

KIMEP TIMES

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Crisis Leadership

words by **Zarrina Mulloboeva**
photo by **Olga Tsoy**

On September 10, Dr. Chan Young Bang met students in the Great Hall to discuss the recent tenge devaluation and its effect on tuition, stipends and university in general. He also addressed concerns raised by students.

As Kazakhstan experiences another wave of depreciation of the national currency, students are concerned about KIMEP's response to the situation. Currently, one three-credit course costs KZT 150,000, the student fee per semester is KZT 2,520 and the library deposit is KZT 20,000.

"Following the devaluation, the changes in tuition fees are the most popular right now, last year it increased by 10,5%. We all are dreadful in anticipation of a higher raise in prices for this year," says Dana Kenges, third year accounting major student.

This also applies to the scholarship holders as they receive their monthly stipends, which has not been raised since 2012, in tenge. The Central Asian Undergraduate Scholarship (CAUS) provides students from Central Asia with full tuition and when students have GPA above 4.0 they receive a monthly stipend of KZT 18,000 and free accommodation in the

dormitory. "When we were freshmen, our monthly stipend was \$100, now, when we are seniors it's about \$50," says Aike Ismailova, 20, a fourth-year accounting major student.

On September 10, Dr. Bang met with students and faculty to talk about KIMEP's strategy for addressing the devaluation related student concerns.

According to Dr. Bang, tuition fees will not rise due to the tenge devaluation, because the management of the university anticipated this situation and took several proactive steps in order to mitigate adverse effects.

Continue reading on page 5



IN THIS ISSUE

- PAGE THREE -

Freshmen
Who are they?

- PAGE SIX -

Fukushima
Four years after disaster

- PAGE SEVEN -

Interview
New VP of Administration

- PAGE EIGHT -

Yoga
Can help you with exams

Results of the elections 2015-2016

President:

Dias Sabdenaliyev - **442 votes**

Vice President of Administration:

Ainur Bainazarova - **471 votes**

Vice President of Finance:

Alnur Adambayev - **442 votes**

Vice President of Sports and Culture:

Bakdaulet Polatuly - **384 votes.**

The senate deputies:

International Deputy:

Nursultan Aytbaev

CSS Deputies:

Shahaydar Sarsenbek

Madina Gaitova

Tolebi Ibrayev

Abylay Rakymzhan

Adilzhan Zharylkassyn

Kairat Azhikeev



Photo: on the left - Dias Sabdenaliyev, top right - Alnur Adambayev, middle right - Ainur Bainazarova, bottom right - Bakdaulet Polatuly.

Four CSS deputies won the same number of votes and according to the KSA Elections Guidelines all pass.

BCB Deputies:

Almaz Bissembayev
Daulet Kydyrbekuly
Nursultan Azizbekov
Aliya Bostanbayeva

BLLB Deputies:

Bolat Beremkulov
Inessa Mun
Dinmukhamed Tilyayev
Rustem Yerzhanov

Electoral program of "Barys" party

(Since the president and all three vice presidents are from Barys party, they will mainly use Barys's Program for the further projects and developments)

"Newly elected cabinet of KSA declares its official program on the 2015 - 2016 year. Despite these listed goals, there are some others, which were suggested by the independent deputies and they will be included to the official program of KSA later on. All KSA cabinet members will try to make them true and be responsi-

ble before students of KIMEP," says Dias Sabdenaliyev.

- Health Care: free monthly health check for KIMEP students;
- Partnership with top Moscow University — MGIMO (Moscow State Institute of International Relations);
- Amendment of KIMEP Constitution, which will allow just and equal treatment of every student of the university;
- Re-establishment and support of Government Internship in Astana for KIMEP Students;
- Cooperation with recruiting agencies such as www.headhunter.kz, which will make KIMEP students more in demand on the labor market;
- Improvement of service quality at Grill and Panini;
- Monthly control of Grill;
- Installing supplementary benches on the territory of the university;
- Installing supplementary equipment at Sport Center — mats and a punch bag;
- Installing water dispensers in the corridors between classrooms;
- Improvement of the relationship between students and professors of KIMEP.

KSA Elections' low turnout: will the problem ever be solved?

words by
Madi Saken



KSA Elections 2015 should not be claimed unique or successful. Instead it should be something to reflect on. The major reason for that is the continuing low turnout of students taking participation in voting process which reveals loads of problems to consider.

No doubt, each year KIMEP Student Association Elections are different from another. This year elections might be marked for the significant improvement of the quality of organization regarding the responsible approach and participation of university administration in elections. It can be observed by several facts: electronic voting system and observers effectively prevented electoral frauds, debate format had been advanced, administration and Election Committee were stricter to candidates. However, there has been one lasting tendency which questions the entire quality, efficiency or even legitimacy of elections.

