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# Fuel Duel



BY CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER  
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A fight over the supply of nuclear fuel sounds like something from a futuristic sci-fi novel. But that is exactly what is unfolding here in Ukraine, as a Russian and an American company clash over the control of a market worth more than half a billion dollars per year.

About half of Ukraine's electricity is produced by nuclear power plants. Russia, the long-time monopoly supplier of nuclear fuel to Ukraine, was met with a challenger → 3

Steam rises from two nuclear power plant cooling towers in this thermal image. A battle between Russia and the U.S. is being waged in Ukraine to supply the country with nuclear fuel. (AFP)

## Gang rape sparks rage against police impunity, massive abuses

BY OLGA RUDENKO  
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The savage gang rape of a young woman by two suspected police lieutenants has sparked the ire of a southern Ukrainian town and has outraged a nation not wishing to tolerate official impunity and massive human rights abuses any longer.

It took mob rule teetering on the edge of mayhem in the town of Vradiyivka in Mykolaiv Oblast, where the heinous crime took place, to prevent a police cover up in tandem with local prosecutors.

Three high-ranking regional police officials and a local prosecutor have thus far been sacked. And the crime's three suspects, two local police officers and a civilian, are in custody. Odesa police investigators have been brought in to investigate to ensure objectivity, top cop Vitaliy Zakharchenko told parliament on July 3.

The three suspects face up to 12 years in prison if found guilty of gang rape.

Late on June 26, Iryna Krashkova, a 29-year-old grocery store cashier, was heading home from a nightclub when three men abducted her.

They drove her to a nearby forest, beat and robbed her. Two of them raped her and then left her bleeding in the forest. Suffering from skull fractures, cuts and bruises, Krashkova struggled to make it back to town by dawn.

Krashkova personally knew the attackers and identified them to the police. The problem was two of them were also men in uniform from the same town of 8,600 people: Lieutenant Dmytro Polishchuk and First Lieutenant Yevhen Dryzhak. The third man, who allegedly drove the car and beat her, was civilian Serhiy Ryabinenko. The three suspects are 25 to 30 years old.

The police triumphantly proclaimed the case was solved on June 28 when they arrested Ryabinenko and Polishchuk. Ryabinenko took the blame of beating and raping her all to himself.

Dryzhak, who allegedly raped the victim first, claimed to have an alibi. But Krashkova told local media that "This alibi is 100 percent fake."

"Dryzhak raped me first. Then he told Polishchuk, 'Want her? Take her,'" Krashkova recounted. → 3

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# Ukrainian climbers murdered in Pakistan laid to rest at home

BY SERGEY BOKHNYAK  
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Kharkiv Governor Mykhailo Dobkin and Mayor Gennadiy Kernes on June 30 attended the funerals for three murdered Ukrainian mountaineers, who were laid to rest in their hometown following a vicious terrorist act eight days earlier. In total, 11 people were brutally killed during the in Pakistan.

As a group of climbers rested at Nanga Parbat mountain base camp, Pakistan's second highest peak, 15 Islamic militants dressed in police uniforms attacked the group, ordered them to their knees and then shot them execution style. Eleven were killed, including 10 tourists and their guide. Among them were three Ukrainians, two Slovaks, two Chinese, one Lithuanian, a Nepalese, and one Chinese-American, as reported by the home secretary of Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan's northernmost region where the incident occurred.

"I'm not American. I am not American," Ernest Marksaitis, the Lithuanian climber was quoted by National Geographic as saying moments before the group was executed in an interview with a climber who survived.

The three Ukrainians – Ihor Sverhun, Badavi Kashaev, and Dmytro Konyaev – were all from Kharkiv, the nation's second largest city, and were members of the Kharkiv AlpClub. Their bodies were repatriated to Ukraine on June 28. Seven other Ukrainian members of the expedition who were higher up the mountain returned with them.

The senseless murders shocked the world, and because Nanga Parbat was thought to be among the safest places in the country for foreigners to visit. Travelers and members of climbing communities around the world expressed their condolences this week, as did the government of Pakistan.

"The government of Pakistan expresses its deep sense of shock and grief on this brutal act of terrorism, and extends its sympathy to the families of the victims," it said in a written statement on its website.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, this incident isn't expected to complicate bilateral relations with Pakistan. The Pakistani govern-



Pakistani pilots and Ukrainian soldiers carry the body of a Ukrainian mountaineer who was murdered by terrorists in Pakistan on June 23. There were three Ukrainians among 11 victims. Their bodies were repatriated on June 28. (UNIAN)

ment provided the airplane that brought the bodies of the victims home.

Ukraine's foreign ministry said it is still negotiating the issue of compensation for the families of the victims through its embassy in Islamabad.

Zafar Ikbal, acting Pakistani ambassador to Ukraine, also expressed doubt that bilateral relations will be affected by this. "Ukraine understands that Pakistan itself is a victim of terrorism," he told the Kyiv Post.

He confirmed that there have been talks of compensation, but no resolution has been reached. The Pakistani ambassador said he was in no position to comment on whether there will be compensation.

"In normal circumstances, a compensation means that we did something wrong, and we need to compensate," he explained.

Junud-e-Hafsa, a previously unknown faction of the Taliban, claimed responsibility for the killings. A spokesman for the group told the Associated Press, "by killing foreigners, we wanted to give a message to the world to play their role in bringing an end to the drone attacks."

Zafar said that the Pakistani government is conducting a thorough investigation with the help of locals in the Gilgit-Baltistan region where the group is believed to be hiding.

"There were even a few arrests, but it was not one central to this incident," he said.

If caught, the perpetrators could face the death penalty for their crimes, according to Pakistani law.

Gennadiy Kopeyka, chairman of the Kharkiv AlpClub, said that there were two groups of expeditions with Ukrainians in them: one with five Kharkiv residents, and one with five Kyivans. The expedition was supposed to be about a month long, reaching the 8,125-meter-high Nanga Parbat peak in the early dates of July. At the time of the attack, the expedition had stopped at the second base camp, where it was adjusting to the altitude and climate, as well as preparing for the next leg of the trip.

Kopeyka said this was the first time they had sent climbers on this specific path in nearly 16 years, but that he couldn't have anticipated anything like what happened.

"Mountain climbers are a source of revenue for the local population because they bring with them possible jobs for the locals, so there was never any enmity towards them in any regions or any mountains of the world," says Kopeyka.

When reached by telephone, the family of one of the victims declined to comment on the incident.

The surviving members of the group seem no longer to feel safe in Pakistan, despite the incident being the first of its kind in the region. In an interview with National Geographic, Aleksandra Dzik, a climber from the second expedition group which wasn't attacked, disclosed that even though they were aware of the risks in Pakistan, it never seemed to concern them as tourists.

"We believed that we are untouchable," she said. "Now we do not feel safe on the streets, but we try to behave normally anyway," because as she asserts, "it's the only thing we can do against terrorism. Not to give terrorists what they want—to make us hide."

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# US firm struggles to break Russia's nuclear fuel monopoly

→ **1** in 2011, when the American Westinghouse Electric Company got its foot in the door. It was contracted by state nuclear energy company Energoatom to provide fuel to three of the country's 15 reactors over five years in a deal experts say is worth more than \$100 million.

But Westinghouse hit a roadblock in 2012. During a scheduled maintenance at the Yuzhnoukrainsk nuclear power plant, located some 350 kilometers south of Kyiv, Ukraine's State Inspectorate for Nuclear Regulation found that Westinghouse's fuel assemblies (cases that support nuclear rods in the reactor) were damaged and unsuitable for future use.

Although the Americans took the brunt of public bashing for the flaw, Michael Kirst, Westinghouse vice president of customer relations and sales in the region, says that the problems lie with the design of fuel assemblies produced by its Russian competitor, the state-owned nuclear fuel maker TVEL, which has long held a monopoly in the Ukrainian fuel market.

Russian-made fuel assemblies are used alongside the American ones in three of Ukraine's reactors. Using a variety of suppliers is new for Ukraine, but it is common in most other countries that produce nuclear energy.

Westinghouse first brought fuel to test in Ukraine's Yuzhnoukrainsk reactor No. 3 in 2005. It worked as designed, according to the company, and at the time TVEL's assemblies were similar to Westinghouse's, allowing the two to operate seamlessly in Ukraine's reactors.

But shortly thereafter, Kirst said, TVEL changed its fuel assembly design, which did not fit well in Ukraine's reactors alongside those made by Westinghouse. He said the move was likely done to spite Westinghouse.

