corporate sponsors like Clifford Chance, Linklaters, Starbucks and Deloitte. Individual donations and one-off concerts, plays and fairs provide supplementary income.

The flow of money to charities developing long-term projects, however, is dwarfed by that pumped directly into the system of state institutions.

Companies often decline to name

exact amounts, but Sberbank, Russia’s biggest lender, supports 25 percent of Russia’s orphanages, while state-owned oil pipeline monopoly Transneft has said that paying higher dividends would mean a decrease in the aid it gives to orphans.

Some see positive changes in the system of state institutions.

“There is a big difference from 20 years ago,” said Maria Yeliseyeva, head of Maria’s Children, a charity that has been using art to engage orphans since 1992. “And community control will increase.”

But even Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has criticized orphanages as “more conducive to the isolation of children than their socialization,” and few expect any dramatic improvements.

“Russia’s orphanage system is huge and there is a lot of institutional inertia,” said Andrei Kortunov, president of the New Eurasian Foundation.

“Any attempt to dismantle it, even if it comes from a high level, will be almost certainly suicidal for its initiators.”

Step Up will host a charity clayshooting event Saturday to raise funds for its educational program. See vverh.ru or www.clayshoot.ru for more details. Tel. 8 (909) 950-0330.

HOW TO HELP

Material donations (especially clothes and toys) to orphanages or short-term volunteer contact with vulnerable children should be avoided if you are actually seeking to help those in Russia’s state institutions.

Many of the best orphan charities in Russia offer constructive ways in which volunteers can channel their energies and hold fundraising events, as well as receiving donations. They include:

Big Brothers Big Sisters
www.bbbsrussia.org
+7 (495) 679-8646
Director: Roman Sklotsky

Big Change
www.bigchange.ru
+7 (499) 613-3504
Director: Irina Ryazanova

Deti Nashi
www.detinashi.ru
+7 (495) 787-9970
Director: Varvara Penzova

Maria’s Children
www.mariaschildren.ru
+7 (499) 978-5450
Director: Maria Yeliseyeva

Step Up Orphan Opportunity Center
www.vverh.ru
+7 (495) 629-5117
Director: Olga Tikhomirova