The voter turnout of 2015 Elections was 798 voted students, which is 38,9% of 2049 eligible voters. For the past five years there has been no KSA Elections which turnout overcoming 50% threshold. As there is no rule requiring to pass minimum threshold, there are different opinions on this tendency. For instance, Dr. Sergey Sayapin, Assistant Professor of KIMEP Law School, claims "If the voter turnout is less than 50%, and winners are determined by relative majority, this means that winners do not necessarily enjoy a genuine support from their peers." Unlikely, Associated Professor at the Department of Int. Relation and Regional Studies, Dr. Jiri Melich asserts "Voter turnout of less than 50% is something to reflect on, on the other hand, we

Factual information about elections:

2715 Overall number of KIMEP Students

2049 Number of eligible voters

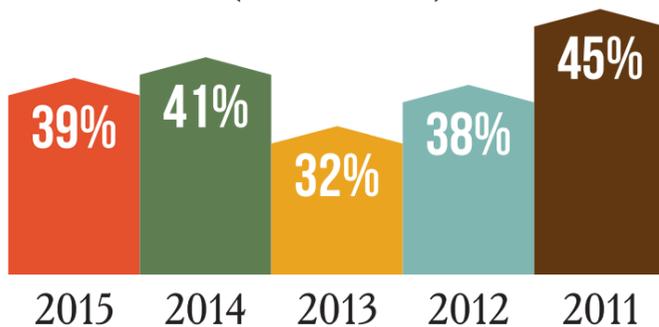
Number of voted students

798

39%

Voters turnout percentage

Comparative statistics: (voters turnout)



*information from Registrar office by 20.10.15

don't have to see it as tragic. Many countries with a standard democracy (including US) experience frequently quite low turnouts, especially in elections below the national-level." Nevertheless, the existing tendency shows that the majority of KIMEP students still feel indifferent towards KSA elections. Certainly, there are some reasons to admit, but most importantly, consequences to avoid.

Naturally there are various factors explaining inactive electoral participation. In some cases it may be simple

difficult accessibility or complexity of voting process. Assistant professor of KIMEP College of Social Sciences, Nygmet Ibadildin, connects low turnout with the political context in the country. "For example, in Kazakhstan elections are claimed to be not inclusive, as there is no real analytics in media, equality of access to it, tradition of open political debate or critique." That may refer to KIMEP as well. However, regarding the specificity of KIMEP realities (only) two major reasons might be noticed.

The first reason is the low quality of agitating and informing process, that refers both to administration and candidates. By a simple evaluation of candidates' agitation, it can be defined that perception of political agitation among the candidates doesn't go beyond portrait-banners. Agitation at KIMEP puts emphasis on personalities of candidates rather than their extracurricular merits, ideas and programs. Moreover, usually candidates poorly capitalize on building genuine public relations on the ground of open public platforms. This year debates showed that students experience huge necessity in public communication with KSA. On the other hand, administration should also contribute to the agitation in terms of better promotion of elections itself.

The second one is the constant violations of elections regulations. In his report, Dr. Melich, regular observer of KSA Elections, tells that different kinds of undue agitation violations were detected. "Most importantly I was made aware of one more serious violation - some students were pressured for remarking on candidates violations," Dr. Melich reports. Unfortunately the worst consequence of lasting violations would be getting used to that. Inappropriate, undue agitation usually deprives students of their will to vote. This seems to be a simple protective reaction from lasting annoying yet unprofessional and illegal someone's self-advertising.

Apparently, there is another question to be asked - can we claim that KIMEP community has low civic or participatory culture. Dr. Melich gives his answer "Many people in Kazakhstan, including KIMEP students would fall in the category of "subject culture," which means they may be

rather passive and accepting things as they are than trying to change them for the better. But this does not apply to all - we have many students who do not wait for "orders from above", they feel empowered to take initiative and change the status quo. I would say that KIMEP student community is a unique mix of participatory and subject political cultures — and, in fact, the so-called civic culture is always such a mix."

If Dr. Melich is right, then KSA or administration should figure out how to make such people and student organizations more involved in election, political and decision-making process, as well as how to extend their initiative to the greater part of community.

In addition, professors of KIMEP Dr. Sayapin and Dr. Melich suggest some solutions for above-mentioned problems. "Better promotion of the standing rules and procedures among all students; training and testing candidates on their knowledge of the free and fair election process; monitoring other KIMEP locations for undue campaigning," proposes Dr. Melich. "Constitutional amendment setting the minimal voting threshold; simplified voting system through KIMEP Student Portal; KSA public report on the promises made during elections," proposes Dr. Sayapin.

From a brief analysis of low turnout problem, it can be concluded that the major problem which KSA institution faces is its public relations. The problem is that passivity, mistrust and absenteeism, as the forms of protest, will not allow even the best set of KSA members to reform the status quo. The new elected members, as well as future candidates, should come up with the solution for building truly genuine relationships with student community.