"Russia is doing everything to make it difficult for us (to operate in Ukraine)," he told the Kyiv Post.

In a written response to the Kyiv Post, TVEL deflected the accusation. "The process of improving the characteristics of Russian nuclear fuel does not align with our desire to somehow complicate someone's life," the company said. Ukraine's Energoatom provided no comment for the story.

Yet Kirst insists that his company's fuel assemblies "are being damaged because the Russian (TVEL) fuel is bending substantially" and colliding with other assemblies inside the reactor. "Westinghouse designs performed perfectly," he said.

The technical term used in the industry to describe the bending is "fuel bow," a certain amount of which is necessary.

"The fuel assembly should be flexible, but not bending in the manner in which TVEL's are," Kirst explained. "If you look at a photograph of (the TVEL fuel assembly), you'll see the space between is so narrow that (Westinghouse) must force its fuel assemblies into the reactor. I don't have to tell you that (with nuclear fuel assemblies) that is a bad idea. These things can't be forced."

Olga Kosharnaya, a leading researcher of energy security at the government-funded National Institute



Employees of Russian state-owned nuclear power company TVEL are captured at one of the stages of production of nuclear fuel at the machine building plant in the town of Elektrostal. TVEL supplies most of the fuel for Ukraine's 15 nuclear reactors. (TVEL)

for Strategic Studies in Ukraine, says problems with Russian-made fuel are actually common. In 2011 alone, 21 TVEL assemblies were discovered to be defective in Ukraine, she said.

The problems caused by this design

flaw included the depressurization of fuel elements, which led to the release of radioactive contamination in some cases, she said.

But TVEL insists that its "fuel element for many years has successfully,

safely and reliably operated at power plants in Ukraine, and has received no complaints and criticism from Energoatom and by the Ukrainian regulator."

But it was Westinghouse that was asked by the State Inspectorate for Nuclear Regulation to improve the design of its assemblies to ensure further delivery of its fuel to Energoatom's nuclear power plants.

Another agency, the State Financial Inspection of Ukraine, said the American-made fuel assemblies are flawed and have cost Energoatom Hr 114 million (about \$14 million). Energoatom officials on June 13 said they were preparing a lawsuit against Westinghouse in case it did not remedy the issue, according to an Interfax-Ukraine report.

At the end of June the Americans submitted a proposal to the State Inspectorate for Nuclear Regulation for improving the design of its fuel assemblies to be able to continue supplying fuel along with TVEL. But even if the proposals are accepted, Westinghouse won't be out of the woods yet.

Ildar Gazizullin, an energy policy specialist and economic analyst at the Ukrainian Institute for Public Policy, says that he has seen "a lot of disinformation and (misuse of facts) around this issue."

"Russia is concerned with protecting its markets in Central Europe and has made attempts to keep competitors out," he said.

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# Rape, cover-up anger nation

→ **1** District prosecutor Serhiy Mochalko told the local media that Dryzhak was on duty at the local police station the night of the attack, as evidenced by surveillance cameras.

This is when riots started in the town. Outraged over what it perceived to be a cover up by a friendly prosecutor, a crowd of about 100 people initially rallied outside the court building in Vradiyivka to demand justice. The protest grew tenfold (by some accounts) the following day when a mob stormed the police station, pushing through gates, smashing doors and breaking windows while demanding Dryzhak's arrest.

According to some media reports, the police used tear gas in a failed attempt to disperse the crowd. Police officials denied this, however. At least four people sustained injuries during the riots.

The following day Dryzhak was detained. His alibi appeared to fall apart when another prosecutor from the same district office admitted that there was no video footage proving that he was at the station on the night of June 26.

"The camera recorded Dryzhak at 11 p.m. (on June 26) and then at 6 a.m.," said Anatoliy Titus, a Mykolaiv regional department prosecutor, on July 3. One of Dryzhak's colleagues turned off the lights (for a period of) time, and the video footage is blank as a result.

"In theory, Dryzhak could have left the station," said Titus.

Two of the suspects turned out to



Iryna Krashkova, 29, before and after her rape and beating on June 26. Two police officers and a civilian are suspected of abducting, and then later beating and gang-raping her in Mykolaiv Oblast. The suspects are currently in custody and could face up to 12 years in prison. ([vk.com](http://vk.com), [niknews.mk.ua](http://niknews.mk.ua))

have friends and relatives in high places. Polishchuk is the nephew of the prosecutor of one of the districts of Mykolaiv, a regional center.

Also, Mykolaiv human rights activist Elena Kabashnaya claimed that Dryzhak was the godson to General

Valentyn Parseniuk, head of Mykolaiv Oblast police. He was dismissed from his job on July 2, the day following mass riots in Vradiyivka.

The town's top policeman and prosecutor were also dismissed, and its deputy chief of police was arrested and charged

with abuse of power that involved violence after he was discovered to have tampered with the crime report.

Prosecutors also discovered that Oksana Rostova, the chief doctor of Vradiyivka's city hospital, which treated the victim after the crime, falsi-



fied medical reports about Krashkova's condition.

The victim's injuries were called "light." The report also indicated that Krashkova had a "promiscuous lifestyle." According to Prestupnosti.Net, a Mykolaiv criminal news outlet, Rostova is the wife of Vitaliy Rostov, head of the Vradiyivka State Administration and local Party of Regions branch.

On July 4, President Viktor Yanukovich demanded "some fundamental staff decisions (within the interior ministry)."

"I won't tolerate impunity, especially when it's about those who must defend people, not violate the law," he said in an official statement, which observers said will help to investigate the crime more thoroughly.

Meanwhile, Krashkovska's gang rape has helped to uncover details of another case in the same town. A 15-year-old girl was raped and murdered in Vradiyivka in 2011. Her case remains unsolved despite being under the interior ministry's personal control.

Also, Krashkova is the second high-profile rape victim in Mykolaiv Oblast in 16 months. Last year, the nation was incensed by the gang-rape of 18-year-old Oksana Makar. She was set on fire and soon died of her wounds in the hospital. Three rapists, some of them relatives of authoritative local officials, were sentenced to life, 15 and 14 years in prison.

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## Editorials

## Thugs in uniforms

This and last week the public saw just how much Ukraine's overstuffed, corrupt and incompetent police force needs to change to uproot its rotten, Soviet core. It safeguards government authority, first and foremost, as it commits massive human rights abuses with impunity before civilians in need of protection.

On June 26 two militia lieutenants (they're not called the police) allegedly gang-raped and beat a young woman to a pulp in a Mykolaiv Oblast township. The victim required multiple operations and remains in critical condition. Then the police, aided by their brethren – local prosecutors – proceeded to cover up the heinous crime. They could have succeeded had it not been for escalating mob rule that engulfed the town of 8,500.

Then, on July 2, the nation's top cop Vitaliy Zakharchenko told parliament that he had dismissed two high-ranking regional police chiefs in Mykolaiv, and pleaded for more money to incentivize police work through salary increases and other benefits. This was his proposed solution for how massive problems in the police should be handled.

No, Mr. Zakharchenko. For a real break with Soviet-style policing to take place, you must resign, along with the vast majority of your cohorts who were cut from the same cloth of debased immorality and whose sole mission is to defend government authority and personal comfort.

You should be replaced by the standards of rule of law and civility with which Western police forces live and breathe every day. And your resignation should be done honorably in the name of Ukraine's European integration, whose end goal is to thoroughly cleanse the police force of every vile Soviet fiber.

Only with newly trained personnel re-named as a police force devoted to "serving and protecting" the public – not the government – can this nation put an end to the mistreatment and tortures of detainees, brutal rapes, cases of framing, and other abuses.

And should Zakharchenko require additional evidence, he should consult the Kharkiv Institute for Social Research. Its recent study found that more than half of 15,000 respondents believe police work is "ineffective." The same study said that 65 percent of those who had been victims of a crime were dissatisfied with the way their case was handled.

He should furthermore look no further than a Razumkov Center poll from March, which found that only 9 percent of the nation "fully supports" police activity. That does not include the combined number of people wearing the uniform and their relatives.

## End the monopoly

Russia has held a virtual monopoly on Ukraine's nuclear fuel market for decades. Recently, though, an American company managed to sneak in and snatch a bite of the pie, much to the chagrin of the Russians. But after being wrongly accused by Ukrainian regulators of producing faulty fuel assemblies, Westinghouse Electric Company is finding that competing in the former Soviet Union is a dirty game.