Enrollees admitted in 2015

Bang College of Business



Language Center



College of Social Sciences



Other



School of Law



TOTAL ENROLLEES ADMITTED IN 2015

715

TOTAL ENROLLMENT ALL STUDENTS

2715

TOTAL ENROLLEES 1-YEAR EARNED

494

TOTAL ENROLLEES 2-YEAR EARNED

591

TOTAL ENROLLEES 3-YEAR EARNED

435

TOTAL ENROLLEES 4-YEAR ABOVE

480

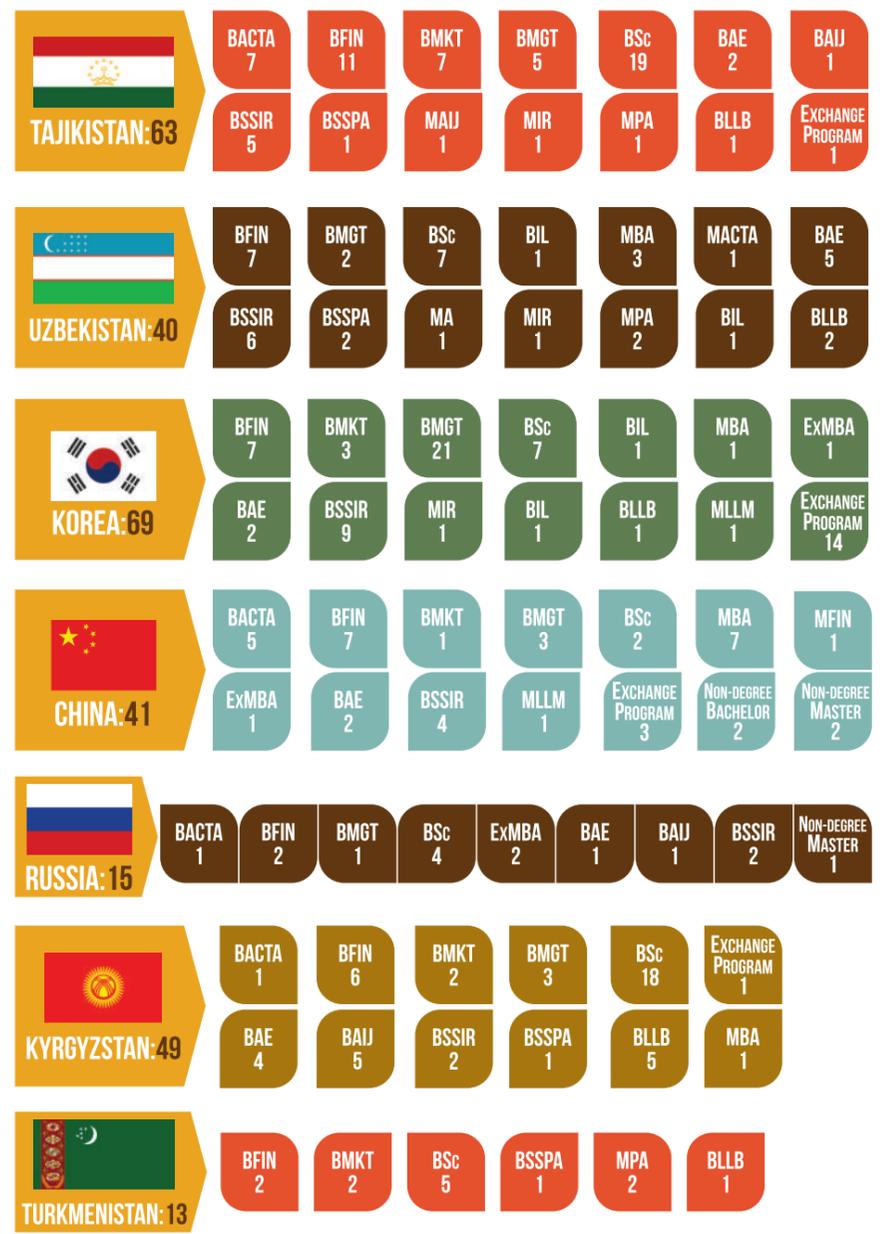
Non degree Programs



Enrollment by Gender



International Students



Ekobox: 5 mln tenge for revolution of student living in Kazakhstan



words & photography
by **Kristina Nikulina**

Slavomir Tuleja and Clemens Biermayer from Austria know how to spend their exchange semester effectively. Recently, they've represented KIMEP University at the first technological festival in Kazakhstan, Tech Garden Fest. Their project Ekobox won the Safe City and Green City Track of the "Startup Day" competition.

Ekobox is the innovative way to construct eco and technology friendly student dormitory accommodation from modules. The project has a great potential on Kazakhstani market since it "combines ecological and innovative living into a profitable business."

Slavomir and Clemens found two new members, Aizhan Akhmetova and Yernar Kabdullin, and created the Kazakh-European startup team. As a winner of the competition, Ekobox is now one of 30 startups supported by the largest national Business Incubator. Being a part of the startup program, the team received a grant of five million tenge for the development of the project and a co-working space in the Nurly Tau business center. The next stage for the team is to establish a Kazakh-European company as a part of the Startup Incubator and to build the prototype of the actual product - technology demonstrator of a module house.

"Our intention is to cooperate with KIMEP University in development of

this project," says Slavomir. "Currently, we are getting KIMEP administration's view on the subject."

For the question of how they are able to combine such a serious project with their studies, Slavomir and Clemens say that time-management is a very helpful skill which they've already mastered and "KIMEP provides student-friendly environment including flexible schedule, which makes the effective combination of work and study possible."

Balzhan Suzhikova, the head of the Corporate Development Department of KIMEP University says that Slavomir and Clemens are "very successful at visualizing their desires and plans. That is why they always know what they want to achieve and just go for it."

Clemens and Slavomir came from University of Applied Sciences in Krems, Austria, where they are getting their Master's degree in International Business and Export Management. IMC Krems' students have an option to spend one semester abroad at one of more than 110 partner universities, including KIMEP.

Clemens says that he was never interested in these "already-developed" countries where people stick to their "comfort zone." Coming from Vienna, the place with the highest living standards, he always thought that going on exchange to the US or European countries is simply boring. Before Kazakhstan, Clemens has been to Russia and got into the unique CIS culture of open mindedness, and wanted to explore it further in Central Asia. After all, "KIMEP was quite an easy



decision to make."

For Slavomir the perception is completely different. Coming originally from Slovakia, which is also a post-Soviet country, he can observe a lot of similar things Slovakia and Kazakhstan have, with Slovakia just slightly outpacing Kazakhstan in certain things such as customer-oriented approach, product design, and customer services. According to Slavomir, these things are going to develop soon and he wants to be a part of this change. "I was always looking for countries which might not be a top-choice exchange destination for most students but they are interesting for me in this sense,"

says Slavomir.

For their Master's in International Business and Export Management, Clemens and Slavomir explore innovation, entrepreneurship, strategy, and business development in an international context with slight focus on the Austrian startup scene. Both of them already have extensive startup experience. Slavomir has been working in the modular container architecture for several years, including building student dormitories in Germany and launching housing brand called Huzzle.sk in Slovakia.

When Clemens and Slavomir met in Austria in pursuit of their master

degree, they've developed one more startup idea - Lisa's Flat, which is currently ready for the crowdfunding campaign. Lisa's Flat is a fully-equipped entertainment house which you can rent with your friends.

For Lisa's Flat project, Slavomir and Clemens got the first place at the Red Bull Road to Pioneers startup contest in Krems an der Donau, Austria. "When we look into the future now, we know that both of us will work on some new exciting ideas, innovation, and strategy, on improving services, and products," says Slavomir.

Teamwork makes the dreamwork: KIMEP volunteers at Kazakhstan Open 2015

words by
Tomiris Orozoeva

photography by
Kazakhstan Open



KT has talked to Natalya Shin, KIMEP alumnus, who is currently responsible for organizing the Kazakhstan Open golf tournament. She is one of three volunteer coordinators.

Why did you decide to be a coordinator at the golf tournament? What are the benefits?

Back in 2009, while studying at KIMEP I stumbled upon a poster about volunteering. Golf at that moment sounded rather new and interesting to me. I saw an opportunity to watch this beautiful game live. The

very idea to be a part of such a big event attracted me immediately, and I applied for a volunteering position for four full days. I was impressed from the very first day: the atmosphere, the level of organization, the people around, the golf course, the nature - everything was just amazing. From that moment, I have gotten interested in golf. Thanks to the tournament, I met many nice and friendly people, who later became my close friends. One of them is Camila Davies, who was a coordinator for all volunteers at that moment. She lately offered me to become a coordinator.

The volunteering experience gave me a lot. Golf is not just a game,

it is a whole culture. This game teaches you how to control your emotions, mind and body.

What are your duties as a volunteer coordinator?

It has been already six years since I've started volunteering and coordinating volunteers for KZ Open. The first task is to recruit volunteers. Each year we have about 150 volunteers, and a majority of them have been KIMEP students. They have always been very helpful, ready to learn new skills and socially active.

My second duty is to train volunteers, explain them what to do, coordinate and make sure that everybody is happy, having fun and enjoying being at the tournament.

What are the conditions for volunteers?

Volunteers get a golf lesson by professional players from Kazakhstan just one week before the official start of the tournament. This is a great opportunity to watch the golf course in practice, to hit a ball and talk with

Pro golfers. During the event, volunteers are provided with transportation, t-shirt, food, snacks, and drinks. Also, there are always two parties at the event, Cut party and Closing Ceremony, and all volunteers are very welcome to attend them. After the tournament, all volunteers get a Certificate of Appreciation.

Could you please tell a little bit about the event itself?

This year, Kazakhstan Open celebrates 11 years. The event is being broadcasted worldwide, which is a great promotion for Kazakhstan. About 130 professional players come from 25 different countries each year. Every year, this event becomes more and more popular here and abroad. Kazakhstan Open is the most important tournament for all players since it has the highest monetary prize among the European Challenge tour championships.

Is it easy to communicate with golf players?

It is. They are very nice, polite, and friendly. We don't have any language

barrier since our volunteers know English very well. Players are very thankful to all volunteers as they understand that volunteers help to make tournament run smoothly, including keeping timeframes and updating score information online and on the scoreboards. These golf tournaments, as well as other big sport events like the Olympics, Marathons, and Winter Games, in big part rely on volunteers, their efforts, time and dedication, and would not be able to take place without their help.

I recommend that one day you come and see in person what it is all about, and I bet you will become addicted to being a volunteer like I and many others did.

I would like to say thank you to all KIMEP volunteers! You are just fabulous!

Looking forward to seeing KIMEP students next year in September!

Film industry in Kazakhstan current trends and blurry future



words and
photography by
Olga Loginova

“Only the strongest will survive the crisis” — that is what cinematography experts from different countries have concluded after a week of intense panel discussions during the 11th Eurasia Film Festival. Indeed, when the rent in movie theaters is paid in dollars and movie tickets — in tenge, film-making becomes more of a charitable rather than profitable and artistic activity. This raises the major concern of passionate moviegoers — what films would be shot in our country? What will determine which films are screened: market economy or the government? Or maybe there is a third alternative?

The statistics provided by Oleg Ivanov, movie expert from Russia, is shocking: only 5 per cent of the movies screened in Kazakhstan are domestic, 7-8 per cent of them are shot in Russia and the overwhelming majority of films is coming from the West. Within the minuscule amount of Kazakh motion pictures, there are three categories: ideological movies, commercial films and art-house.

Government-sponsored ideological production made by Kazakhfilm is admittedly unprofitable, Nurtas Adambayev, a film director (“Kelinka Sabina”) says. This may be the reason why such movies are often shot reluctantly for long periods of time, and in the end might end up being put on the shelf in archives, never reaching the audience, whose tax money was used to fund them. Commercial films, on the other hand, are intended to bring profit. They seldom do, though. As Yerzhan Adambayev (“Toll Bar”) jokingly remarked, “if your budget is 6,000 dollars, only then there is a risk of being able to pay off all the costs.”