Ukraine, afraid to anger its former ruler and monopoly supplier of nuclear fuel and gas, instead of standing up for the company helping to ease its dependence on Russia, is again bowing to its bully to the northeast.

The trouble began when Ukraine's State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate in 2012 said it found Westinghouse nuclear fuel assemblies in three reactors here to be faulty, a claim the American company disputes. The real problem, it says, are the fuel assemblies of the Russian state-owned nuclear power company TVEL, which according to Westinghouse bend and sway when placed in the reactors so much that they're damaging the American assemblies around them.

Many experts – including at least one from a Ukrainian government-funded think tank – say TVEL's fuel simply doesn't compare to the quality of the American-made fuel and that in 21 cases last year alone the Russian assemblies even leaked radiation.

Instead of letting Russia strong-arm it in another energy sector, Ukraine needs to take the reins. Already Russia is crying foul that Ukraine is re-importing the natural gas it supplies to Europe from Russia at cheaper prices. And it is aggressively pursuing the South Stream project to circumvent Ukraine and weaken it as a strategic geopolitical player.

Indeed, Russia has never taken the trouble to veil too much that it aims to weaken, divide and make Ukraine subservient to it. But Ukraine needs to persist in cutting the umbilical cord.

One place Ukraine can start is by constructing a nuclear fuel facility here that will give the opportunity for the country to produce enough fuel on its own to power 13 of its 15 reactors. The catch? Ukraine awarded the project to TVEL, leaving it again at the mercy of Russia. Worse yet, TVEL will own just less than half of the plant, assuming it's ever completed. Westinghouse's bid would have allowed Ukraine to own it outright.

Ukraine should look elsewhere for partners, including partners in nuclear projects – and we can't care less whether the companies are French, American or Japanese. The only thing we know for sure is that the nation would benefit from diluting Russia's monopolies.



**NEWS ITEM:** President Viktor Yanukovich has been the butt of many jokes in the past couple of weeks because of the visitors he has been receiving. On June 26, he received a Hawaiian princess in Kyiv and the chief of a Native American tribe, while on July 2 he met with Britain's Prince Michael of Kent. The ongoing joke is that the president meets with royalty more often than he does with top members of the political opposition. His last meeting with the leader of *Batkivshchyna* took place on June 19. The other two opposition leaders, Vitaliy Klitschko and Oleh Tyahnybok, refused to join their colleague from the opposition because the president insisted on a meeting at his office.

## Ukraine's young and poor are left to survive on their own



YAROSLAV HRYTSAK

A new ghost is wandering the world: the ghost of the precariat. Two years ago the phantom manifested itself in Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring movements. For a few weeks it has been resisting Turkish authorities, and for the last few days it has been the backbone of mass protests in Brazil.

The phenomenon first received media attention in 2004. Why so late? Well, its center is a ghost-like class of people. It's neither the proletariat nor the middle class; it's somewhere in between.

Karl Marx, the ideologist of Communism, once wrote about the "absolute impoverishment of the proletariat." For the precariat, on the other hand, relative poverty is an attribute. Its representatives are not dying from hunger, but they live in worse conditions than those who hold a permanent job. They themselves do not have one, and are unlikely to obtain one. In a lifetime, they generally go through 30 employers.

The term "precariat" comes from the Latin "precarious," which has two meanings, both of which are fit to describe this group. The first describes the state of begging, obtaining something based on mercy. And the second suggests a state that is temporary, unreliable and transitioning.

So, the precariat are people who live on temporary earnings, and when they have none at all, they live on the mercy of their parents, relatives, partners or friends. To be more precise, they're not just "people," they are "young people."

As sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman writes: tell me your year of birth, and I will tell you what class you belong to. The precariat are people who were born in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, the unemployment rate of people aged 15 to 19 is 12.6 percent, equivalent to approximately 74 million people.

The situation is worst in the Middle East and North Africa, with a rate of 24 percent. The best-off are those in East Asia, at 10 percent, while the European Union is somewhere in the middle with a rate of 18 percent.

But these statistics are significantly underestimated. Unemployment is only counted among those who are not enrolled in school. However, modern universities, with the exception of the most expensive ones, are currently functioning as babysitters, harboring young people from the labor market.

Here in Ukraine, the word "precariat" is rarely used. It has no entry in the Ukrainian Wikipedia, although the German, Polish and Russian versions have such an entry.

Ukraine often lags on certain things. But that does not mean that these phenomena bypass us. Youth unemployment among Ukrainians is at 20 percent, excluding those who are studying.

Few people know that Ukraine is placed among the top 10 nations in the world for university enrollment. I suppose that for many of them, this may be because the university is a place to hide from unemployment on their parents' money.

What makes it worse for Ukrainian students is that they're paying for a defective product – poor quality education that reduces their chances of employment.

There is a simple test to check the quality of education: education is what remains when you have forgotten everything else. All Ukrainian students have to study a foreign language, most commonly English. To test them, try to talk to a university graduate in English. It's pretty clear what the result will be – not very good.

It can't be any other way at the moment. Just look at the number of mistakes our president makes in writing, or who our education minister is. Removing both from power is paramount for the future of a whole generation.

However, there isn't a single political party in Ukraine that caters to the precariat. It's clear why the Party of Regions doesn't: when they think about children, it's their own they have in mind – specifically, how to make them millionaires or extract them from the paws of investigators or courts when they have beaten, run over or killed someone.

What is surprising is the opposition's lack of input on the matter. It continues to rely on national democratic and other old-fashioned party benchmarks – and this is not what the youth is interested in.

The problem is not that the youth lacks patriotism. Sociological studies show that the younger a Ukrainian is, the more they consider themselves tied to the Ukrainian tradition, the more they support Ukrainian independence and the more they are ready to go to war for Ukraine, should the need arise.

The precariat in general, and the Ukrainian precariat in particular, is not beyond politics. It's beyond the current state of politics. These people's slogan, be they in New York, Istanbul or Rio, is: we need to change the way of living, not the politics.

Yaroslav Hrytsak is a Lviv-based historian. This op-ed was first published in *Krayina* magazine and is reprinted with the author's permission.

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# FT, Forbes harm Ukrainian journalists by inking iffy deals



ZENON ZAWADA

It's tough enough being a journalist in President Viktor Yanukovich's Ukraine, with the heightened threat of being censored, getting attacked by thugs or losing one's job as your company is traded around like a used car.

Reporters Without Borders stated in May that "chronically high levels of violence against journalists hit a new peak, while impunity remained total" under the current government. Unfortunately, Western publishers haven't been helping our cause.

In late December, reports of a syndication agreement surfaced between the London-based Financial Times and a daily business newspaper, Kapital, which emerged on the Ukrainian market in April.

Already then, media watchdogs said that Kapital is controlled by Serhiy Arbuzov, the first deputy prime minister of Ukraine. He denied ownership ties in March.

Financial Times Head of Communications Kristina Eriksson informed me this week that her company was assured by Kapital's owner, Oleg Svirko, that there are no undisclosed third parties with a financial interest or control of the newspaper.

Yet local editors and reporters know better, being aware of the labyrinths of opaque ownership structures that often extend overseas.

In the case of Kapital, the media watchdog Telekritika collected enough evidence to suppose that a team of behind-the-scenes spinsters and PR specialists are controlling that publication without any legally established links, thus enabling Svirko

to make the claim that no third parties are involved. Also consider that the Ukrainian market lost two business dailies last year because of the corroded investment climate. Only a wealthy investor – protected by tight government ties – would bother entering this sorry market.

Given this market's weakness, the motivation to launch a business daily (where those more established have failed) would not be to report on news, but to offer the state spin on the news.

Examples of that spin abound in the issues of Kapital, whose sophisticated content (including news on business deals, the latest gadgets and arts performances) otherwise serves as slick packaging for the state propaganda at its very core.

Many Kapital articles hype state plans for grandiose projects that are traditionally rarely fulfilled. They proclaim huge economic gains from projects that have yet to be launched, without getting verification for such estimates from independent analysts.

Articles frequently surface that highlight the advantages of the state's increasingly desperate initiatives of creating revenue and collecting taxes and fees. Its reporters have unparalleled access to exclusive information that is often provided by anonymous state officials.

Therefore, the Financial Times either hasn't done its homework, or is willing to turn a blind eye to individual rights abuses. The newspaper shouldn't have signed a syndication agreement without performing thorough due diligence on its affiliated publication's links to state officials.