Comedy is a genre which is more likely to pay off, and even bring profit. As Askar Bissembin (“A Threesome Wedding”) says, when you produce a comedy, you feel confident, as if you’re armed

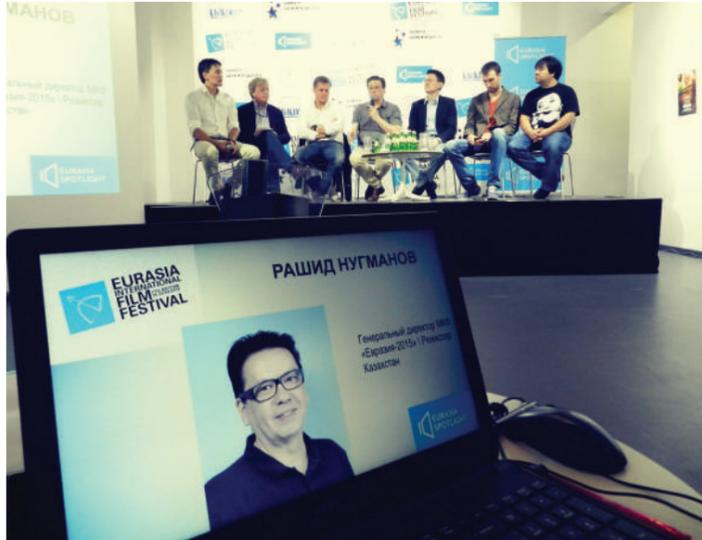


Photo: panel discussion of Eurasia Film Festival

Only 5 per cent of the movies screened in Kazakhstan are domestic

with jokes which will go bang at the right moment. The most successful comedies shot in recent years — “Kelinka Sabina” and “A Threesome Wedding” collected enough box office to compensate for the expenses, and none of them were financed by government. As Bissembin says, these films pay off both because of their entertaining nature and “a message”, a moral lesson which can be seen even in “Kelinka Sabina” — learn your mother tongue, be aware of traditions, do not forget where you come from. Such movies are created with the purpose of leaving the moviegoer in a good mood.

Uplifted spirits, though, is not the ultimate goal of cinematography. At least, that is what Adilkhan Yerzhanov, the “Partisan Movement’s” founder thinks. “Partisan Movement” was established in 2014 by a group of young film directors in order to express their protest against the hypocrisy of bourgeois cinema. As Yerzhanov explains, modern commercial films made in Kazakhstan are escapist. They turn the audience away from reality by showing life too photo-shopped, too perfect. None of our commercial movies reflect neither political, nor social problems, and that is when art-house movies come

forward to speak about the unspoken, he says. To be considered a part of a partisan league, one must create an honest film with minimal budget and distribute it through piracy networks or via movie festivals, but not sell it to the movie theaters. Yerzhanov’s most recent work, “Toll bar” (in cooperation with Zhassulan Poshanov) has been named the best film of this year’s “Shaken’s Constellation” festival. Contrary to “partisan” values though, it is run in the cinemas from October 8.

As the tenge exchange rate sours, all film-makers, both commercial and art-house, will have to tighten their belts and look for new funding opportunities, or try creative ways of solving money problems. The government support is not likely, but some film critics are optimistic about the future of Kazakhstan film industry. As Tolegen Baitukenov, founder of the “Action!” film school and director of “Super Baha” hopes, the future belongs to those who search for possibilities. In such challenging conditions, he argues, only really passionate directors will continue filming. In the longer run, that will inspire the whole new wave of truly artistic, intellectual and socially important Kazakhstani films.

Post Exchange Crisis

words by
Tomiris Orozova

Intended to go for an exchange program? Probably you are building a house of expectations or collecting required documents and packing your suitcase. All you are concerned about is actually a time you will spend as an expat, though returning back home can turn to the issue and should play role in deciding whether to go or not.

Scientists call it reverse cultural shock. You feel as a foreigner in your own country. Since you’ve lived half a year or more in a foreign country, you’ve adapted to its environment and now you have to readapt to your own. Basically, you go through the same stages on a U-curve namely honeymoon phase, cultural shock, recovery and adjustment. At the first stage, you feel excitement and euphoria; you are happy to reunite with family and friends whom you missed abroad. You eat beshbarmak, walk on the streets where everything is written in your native language and see strangers similar to yourself. After a while, positive feelings leave you alone. You start questioning things which are considered normal here: Why I should care what people think about me? Why students cheat on the exams? Why people break the rules and then bribe civil servants?

“Bachelor students are the risky group because these are the people who did not fully form their personalities,” says Nurseit Niyazbekov, Assistant Professor of Sociology at KIMEP. According to him, it was the reason for the government to close the Bolashak program for undergraduates. After completing degree in the US or another country, students faced serious problems in Kazakhstan. They’ve become cynical and arrogant because they saw more developed economies. They felt their superiority and did not think in a way the locals did. The more time young people spend abroad, the harder it becomes to readapt after coming back.

The bad thing with reverse cultural shock is that it comes unexpectedly. Usually, upon arrival on exchange program, expats have intercultural training sessions where they learn how to cope with cultural shock in a new environment. However, there is no such trainings when they return, since returnees are more than familiar with their own culture. Regardless of this awareness, expats might have an idealized version about their home. Nadira Makhperova, fourth year KIMEP student, who spent her exchange in Sweden last year, says “When I was in Sweden, I was talking a lot about Kazakhstan. Everything seemed to be great here, but when I came back, I found out that I was mistaken.”

Although scientists argue that no returnee can avoid reverse cultural shock, some students hadn’t faced it. Janara Bozoeva, freshman student majoring in business, says that her exchange was all about fun, but back home she should study and work hard. “I do not feel depression or anxiety or shock from my own culture.” Exchange is like long vacation and coming back means back to reality. As Janara concludes, you obviously cannot have fun all the time.