Kapital's publishers have placed the world renown and respected FT logo on the top fold of its front page. In allowing this, the FT has been, in essence, offering its stamp of approval to the spin vehicle allegedly produced by Arbuzov and his government, which is recognized by the EU as engaging in persecution against the opposition.

An increasing number of EU leaders have labeled the administration of President Yanukovich as authoritarian, including former European Parliament Chair Hans-Gert Pottering and Andreas Gross, the 2012 Ukraine election mission chair of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Yet two weeks ago, another Western publication has allowed itself to get mixed up with this authoritarian government.

On June 20, a company called VETEK announced it would acquire, among other publications, Forbes Ukraine. VETEK is owned by the 27-year-old tycoon Serhiy Kurchenko, another sudden newcomer to the media business. He is widely recognized as simply being a front, as world boxing champion turned opposition lawmaker Vitali Klitschko recently alleged. Kurchenko, of course, denies it.

Forbes' chief editor, Volodymyr Fedorin, immediately announced he will resign on Oct. 1, citing his conviction that Kurchenko is representing the state interest in turning Forbes into its mouthpiece. After all, one of Kurchenko's companies threatened to sue Forbes last year for an investigative article addressing alleged corruption.

Yet Miguel Forbes, who leads Forbes' licensing division in New York, issued a statement welcoming the sale, stating he's happy about the new possibilities it creates.

In response to my follow-up inquiry, a Forbes spokesperson sent me a statement saying the new owners are fully aware of the company's policy that any breach of editorial independence is grounds for terminating the license. They will create an "independent editorial oversight board" for Forbes Ukraine to ensure editorial integrity.

In a similar gesture, seller Boris Lozhkin announced a charter to uphold editorial inde-

pendence and journalistic ethical standards. Yet Ukrainian journalists understand that such promises aren't trustworthy.

If the leaders of the Western world are having difficulty convincing the Yanukovich administration to play fair and release former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, then the ability of editorial board members and journalists to exercise some influence on these unaccountable oligarchs is even more doubtful.

Regardless of whether editorial standards upheld, Forbes should have not allowed itself to get involved in a company controlled (allegedly) by state officials. The FT syndication agreement and the Forbes sale to a state-linked company raise the ethical issue of whether Western publications, which enjoy the rule of law and freedom of the press, have a moral obligation to defend those same Western institutions in the countries in which they work.

Among the consequences of the moral relativism that has engulfed Western societies is that businessmen have ignored their moral obligations abroad and have instead fully deferred to that other Western value – profit margins.

It's up to those of us defending Western values in Ukraine to convince the London-based managers of FT to abandon its syndication agreement with Kapital until its owners are determined to be entirely independent of the government and disclose their ultimate owner(s).

Forbes management in New York needs to be convinced of canceling its licensing agreement with any company until its owners are likewise determined to be independent.

We can make moral arguments or use the language they seem to understand a lot better: earnings figures. I'm canceling my subscription to Forbes Ukraine this week.

Zenon Zawada is a former chief editor of the Kyiv Post.

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## KYIV KIDS TO COMPETE IN DANONE NATIONS CUP FINALS



On May 30, a team from Kyiv secondary school 329 defeated competitors from Mariupol to win the Ukrainian title in the global Danone Nations Cup youth football tournament. The squad, captained by Vladyslav Vanat and coached by Anatoliy Dobryvechir, will head to London on September 7 to test their skill against young athletes from around the world.

At the conclusion of the tournament, to be held this year at Wembley Stadium professional football star Zinedine Zidane will present the Danone Nations Cup to the champions.

Danone Nations Cup has been a stepping stone to many professional football careers worldwide. Its alumni include RSD Mallorca player Giovanni dos Santos (DNC 2001), Luuk de Jong of FC Borussia Mönchengladbach (DNC 2001), Aleksandar Dragovic of FC Basel (DNC 2003), and Phil Jones of Manchester United FC (DNC 2003).

In Ukraine, DNC is played at amateur level with a focus on promoting healthy lifestyle and ambition, rather than raising professional footballers. Nevertheless, the country's track record is excellent. In 2000, Ukrainian kids made it to TOP 3, while in 2009 they ranked #5, competing against teams from 30–40 countries. Today, some of the Ukrainian alumni play football professionally in national football clubs, such as Yuriy Brovchenko of FC Oleksandriya, Oleksiy Bashakov of FC Kremin, Oleksiy Larionov of FC Poltava.



"This year, the championship was more than just a sporting event, it was a family celebration," said Olexandr Kadenko, vice-president of the Ukrainian Amateur Football Association. "Never in the history of Spartak stadium have so many happy and active kids and their parents gathered."

Kadenko said that "the Kyiv team showed great teamwork and excellent technique. I wish them much success while representing Ukraine at the international level."

Vladyslav Vanat, the team captain, said that winning the right to represent

Ukraine was "like a dream come true."

"It took a lot of hard work to achieve our goal: we trained three times a week and gathered every day after classes to plan our tactics," he said. "Now, we believe that we can fight and win at Wembley."

"Danone has supported youth football in Ukraine for the past decade, helping over 200,000 kids from 10 000 schools believe in their dreams of competing in the world's best stadiums," said Danone Ukraine General Manager Dario Marchetti. "The Danone Nations Cup is just one way we show our commitment to



youth and to healthy lifestyles. A healthy life relies on a balanced diet and regular exercise. Together, we can spread the message of sports and healthy habits to the next generation. I will be rooting for the Ukrainian team in London!"

The Danone Nations Cup tournament is a centerpiece of the company's international commitment to health and fitness. The Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sport, the Ukrainian Amateur Football Association, Adidas and Gala Radio are Danone's partners in promoting Danone Nations Cup in Ukraine.



# World in Ukraine

**Editor's Note:** World in Ukraine takes a look at Ukraine's bilateral relations with different nations. To sponsor this news feature, please contact the Kyiv Post's sales team at [advertising@kyivpost.com](mailto:advertising@kyivpost.com) or call 591-7788.

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# A taste of America: Some US fast food chains brave it into Ukraine

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO  
GRYTSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

After more than a decade of McDonald's uncontested dominance in the nation's fast food industry, other giants are moving in to satisfy the appetites and dip into the pockets of Ukrainian consumers.

The first to follow was Michigan-based Domino's Pizza in October 2010, which has grown to 15 locations. Next, in December 2012 Kentucky's KFC cut the ribbon. And Texas Chicken and Cinnabon, both headquartered in Atlanta, opened their doors in May.

Not far behind is Subway, the world's largest sandwich maker, which is slated to open its first Ukrainian unit by the end of this year.

The arrival of these food chains, combined with the new large-scale projects of U.S.-based energy giants, could bring a new wave of American investment to Ukraine. Representing the world's largest economy, U.S. investments into Ukraine totaled a mere \$902 million by the end of 2010, the latest figure available from the U.S. Embassy.

Experts and market players say Ukraine is being targeted for expansion in spite of its unfavorable investment climate. They say American quick service chains are hungry for new markets because they are reaching saturation points in neighboring countries.

"The (economic) climate I don't think has changed. If anything is better I think more people and more Western brands are here, which is better for us," John Owen, Subway Russia Service Company president said in a telephone interview.

"I think the market is exciting; it's a fantastic opportunity for us," he says.

Ukraine's restaurant industry is growing annually by 15-20 percent, according to market researcher Pro-Consulting. The market value was about \$3 billion in 2012.

Oleksandr Sokolov, head of the analytical department at Pro-Consulting, says that fast food accounts for a quarter of that market, or about \$750 million.

Sokolov believes that consumption of fast food grew in Ukraine as the nation crawled out of the economic downturn of 2008-2009. He believed that in Kyiv the demand is only met



by 50 to 60 percent, while in other regions the figure is even lower – about 30 percent.

Andriy Lukyanenko, senior director of business development at McDonald's Ukraine, says that the nation's fast food market has the potential to grow 100 percent in just five years.

"So it's not strange that the new players come here," he said.

For years, fast food chains shunned the Ukrainian market, focusing rather on Poland and Russia with the exception of McDonald's, which came to Ukraine in 1997. Ukraine's smaller neighbors, Romania and Hungary, with populations just a fraction of Ukraine's

45 million, experienced a more impressive presence of fast food brands.

"The companies were assessing the transparency of the business and economic climate in the country, and Ukraine was seriously losing in comparison to its neighbors, and so it wasn't seen as attractive," Sokolov said. "But things have changed after the other markets got saturated."

Jorge Zukoski, President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine, says that due to issues like weak rule of law and contract sanctity, successful franchising projects have been few and far between.

McDonald's engaged the Ukrainian

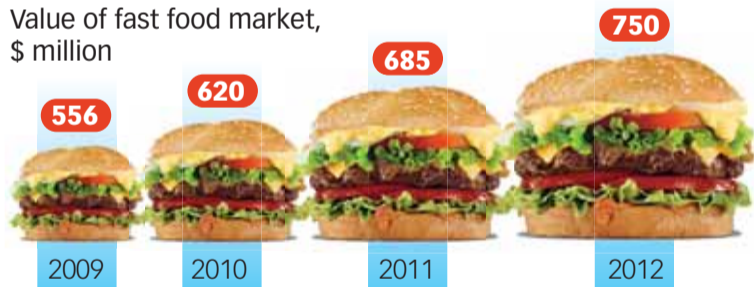
market directly with company-owned units, while most other food brands operate as franchises, said Andriy Kryvonos, head of the Ukrainian Franchising Association.

McDonald's is an impressive case study for newcomers, though. Seven out of its 75 Ukrainian restaurants placed in the top 100 in the world by number of visitors in 2012. The unit located near the Kyiv train station was the second most visited McDonald's in the world.

Lukyanenko said that that five new McDonald's restaurants and three new McCafes will open in 2013. However, he does not think that there →

## Ukraine's fast food market

Value of fast food market, \$ million



Source: Pro-Consulting company estimations

## → On the move

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**ANDRIY MOROZ** was promoted on July 1, 2013 to an Associate Partner at Lavrynovych & Partners Law Firm. In his new role he will be responsible for legal work in the sphere of bankruptcy, competition and anti-trust, litigation and international arbitration, and legal support of M&A deals.

Andriy joined Lavrynovych & Partners as an Associate in 2007. He has significant experience in developing a line of judicial defense in corporate disputes, exercising remedies, taking advance measures, and representing Clients' interests in the Ukrainian courts of all levels. Among the clients to whom Andriy has provided legal support are Kyivstar, Vaderstad, VS Energy International, Belhrancorm-Poltavshchyna, WESTA ISIC, and Ukragroalliance.

Andriy Moroz graduated from Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University, and holds a Master of Laws degree. Andriy is a member of the Ukrainian Bar Association.

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## Few US fast food chains test business climate in Ukraine

→6 will be many new competitors arriving "over a new wave of economic crisis and the economic situation inside Ukraine."

Industry experts say that the other reason for the trickling pace of new arrivals is the time needed to find a partner who could meet the demands of the brand and be ready to pay from \$700,000 to \$1 million for the franchise.

"We're not talking about the kiosk business on the street, but about a systematic approach. It requires much more time," said Kryvonos of the Ukrainian Franchising Association. He forecasts an increase in the number of negotiations in the short term, but not necessarily new restaurants and brands – despite the fact that they are anticipated by Ukrainians.

A January poll by GFK-Ukraine in big cities showed that 50 percent of people want Pizza Hut here, almost 40 percent want to sip Starbucks Coffee and about 39 percent long for Burger King.

But Zukoski says they will have to do without – at least for now.

"Even though Ukraine is a large market with a growing consumer base and changing consumption patterns in relation to quick service restaurants, we will not see a rapid increase in market presence until international franchisers will feel comfortable that they can protect their global brand integrity in Ukraine."

*Kyiv Post staff writer Oksana Grytsenko can be reached at grytsenko@kyivpost.com*

## Expats to Watch

# National Guardsman catches the Ukraine bug, lands dream job here

BY ANNA SHAMANSKA  
ANNA.SHAMANSKA@GMAIL.COM

Unbeknown to Major Sven Olson, his journey to Ukraine began about 27 years ago when he enlisted in the U.S. National Guard. That fateful decision would eventually land him a position as a representative of the California National Guard at the U.S. embassy in Ukraine.

A lightning bolt of love struck when the native Montanan first visited two years prior to his appointment in 2010. He would come back and visit the friends he had made here, eventually getting married to a local woman.

"It was a dream come true," Olson said of gladly accepting the position of Bilateral Affairs Officer.

And this reality has provided a bundle of experiences.

"In one lifetime, to be in the Cold War for so many years (with former Soviet countries), and now to be friends and to work together on a daily basis is not even shocking, but surreal," reflected Olson.

Olsen's arrival closely coincided with the inauguration of President Viktor Yanukovich, who was quick to start shifting the policies of the previous administration. Geopolitically, Ukraine adopted a non-aligned status as its defense doctrine. However, in Olson's personal opinion, this hasn't

### Sven Olson

Age: 49

Citizenship: American

Position: Bilateral Affairs Officer of the U.S. embassy

Years in country: 3

Tips for succeeding in Ukraine:

"Don't give up and be patient. It's easy to become impatient and frustrated with the processes in the country, but it's worth it."



changed America's commitment to helping Ukraine modernize and transform its armed forces.

"Money has decreased for both countries, but I have remained very busy. Just my office alone hosts about a hundred events each year, exchanging service members," he added.

In his capacity, Olson facilitates cooperation between the U.S. military and Ukrainian armed forces.

"We do that by taking Ukrainians to the U.S. or Europe and host them on U.S. military bases and vice versa," he said. "We teach seminars, workshops and assist Ukraine in achieving its goals for improving the armed forces."

Olson's other responsibility is managing the Department of the Defense Humanitarian Assistance Program.

"The program allows me to rebuild

schools, orphanages, clinics with new interiors, exteriors, equipment, furniture, appliances and so forth," he said.

Although Olson feels at home in Kyiv, he believes there's room for improvement. He names the bureaucratic phenomenon of stamping documents as an example.

"Nothing is official until it's stamped, which is shocking because it's 2013 and there is this thing called the Internet," he said. "In some respect it feels like Ukraine is missing that part of reality because of stamps."

But it's not stamps that upset Olson the most.

"My biggest disappointment would be the emotionless metro-phase that people get into when they go from point A to point B on public transportation," he said.

And he is doing his best to mitigate that. "From the very beginning I felt that it was my job to change that, to make people laugh. And since then I had entire metro cars singing, dancing, laughing, playing and blowing bubbles."

In his spare time Olson takes in-country journeys or ventures into Europe, either with his wife or on work-related trips. He often dines in a few local restaurants. His current favorite is Grill do Brasil. He also became a fan of sushi after arriving in Ukraine.

"I never had sushi before I came here. I finally tried it, and I love sushi now," he said.

Although short, the time spent in Ukraine seems to have made a great impact on Olson's life.

"It's been an amazing three years. I've been able to travel all across Ukraine. I have a gazillion friends. I met and fell in love with my wife and we have a stepdaughter, who I'm adopting."

As much as he enjoys living in Kyiv, Olson's deployment ends in November. He'll move back to the U.S., but not for long.

"I will float between the two countries," he said. "We will always come back to Ukraine. We have property here. My wife's family is here. We also plan to start businesses here as soon as I am able to, which is after my work here at the embassy is completed."

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# Agricultural projects off target

BY KATERYNA KAPLIUK  
KAPLIUK@KYIVPOST.COM

Unrealistic goals, political favoritism and lack of money seems to have stalled many projects that were to power the Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers ambitious 2013-2014 economic development program.

In the program's fifth month, many projects remain stuck at the starting line – particularly in agriculture.

The state program for boosting the economy was debuted in March. The government plans to spend Hr 460 billion (more than \$55 billion) to gear up key industries in an attempt to boost gross domestic product by 3.4 percent in 2013 and up to 4 percent in 2014, according to the Cabinet's targets.

Most economists think that forecast unrealistic, as Ukraine's economy shrank by 1.1 percent in the first quarter, according to the state statistics agency. Most rating agencies and investment banks predict 0 to 0.6 percent growth this year.

One of the development program's main goals was to replace old agricultural machinery by providing state-guaranteed loans to local producers. The government hopes this will encourage foreign investors to enter joint-ventures with homegrown firms.

According to Agriculture Minister Mykola Prysiazhniuk, five machinery projects should currently be funded with about Hr 700 million (\$85 million). The state guarantees mean that should companies default on loans, taxpayers will have to foot the bill.

Also worrying, though, is the fact that the government program's potential recipients often have close ties to the government and the ruling party. In other cases, their ownership is hidden through offshore companies.