But Nadira has not yet overcome her cultural shock. She returned to Kazakhstan in the beginning of June, but she still cannot realize it. “I’m feeling like I’m in a kind of dream. I don’t feel the reality of a my life.” When she makes plans for the day, she depicts streets of Uppsala, her host town back in Sweden.

According to Nurseit Niyazbekov, we should send more students to study abroad because the differences in views will shrink. There should be special trainings for returnees to successfully readapt at home. The goal of exchange programs is to learn new culture, gain knowledge and adopt best practices in order to implement them at home country. Some forget that and prefer to stay at the host country where everything seems better.

Crisis Leadership, continued from page one

To reflect the negative effect of devaluation on the purchasing power of faculty members, faculty compensations increased by 12.6 %. An additional raise of 13-15% in faculty pay and 8% in staff pay is expected in the near future to keep KIMEP faculty competitive in the global marketplace.

The financial state of the university tuition is measured by the number of credit hours registered rather than number of students registered. Last year, KIMEP projected about 32,000 credit hours. According to the registrar office, there are

33,700 credit hours registered for current semester which is about 3% higher than was projected.

Prior to the devaluation, KIMEP’s budget was about 22-23 million dollars. After the recent devaluation, the readjusted figure stands at 16 million dollars. Another measure undertaken was converting KIMEP’s cash assets into USD. “Currently we have 13 million dollars in cash reserves (11 million in USD) to commit to our students and the university,” says Dr. Bang.

Also, Dr. Bang reassured that monthly

words by
Zarrina Mulloboeva
photo by **Olga Tsoy**



stipends and salaries of student part-time workers would be increased. However the decision about the level of increase is about to be made by the relevant management members.

Dr. Bang believes that by taking proactive measures KIMEP will be able turn these challenges into opportunities, to excel in quality of education and service.



Letter from Fukushima: four years after disaster

words & photography
by Zhansaya Akberdiyeva

My trip to Japan three years ago was nothing extraordinary just a little crush with Tokyo amid Japanese language classes. Japan gave me a blend of weird joy, happiness and ground under my feet, and I wanted to give back. So I decided to volunteer.

When people learn that I have been to Japan, they usually think about fancy Tokyo or (rarely) Kyoto. Not Fukushima. Definitely not Fukushima. For many, this name smells like death and danger. Before I left to Fukushima, I had heard numerous dark humor jokes about me coming back with three eyes or eleven fingers. I cannot judge them. Even for Japanese, even four years after the nuclear disaster, Fukushima still remains "a dangerous place to visit."

I was volunteering at the kids camp in Samegawa, a small isolated village far in the mountains. Ordinary Japanese children, looking so much like Kazakh kids, reminded me of my own younger brothers - and they also called me their "elder sister". We spent all days playing, climbing the rocks, cooking and doing summer homework together. I saw no trace of surviving the disaster on their cute faces, yet I realized that they had been suffering a huge stress deep inside. So, I did not want to ruin the merriness by asking unpleasant questions and evoking scary memories.

But when their parents came to get their children back home, I could not resist and asked one mother what was it like back then, four years ago. She did not refuse to talk.

Japanese people are used to frequent tremors. In Samegawa, we experienced them almost every night and nobody usually said a word about it next morning. But March 11, 2011, was a

day of the modern day catastrophe - the most powerful in Japanese history, 9.0-magnitude earthquake, followed by a tsunami. Fukushima residents faced the drama humanity had never seen before - failure of the local nuclear power plant and massive radioactive contamination.

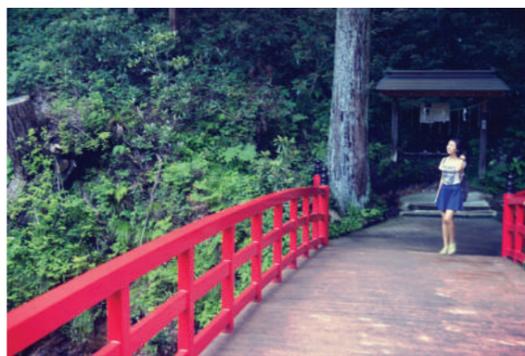
"No one knew what to do," the woman said. Where to run if you

do not see what you should be hiding from? Constant thoughts about radiation and poignant worries about family and children drove everyone crazy. "Gas stations ran out of fuel in a matter of minutes. We jumped into the car and reached the neighboring prefecture with the last gallons of petroleum, refueled there and set off to Tokyo, where my parents live."

However, they decided to return to Fukushima a week later. "Because it's our home," she added with a hesitant smile while I watched her son leaving the camp, bustling and laughing out loud with other children.

Four years after the disaster, people are back to their work and school. Their life does not differ much from the daily routine in other parts of Japan. The biggest problem today is not radiation, but toxic rumors about allegedly lingering nuclear pollution in Fukushima. After the disastrous accident, strong winds and currents carried the radioactive dust and water away, so the prefecture escaped major contamination. Radiation level in Samegawa is around 0.05, which is way too far from dangerous. No one lives in a radius of 30 km from the remains of the Fukushima-1 nuclear power plant, but other areas of the region are totally crowded.

In Japan, I was like a missionary telling everybody how hospitable Kazakh people are, how deep the Caspian Sea is, and how magnificent the mountains around Almaty are. Now I feel the same way again, as I share my Fukushima experience here in Kazakhstan. Deep dark forests and grand mountain ridges, deafening cicada songs and the world's tastiest peaches: Fukushima is endlessly beautiful. And, more importantly, it is safe now.



Living in the right world

words by Tomiris Orozoeva
photography by Kristina Nikulina

Her computer mouse is on the right side of a table, although she is left-handed. Adaptation becomes an everyday habit for the lefties.

When Zulfiya Urunova, a sophomore student from Tajikistan, was in high school, a new literature teacher saw her sitting on the first row writing with her left hand. An elderly woman asked strictly why a 17-year-old was writing like that and why her parents did not retrain her.

When Zulfiya said that she was not going to force herself into right-handedness, the teacher promised that she would never get a good grade.

Today Zulfiya, a wannabe-accountant looks passionate about being left-handed. While on a FLEX (Future Leaders Exchange Program, a U.S.-funded initiative for high school students) stay in the US, she organized a project for children from poor schools. With a friend, she found a shop selling things for left-handers. "It was amazing. Pens, scissors and more things designed specially for people like me and my friend." They visited three schools and told left-handed children about advantages of being who they are. "Kids were happy. They've learned that some of the most famous people are lefties too!" After the presentation, Zulfiya and her friend gave kids some gifts from that shop.

In the world of right-handers, there



is unconscious but lifelong discrimination of the left-handed minority which you normally fail to notice if you are not from that minority. Zulfiya was keen on sewing, but because it was uncomfortable for her to use scissors, she quit her hobby. Until certain age, she did not realize that the problem was in her left-handedness, not in her abilities.

There can be difficulties in all sorts of situations. "It's challenging to cook sometimes. Cookie scoops with a lever, knives, openers, corkscrews are all made for the right-handers,"

laments Zulfiya.

Even stationary can turn out to be a foe - being smeared with a pen while writing or hurting your hand while making notes in the spiral notebooks can be very annoying. The sad story continues in the university - left-handed students hate two-in-one desk chairs in study rooms, because they are meant to be used by the right-handers only. Lefties would either have to sit crookedly and spoil their posture, or skip taking notes at all.

Urunova made a research into the problem for her Academic Reading

and Writing II course, trying to find out how attitudes may affect productivity of the left-handed people. Some of her findings were shocking. One of interviewees, a Chinese girl, said that her high school teacher used to beat or tie her left hand. Generally, perception of lefties in the East appeared to be more negative in comparison to the Western countries' attitudes.

"Still, when people see me writing, they'd say something like 'oh you are left-handed', and sometimes I can feel that such remarks are negative," says Zulfiya. Even in linguistic terms, "left"

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Still, when people see me writing, they'd say something like 'oh you are left-handed', and sometimes I can feel that such remarks are negative.
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often means "bad". Take, for example, a popular Russian expression to describe cheating on a spouse - "go to the left" ("ходить налево"). In Islam jinni (helpers of the evil) is said to sit on your left shoulder. Traditionalists and religious people keep saying that left-handers should be retrained. Zulfiya's father and grandmother originally were lefties, but they were forced to use right hand.

"I did not do that," she says. "We make up just 10 per cent of the whole population in the world. Why lose uniqueness?"

words by **Tomiris Orozoeva**
photography from personal archive
of Ainur Bainazarova

Newly-elected Vice President of Administration, Ainur Bainazarova, promises to popularize charity events within the walls of her alma-mater.

Ainur, what was the reason behind your decision to run for the KSA's position of VP of Administration?

Well, I think that the position of VP of Administration suits me more than VP of Finance or VP of Sport and Culture, because I'm familiar with this kind of responsibilities, I really like them and feel myself confident. Secondly, because I have a clear vision and understanding of work on the position of VP of Administration. And if you will ask me why I did not prefer the position of Deputy BCB-4, I'd say that it's just not enough for me to be a Deputy.

Could you present and clarify your election program, if any (do not confuse with the program of the "Barys" party).

One of the reasons why I applied to KSA was strong feeling of some kind of inequality that our students face. And I based my program on this factor.

Health care program:

1. Cancer awareness. Free diagnostics, guest lecturers and different promotions.

2. Popularization of Blood donation.

3. Promotions of healthy lifestyle (HIV awareness, drugs and smoking free lifestyle.)

Charity. Dedicated to veterans, orphans and children with serious illnesses. I plan to organize major Victory day celebration on annual basis, promoting patriotism and respect for elder generation. Also, supporting and taking care of Veterans during the year (not only on May 9). I believe, it's our direct obligation. I also want to promote charity, organize monthly visits to the orphanage, support of charitable foundations and public funds.

Rebranding of KSA. Today we see that KSA lost students' trust which is a crucial point. Before it had bad communication channels with students and poor research of their interests. We need changes in Constitution, even our administration agrees that it's outdated. I would like to create high performing team this year and, thanks to my position, I have authority to do so.

KIMEP Unity. The last fundamental point in my program is unity. Is KIMEP our second home, and should we build supportive relationships with each other? Just like a family. Remember Nauryz celebration, Sport Day, or Family Day, when we are all together, having some delicious food and a lot of fun. At this particular moments I always feel happy of being a KIMEP student. I would like to see more such events on campus. I also would like to provide more opportunities for our students to show

their abilities and skills. We can create university anthem, brotherhoods, possibly develop a new version of symbol (owl), create stylish uniform, set common values, and so on. It is important because in comparison with other universities, we lack team spirit.

Do you have life experience or specific skills which might assist your work in KSA?

Yes, I do. On my second year of study I found a job on headhunter.kz. I was working in "Cross Group" organization which provides services for oil and gas industry companies. I had worked there for eight months as a corporate development specialist.