The Kherson machine building plant was one of the firms selected for inclusion in the government program. It has plans to set up a joint project with German combine-harvester manufacturer CLAAS, but it's still short on publicly available details. Party of Regions member Oleksandr Oliynyk owns the Kherson machine building plant.

Other potential recipients of government-backed cash include the Chervona Zirka plant, owned by Kirovograd-based Party of Regions deputy Pavlo Shtutman, and the Paton welding plant, 61 percent of which belongs to Belize offshore companies.



A woman sunbathes in a field outside Kyiv as an old tractor chugs past. Ukraine's government prepared a program for 2013-2014 to upgrade agricultural machinery, but its implementation lags. (UNIAN)

The program also plans generous support for politicians and businessmen who own greenhouses. The Kyiv Post traced their ownership from company statements or the national registration database.

In 2013, state-guaranteed loans worth Hr 475 million might be set aside for companies like Edem-F, owned by billionaire Dmytro Firtash's mother; APK-ZernoSurs, controlled by Borys Kolesnikov's family; and Krymteplytsya owned by the Crimean Party of Regions deputy Oleksandr Vasyliev.

However, the Minister for Economic Development and Trade Igor Prasolov insists the government selected projects, not companies or individuals.

"(The projects) have to either expand the production of commodities that are in demand; or modernize production; or implement projects in those sectors that are not very interesting for the government but are important for the economy – firstly infrastructure, and secondly the housing sector," he told the Kyiv Post in a recent interview.

Renovating the irrigation system in southern Ukraine is one of the government's most ambitious projects. According to the government program, almost Hr 2.4 billion will be spent on irrigation engineering over two years, notably upgrades to key canals.

But some experts have said the government's target is unrealistic. At the moment the ecology ministry is respon-

sible for the system, Prysiazhniuk told the Kyiv Post. Therefore, the agriculture ministry is waiting for legislative changes on this issue and only afterwards will it be able to invest in the technical upgrade of the two canals.

"(In what concerns the) documents, we could start this year," Prysiazhniuk said.

He added that there are some potential foreign investors who would like to join the project, but provided no details.

Another ambitious program aims to transform 29 distilleries into biofuel plants in just two years. The government's project envisages Hr 350 million in investments from the state budget and another Hr 320 million of state-guaranteed loans for the project coming from the private sector.

But the economy ministry has yet to allot the needed cash. This year about Hr 300 million was supposed to be earmarked for biofuel, but the budget doesn't seem to have the money.

"The Economy ministry says there is no money," says Ruslan Rybakov, a department head at Ukrspyrnt, the state company that owns the distilleries to be upgraded.

Prysiashniuk, however, believes the industry needs a much more modest level of investment – about \$150 million – and expects to find new private investors to work side-by-side with the government. In any case, the execution stage is barely starting.

Other priority projects include the construction and modernization of farms, short-term loans for agricultural producers and upgrades to state-run baking companies.

Tamara Levchenko, an analyst at Dragon Capital investment bank, says that livestock and dairy farms should have a chance to get money this year. Some 153 are supposed to be receiving government assistance.

Levchenko says that the government should not waste money on upgrading dilapidated or outdated former Soviet farms, but should concentrate instead on building new ones to modern standards.

Kyiv Post staff writer Kateryna Kapliuk can be reached at kapliuk@kyivpost.com.



## Brits boast retro airplanes at Kyiv show

Kyivans had a unique chance to survey the best samples of aviation of the 20th century as an impressive lot of such planes landed in the capital's aviation museum for a show on July 2-4.

The planes were presented by 60 members of the British Air Squadron, a club of aviation enthusiasts, led by its chairman Tim Clark and His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent (below, at the center).

Founded in 1966, the Air Squadron is dedicated to promoting aviation and friendship amongst aircraft fans. They do this by undertaking regular and often challenging flights in their privately-owned light aircrafts all over Europe and beyond. "Air Squadron was greatly honored this year by being invited by the Ukrainian armed forces to visit their country," Clark said. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)





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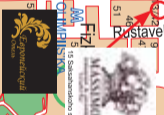
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(Courtesy)

July 13

## Global Gathering Ukraine 2013

Sixteen hours of wild energy, excitement, and endless dancing that accompany electronic music await attendees of the seventh annual Global Gathering Ukraine, a festival to be held at the Kyiv Chaika Airfield. Primarily focused on electronic music, the all-day-and-night festival showcases both world-famous and lesser-known DJs. Thousands are expected to attend. Lovers of dance music won't leave disappointed.

**Global Gathering Ukraine 2013. Chaika Airfield, Zhytomyrska track. July 13. 2 p.m. Hr 349-499**

## Silk-dyeing exhibition

The Wondrous Wonder exhibition will display works by Larysa Lukash, a batik master. Lukash's batik paintings are created through the technique of manually dyeing silk to produce particular designs. The show will feature 20 paintings in gentle pastel colors and will be held at the Ukrainian Culture and Art Center. Among the idyllic images to be presented



Thr July 13

at Lukash's exhibition are representations of birds, red poppies, angels, bouquets of flowers, and images drawn from folkloric tales.

**Batik Exhibition. Ukrainian Culture and Art Center (19B Horyva St.). Through July 13 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Saturday (closed on Sunday). Free**



July 10

(Sohel Yasuli)

## Annual charitable Independence Day Picnic

American Independence Day is to be celebrated in Kyiv on the huge field of Spartak Stadium. Every visitor will get special Picnic Bucks that can be used to purchase food, drinks and souvenirs. Both the foreign and Ukrainian community can enjoy traditional American food, live entertainment and a fire works show. Taking place annually, this family event raises money for charities throughout Ukraine.

**Annual charitable American Independence Day Picnic 2013. July 6. Spartak Stadium (105 Frunze Street). Hr 120, free for kids under three years old**



July 9

(fo.ua)

## Papa Roach live in concert

Fans of metal and rock music are sure to be excited about Papa Roach's upcoming visit. The American band is set to perform at Green Theater nightclub as part of the tour for their new album "The Connection." The musicians promise to top their earlier Kyiv gig in June 2011. Papa Roach is known for its experimental style of alternative rock with hints of neo-metal and rap. Don't miss Papa Roach, in action for one night only.

**Papa Roach. Green Theater. 2 Park Alley. July 9. 8 p.m. Hr 400-700**



(Courtesy)

July 5

## Equilibristic show

The Rizoma Theater invites the public to witness the art and choreography of its new show "Time," which will run at the Lesia Ukrainka Russian Drama Theater on July 4 and 5. The Kyiv show is part of Rizoma's international tour with the well-known acrobat Anatoly Zalevskiy, the show's creator, who calls Rizoma "a soul circus."

The new show is a philosophical play that combines circus acts, choreography, modern music and multimedia effects. The plasticity of the actors is meant to show that time is permanent and eternal, while comedians tell funny, light-hearted stories to suggest that sooner or later, time may stop forever. The show's blend of intellectual and emotional aspects and its intriguing concept should fascinate its audience.

**Equilibristic show "Time." Lesia Ukrainka Russian Drama National Academic Theater. July 4, 5. 7 p.m. Hr 100-850**



(Courtesy)

July 12-14

## The Best City.UA Festival

One of Ukraine's most prominent mainstream music festivals, The Best City.UA, will boast rock-n-roll shows on three outdoor stages along with a tent city, sports competitions, delicious food, art performances and entertaining master classes. There will be something for everyone as daily routines give way to a feeling of energy driven by world-famous rock bands.

First held in 2012, the festival this year brings an impressive lineup of popular bands like Hurts, Enter Shikari, Guano Apes, Lacuna Coil, Mumiy Trol, Leningrad and Spleen. The legendary German rock band Scorpions will headline the festival.

For those interested in pursuits other than music, The Best City.UA will offer sport activities, master classes and theatrical performances. Some of the best Ukrainian DJs will spin music at night parties at the festival's Emotion Stage.

**The Best City.UA Festival. Novoselitsa Park, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast (track M-04). July 12-14. Hr 399 per day, or Hr 999 for all three days**

# Going pagan for a midsummer night



## Tajikistan: pleasant for foreigners, rough for locals

**DUSHANBE** – Settling into my seat aboard Somon Air's packed Boeing jet at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport en route to the Tajik capital of Dushanbe, I was preparing to acknowledge the chief flight attendant's expected "welcome on board" greeting, but she caught me off guard.

The curious flight attendant, a woman in her late 20's, raised her voice: "What are you hiding over there?"