At high school, I've undergone additional training from the Tomsk State University of Control Systems and Radioelectronics, resulting in acquiring certificates in IT, design, Microsoft Office, presentation, and strong team-working skills.

I already organized two great charity events and understood that I possess good managing skills.

What problems you see at KIMEP? Which of them are priorities in solving for you?

KIMEP is a great place for getting higher education. But, there are many sides to be improved. The first what we need to solve is low involvement

of current students in the student life. KSA is a "bridge" that connects students and administration which is almost ruined at the moment. KSA should find the way to rebuild strong connection between students, staff and faculty to collect ideas and suggestions. Work of KSA should be visible and efficient. I think, it is our starting point.

During the election debates "Barys" mentioned that party wants to make changes to the Constitution. Which articles exactly you want to change and how?

There are no regulations on the work of the Judicial Committee. Vice-President of Administration is in the charge of this committee. Roughly saying, according to the current version of Constitution, the only responsibility of this committee is to decide whether to exclude the person from KSA if there are any incoming complains. But usually no one complains, even in the case of most severe underperformance. Whole work of KSA Cabinet might suffer of someone's laziness, and irresponsibility. In my opinion, each individual member's performance should be constantly monitored and analyzed.

What is your personal benefit from working at KSA?

I don't want to graduate just as

Ainur Bainazarova:

"I don't want to graduate just as Miss KIMEP"



Miss KIMEP 2015. I feel like I have something more to give. Some kind of unfulfilled potential inside me. And being the first female at the position of Vice-President of Administration, I can say to my own self "yes, Ainur, you can do more and you definitely should."

Whispering Stars

“

I comment Whispering KIMEP to anger hypocrites, nerds and other vermin.

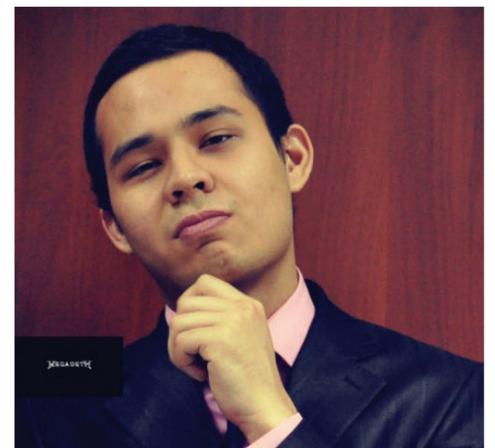
”



Pavel Tkachenko - our winner. He commented 35 times in Sept. claiming that his only reason for such an active commenting was "to anger hypocrites, nerds and other vermin."



Smart Solutions happened to be the 3rd star commentator, writing 22 comments in one month.



Sardor Nurmatov is "interested in sharing his opinion when attention is caught by interesting article or topic." He wrote 12 comments in Sept.



2nd place - Artur Kulchiev who wrote 29 comments. He thinks his comments will barely change anyone's opinion on any subject because nowadays "everybody cares about nothing."



On the 4th place is DaeSun Sim. He comments Whispering to share information and ideas with public, and "promote the goal of being successful, and achieving elite and greatness."



Efim Akhilsky commented 8 times in Sept. When the discussion forms around Big4, Efim is always ready to give his insight. He is shocked about students' fanaticism with this topic.

Those all-time-same people who seem to spend days and nights commenting all of the clever and stupid posts on Whispering KIMEP - anonymous and super popular, among KIMEP students, VK public group.

Surya namaskar: 12 yoga asanas to power up before exams

words & photography
by **Olga Loginova**

Are you stressed out because of upcoming mid-terms? Lacking physical and mental powers to complete home assignments? Need an extra-battery? Surya namaskar ('the greeting of the sun') is a great way to recharge if you are running out of energy. It is traditionally performed in the early morning when the sun rises, but can be done anytime you need a dash of vitality.



Pranamasana (praying pose): stand straight with your feet together. Put your hands together as you exhale

Hasta uttanasana: as you inhale, raise your arms above the head and straighten your spine, bend a little bit backward

Padahasthasana: bend down as you exhale

Ashva shanchalana (rider's pose): as you inhale, put your hands near your feet and make a big step back with your left leg. The right foot should be right in between your hands

Adha mukha shvanasana (dog's pose): put your right leg back, your hands at a shoulder width and straighten your back as you exhale.



Bhujangasana (cobra's pose) front surface of your legs touches the floor, the shoulders are down, and the core is stretching up



Ashtanga namaskar asana: as you inhale, bend your knees and touch the floor with your chin, chest, neck and lower leg.

We want to express our gratitude to Mukhiyatbek Kadirov for his kind support in preparing visual materials.

So Many Books, So Little Time

words by **Zarrina Mulloboeva**
photo from **KIMEP archive**

And when you actually manage to find time to read a good book, there are so many of them you spend all of the free time choosing one. Here are some must-read books for young people that can entertain as well as teach you a lesson.



- Freedom** by Jonathan Franzen
- The Side of Paradise** by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Norwegian Wood** by Haruki Murakami
- 1984** by George Orwell
- One Hundred Years of Solitude** by Gabriel Garcia Marques
- Lolita** by Vladimir Nabokov
- A Farewell to Arms** by Ernest Hemingway
- The Grapes of Wrath** by John Steinbeck
- The Art of Happiness** by the Dalai Lama
- Lord of the Flies** by William Golding
- Civilization and Its Discontents** by Sigmund Freud
- Stranger** by Albert Camus
- Brave New World** by Aldous Huxley
- Crime and Punishment** by Fyodor Dostoevskiy
- The Running Man** by Stephen King



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