I stalled for a moment, thinking she was speaking to me, until it was clear that her attention was directed at another passenger – a young Tajik woman of approximately the same age.

"Are you pregnant?" the flight attendant asked. "Why are you trying to hide this? – Do you have a doctor's permission to fly?"

Luckily, the woman was allowed on board, either by showing the proper paperwork, paying a bribe or simply talking her way out of it. Minutes later our aircraft took off, passing by a beautifully painted Airbus A-380 from United Arab Emirates, also on its way up. The recorded safety message played on our plane, warning passengers not to rip off the oxygen masks from the inside the cabin, was a weird contrast to the view.

I was on my way to Tajikistan, one of the poorest countries in Central Asia. Plagued by corruption – largely fueled by rampant drug traffic and aggravated by the 19-year rule of its current President Emmomali Rakhmon – Tajikistan is not an easy place to live and provide for a family. As a result, nearly 15 percent of Tajiks go abroad for work. It became immediately apparent for a few of those returning that their homecoming would not be very smooth.

That the Tajik authorities are not exactly the most welcoming towards its own folk (even compared to their Ukrainian counterparts) became clear when we arrived at our destination. It appeared that Tajik nationals, not just foreigners, had to complete the immigration cards upon arrival.

Waiting in line – and Tajik border guards could hold the Asian record for the length of time it takes to check a passport – was also much smoother for foreigners. First, some of the guards would handpick Russian-speaking passengers, offering them an opportunity to skip ahead in line for a fee. Once this source of income had been exhausted, a burly man, seemingly the guards' supervisor, began to handpick passengers who were allowed to pass the check point without waiting. → 14



Young women dressed in folk attire float their wreaths with lit candles on a pond on July 6, 2008, in a small village outside Kyiv. According to Ivan Kupala custom, if the wreath does not sink, the girl is set to marry the following year. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

**BY DARYNA SHEVCHENKO AND OLGA RUDENKO**  
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RUDENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Leaping over bonfires. Scouring the dark woods in search of fern flowers. Delicately constructing a flower garland. These are all essential elements of Ivan Kupala Day, a folk and pagan holiday that celebrates the summer solstice. If you have not celebrated it, you haven't seen Ukraine, and you have not discovered the pagan inside you.

This expressive, ancient holiday has endured the centuries up to modern-day Ukraine. Many rites of this holiday

unite fire, mysticism and eroticism. To celebrate it properly on the night of July 6 one needs a basic set of elements: water in the form of a river or a pond, a healthy bonfire, some field flowers and the company of cheerful friends.

**A bit of history**

The original name of Ivan Kupala Day or Ivan's Day is long forgotten, thus, nobody knows when it was first celebrated. Observed on the night of July 6, it was originally connected to the summer solstice.

When the Orthodox Church incorporated the holiday, it became asso-

ciated with John the Baptist's Day, celebrated on July 7. The name Ivan also stems from here. However, local Orthodox churches shun the holiday as pagan.

Historians have suggested that the name might come from the ancient god Kupala. The god's name apparently evolved from a mistake in a 16th century text. It's a derivative of the word kupat (to bathe), and can refer both to John the Baptist who baptized his followers in the river, and more ancient traditions of celebrating gods by taking dips in rivers. This explanation of the holiday's name was given by Finnish scientist Viljo Johannes

Mansikka in his study called Religion of the Eastern Slavs.

Most celebrations happen at night, and this is what makes the holiday's rituals so exciting.

**From orgies to marriage**

The church might have a good reason to avoid having a direct connection with Ivan Kupala. If local myths are to be believed, the night of Kupala prompted a softening of morals, bringing with it random or group sexual contacts as an act of prayer for a plentiful harvest.

Others, on the contrary, believe that pagan cults cherished faithful- → 13

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# Slavic mythology feted

→ **12** ness; thus sexual contact was meant to be between committed partners only. However, there is no authoritative modern source on Slavic sexual rituals in modern sources. Yet studies by Byzantine historian Mauritian Strategist mention sex-connected traditions.

The holiday is better known for other rituals that involve young men and women. Women traditionally make beautiful flower wreaths and float them on rivers, adorned with lit-up candles. If the wreath does not sink, it means its owner will get married the following year.

The prospective husband was expected to wait for the wreath on the other end of the river. And if a man wanted to marry a particular woman, he had to trace and catch her wreath.

Kupala Night was also an opportunity to test one's luck. Ferns, non-blooming ancient plants, were believed to produce a single flower on that very night. Those who found it were believed to acquire mystical qualities such as invisibility or the ability to see underground treasures.

But finding the flower was supposed to be tricky (no surprise there), and breaking it off the stem even more so because evil spirits were believed to guard it.

Those whose luck failed them, could always compensate by taking part in purifying rituals. The most important one is associated with fire, which is lit at dusk and burns till dawn.

It was believed that women who avoided celebrations that involved fire were witches. The same stigma followed young women who could not jump over the fire. Originally, only young single people were allowed to jump, but these days everyone is welcome.

An unmarried couple would



A young woman smiles as she dances at a campfire while celebrating Ivan Kupala Night, a traditional Slavic holiday not far from Kyiv on July 6, 2009. (AFP)

get married soon if their hands touched during the jump, or if the fire started to sparkle during their leap. The man who jumped the highest was expected to have a good harvest for his family that year.

On Kupala Night, Ukrainians make a straw doll representing Marena, a pagan symbol of water and a mermaid goddess. At the end of celebrations, the doll must be burned or drowned.

A detailed description of Kupala Night traditions can be found in the studies devoted to Ukrainian national holidays by famous Ukrainian ethnographer Vasyl Skurativskiy and in other modern folklore studies.

## Where to celebrate Ivan Kupala in the area on July 6-7

**Pyrogovo Folk Outdoor Museum**  
Celebrating in Pyrogovo is the obvious choice. On both days, July 6 and 7, people will gather to look for fern flowers, make fires to jump over and construct wreaths to float on the water.

Those who are not interested in the rituals can simply observe others or enjoy performances by folk bands from across the country.

**How to get there:** Trolleybus #11 from Lybidska and Holosiivska metro stations, minibus #156 from Bessarabskiy Market  
July 6-7, 4 p.m., 5 p.m., Hr 20, Hr 10 for students.  
[www.pirogovo.org.ua](http://www.pirogovo.org.ua)

## Kyivska Rus Park

On top of the usual Ivan Kupala activities, such as jumping over the fire and dancing in circles, the park offers horse rides, master classes of traditional crafts and performances in traditional arts. Visitors will also be able to try on ancient Ukrainian costumes. Celebrations will take place on July 6-7. The only downside is the 60-kilometer ride to the park.

**How to get there:** Park Kyivska Rus shuttle bus from Vydubychi metro station 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

July 6-7, 10 a.m., Hr 100, Hr 50 for pensioners and visitors wearing national attire or costumes of mythical creatures.  
[www.parkkyivrus.com](http://www.parkkyivrus.com)

## Mamayeva Sloboda

Traditional fire jumping activities in this ethnic park in Kyiv will be substituted by a more materialistic quest – a search for Cossack treasure.

An ancient legend says that in the mid-18th century Cossacks sank their treasures in the nearby lake and every Ivan Kupala Night a small portion of it can be found by a lucky couple.

It might sound like a tall tale, but the treasure is as real as it gets. Organizers say that the winners get a gold ring with a gem for a trophy, and second and third runners-up will also receive precious prizes.

**How to get there:** Trolleybus #27, 27K from Petrivka and Shulyavka metro stations; marshrutka #427, 471 from Palats Sportu metro station; both to the Mykhaila Dontsya St. bus stop

July 6, 4 p.m. Hr 200 (registration for the quest will be held in advance and end 15 minutes before the quest starts, passport needed)  
[www.mamajeva-sloboda.ua](http://www.mamajeva-sloboda.ua)

## Hutir Savky, Novi Petrivtsi village

The Ivan Kupala party will take place on July 6 in Hutir Savky, a smallish ethnic park just six kilometers outside Kyiv.

Celebrations will start at 4 p.m. on July 6 and will be supplemented with horseback tours of the park and master

classes by blacksmiths, weavers and potters.

Marena and Kupalo, the male and female version of straw dolls associated with holiday spirits, will be built and then burned at the end of the day.

Cossack dishes will be cooked for visitors to enjoy.

**How to get there:** Take the Kyiv-Liutizh bus from Polissya bus station at Taras Shevchenko Square to ChayNyk bus stop in Novi Petrivtsi

July 6, 4 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Hr 250, Hr 200 for children.  
[www.xutir-savky.com.ua](http://www.xutir-savky.com.ua)

## Radomysl Castle, Zhytomyr Oblast

Radomysl castle, 100 kilometers from Kyiv, will also host its own Kupala celebrations. But theirs will be less about pagan rituals and more about singing and dancing. Visitors will be able to try folk dancing as well as enjoy professional performances.

**How to get there:** Take the Kyiv-Radomysl minibus from Zhytomyrska metro station, then take minibus #2 from Radomysl central bus station to the last stop where the Castle is located.

July 6, 12 p.m., Hr 20. Zhytomyr Oblast, Radomysl, 15 Shchorsa St.  
[www.radozamok.com.ua](http://www.radozamok.com.ua)

## Five weird Ivan Kupala superstitions

1. Boiling a black cat on Kupala Night can produce an "invisible bone" that would make its owner invisible.
  2. Towels, shirts and wreaths must be left on trees by the rivers and lakes for mermaids who come out of the water on Kupala Night.
  3. Climbing over 12 fences on Kupala Night makes your wish come true.
  4. On Kupala Night trees walk and talk to each other through the rustling of leaves.
  5. Bread gains healing powers after being left on a house's roof on Kupala Night.
- Source: [www.traditions.org.ua](http://www.traditions.org.ua), [www.ethnomuseum.ru](http://www.ethnomuseum.ru)



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## THE ORDER FOR MERITS FOR INDIAN ENTREPRENEUR IN UKRAINE



The Kusum Pharm pharmaceutical factory founder and CEO Mr. Rajeev Gupta was awarded by President Yanukovich, the Order for Merits, 3rd degree, for his contribution to the development of the pharmaceutical market of Ukraine. The official award ceremony was on the 28 of June 2013 and the governor of the Sumy region Chmyr Yuri Pavlovich handed the Order to Mr. Rajeev Gupta.

The Group of companies "Kusum" includes a pharmaceutical factory LLC "Kusum Pharm" (Sumy, Ukraine), the distribution company "Gladpharm Ltd" (Kiev, Ukraine) and Pharmaceutical Plant "Kusum Healthcare Pvt. Ltd" (India). They are engaged in development, manufacturing, and distribution of medicinal products. They have provided very good quality medicines for Ukrainian people for 20 years.

Today the Kusum Pharm pharmaceutical factory is one of the most modern pharmaceutical factories in Ukraine. Kusum group offers medicinal products used in treating cardiovascular and gastroenterological diseases, diabetes mellitus, pediatric medicines, antibiotics, and other types of medicinal products. Kusum group of companies in Ukraine has more than 700 employees working on the development and manufacture of medications. The Kusum group's founder Indian entrepreneur Rajeev Gupta has been living in Ukraine for the last 25 years and Ukraine has become his second home. He considers employees a core value of the company.

They are constantly trained to increase their qualifications and skills to climb the corporate ladder. They are motivated as well to work the best. In 2012, both plants have been successfully installed a quality control system corresponding to EU GMP requirements.

Rajeev Gupta invested successfully in Ukrainian pharmaceutical industry and he managed to create the most modern pharmaceutical factory what produces quality essential drugs.

# New 'Coyotes' coming to a Kyiv saloon

BY DARIA NYNKO  
DARIA.NYNKO@GMAIL.COM

A bar whose simplistic concept combines beautiful women and copious amounts of alcohol—with which Ukraine is bountifully blessed — to make money is slated to open on July 10.

It is the country's first Coyote Ugly Saloon, the unglamorous watering hole known for waitresses, called "Coyote Girls," who dance and sing on a 25-meter long bar as they serve up stiff drinks that aren't mixed with soda, juice or water — "Hell No... H2O!" U.S. customers reportedly yell — from their boots or bodies if the moment is right.

So don't expect cocktails with fresh mint leaves and miniature umbrellas; just pure alcohol. And should a brasserie fall on top of your head — some bars hang them on ceilings from female patrons who took them off during crazy nights — act casual.

"Our bars are like a wild and crazy rollercoaster ride!" bar founder Lil Lovell says in an interview available on Coyote Ugly's website.

She opened the original Coyote Ugly in New York City 1993 employing her

proven formula of "beautiful girls + booze = money."

Elaborating on the bar's "business plan," Lovell said: "I began training my girls to perform my shtick. Some were good dancers, some were good singers, and others could yell at the crowd and entice them to drink. Very few had all three qualities, so I had to improvise. I would pair up the dancer with the comic yeller. Maybe the singer can be trained to dance a little better and it all began to work."

There are 13 Coyote saloons in America, and bars in Germany, Russia and Romania.

Worldwide fame came to Coyote Ugly after an eponymous Hollywood movie was released in 2000 based on a GQ magazine article by Elizabeth Gilbert who once worked at one of the bars.

In addition to drinks and sure-to-come fun, Coyote Ugly offers a comfortable lounge area and has a souvenir shop so visitors will have something with which to remember their "roller-coaster" nights.

Doors will open on 9 Mechnikova Street near the Klovska metro station.

Kyiv Post intern Daria Nynko can be reached at [daria.nynko@gmail.com](mailto:daria.nynko@gmail.com).



A mother and her children beg in a pedestrian underpass as a picture of Tajik President Emomali Rakhmonov is featured on a building in Dushanbe. (AFP)

# Dushanbe remains unspoiled by post-Soviet building boom

→12 Going through customs was just as discriminatory. While my fellow Tajik travelers literally had to unpack their luggage to be searched, I merely had to answer that everything about my belongings was okay. Curious, I asked my benefactors their reason for such kind hospitality. It turned out that they thought I was from Belarus (I'm Ukrainian).

In a pleasant surprise, the low income levels in Tajikistan and the absence of a real estate boom has positively affected Dushanbe. In fact,

it turned out to be one of the coziest and most pleasant places to stay that I've experienced in a long time. Its downtown, with two- and three-story columned white houses was reminiscent of a quiet seaside town in Crimea — except for the smaller quantity of people on the streets and the absence of a sea.

A friend from Azerbaijan, who travelled with me, said that Dushanbe reminded her of her capital city Baku many years ago, before the start of the oil boom. An influx of oil dollars largely destroyed its unique ambience by adding numerous posh yet tasteless high-rises to the city skyline.

Gladly, this hasn't happened to Dushanbe. Yet, the recent megalomaniac activities by local authorities are a bit worrying. In the coming months they plan to unveil the biggest teahouse in the world. It seems a stretch and quite awkward for a city of a little more than 600,000 that is difficult to reach. It's hard to imagine a major influx of tourists lured by the impressive richly ornamented oriental edifice.

Back in 2011, Dushanbe got its most bizarre architectural addition — the world's tallest unsupported flagpole, which won the country a place on the pages of the Guinness Book of Records. Ironically, by building this 165-meter-high structure, which dominates the Dushanbe skyline, Tajikistan broke the record set just two years earlier by Azerbaijan by a measly three meters.

On the way back, again flying via Domodedovo, I found that Tajiks are just as unwelcome in Russia (their main labor migration destination) as they are at home. The passport control lines for the Dushanbe flight were the longest and most static in the entire airport. The only activity the airport employees engaged in was

→Megalomaniac tastes of Central Asian leaders extend to Tajikistan with world's biggest teahouse soon to open.

assigning Russian citizens aboard the flight to a different line in order to avoid mixing with the Tajiks.

When after nearly 30 minutes the line hadn't budged an inch, some of the passengers complained to a Russian border guard, who barked: "Why have so many of you arrived?"

Passing through passport control wasn't the end of it. All the luggage had to be scanned for drugs, which meant another hour of waiting until the spaniel dog could sniff each bag. To make matters worse, the conveyor belt meant to spit out passengers' bags broke down, which meant an extra 20 minutes of waiting for it to be fixed.

When irritated passengers approached an airport administrator for assistance, she conveniently and confusingly blamed the delay on the drug control unit before scurrying away.

A few minutes passed before she returned with a janitor, a middle-aged Tajik woman whom she began to scold. The area around the conveyor belt, in her opinion, was not clean enough. Nevermind that it wasn't working.

Kyiv Post staff writer Vlad Lavrov can be reached at [lavrov@kyivpost.com](mailto:lavrov@kyivpost.com).



The party is on at the Coyote Ugly Saloon in Las Vegas. Kyiv gets its own Coyote Ugly on July 10. (Courtesy)

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