

Subscribe to LiTnews

Secure your copy of LiTnews by getting it home delivered.

For 30 a quarter you will receive each issue of LiTnews delivered to your door by post.

That's LTL30 in Lithuania, \$30 for America, Australia and other countries outside of the EU, and €20 for postal delivery within the EU.

LiTnews is published fortnightly and features news, analysis and statistics important to Lithuania.

For more details on subscriptions and advertising email: info@litnews.lt or call +370 617 28606.

Haiti earthquake – EU coordinates aid

Over €130 million is being channelled into relief and rehabilitation efforts. More will follow.

An earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck Haiti on 12 January. Within hours of the disaster the EU provided €3 million for immediate relief activities. An additional €27 million has since been released, along with €100 million for early rehabilitation and reconstruction. Half of this is new money, and half will be redirected from funds already set aside for Haiti.

Some €200 million more will be available for longer term rehabilitation. All figures could rise if assessments show more money is needed. These contributions are in addition to the €92 million already provided by individual EU countries.

The figures were announced following an emergency meeting in Brussels, where the deployment of European soldiers to Haiti was also on the table. No decision has yet been taken. An international conference on support for Haiti is also likely in the coming weeks. It will assess how to convert the international desire to help into practical solutions, said the EU high representative for foreign affairs, Catherine Ashton.

The death toll is currently estimated at 200 000. Some 250 000 people are in urgent need of assistance and a staggering 3 million have been affected.



• Lithuanian Criminal Police photo

Prime Minister thanks authorities for seizing cocaine smuggled through Klaipėda

Vilnius, Jan 28 (ELTA) - On Thursday, Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius thanked Police Commissioner General Vizgirdas Telyčėnas and his team for the successful execution of an international operation, during which 500 kg of cocaine was seized in Klaipėda. This was the largest ever drug haul in Lithuania, and one of the biggest in the European Union.

“The success of such a complex operation shows that Lithuanian police and police officers are capable of performing the tasks on a global level. We have something to

be proud of,” said Kubilius.

During the meeting, one of the priorities of the current Government was discussed - the reduction of corruption.

Commissioner General Vizgirdas Telyčėnas assured Prime Minister Kubilius that special attention would be paid to combating corruption and bribery in the police system.

As reported, the massive half tonne of cocaine was found in a container delivered in a ship from South America. The drug seizure

operation in Klaipėda was carried out by the Lithuanian Criminal Police Bureau in conjunction with authorities from Latvia, America and Ecuador.

According to various calculations, the value of the almost 500 kilos of cocaine hidden inside frozen fish stands at around LTL50-100 million (€14-29).

According to recent trends, cocaine is mostly transported to European countries from Africa, which has already become a kind of logistic centre.

Skikas admits guilt

Vilnius, Feb 3 (ELTA) - Former Deputy Minister of Health Artūras Skikas, accused of bribery, admitted his guilt in court, however, he said he asked for the money as support for his party.

When Judge Danutė Mickevičienė asked whether he admitted his guilt, Skikas said he did, however, during the pre-trial investigation, the former minister of health denied it. According to Skikas, he changed his opinion because when he was arrested he suffered an emotional trauma.

“Yes, I admit guilt. I admit that I asked Kalibatas to support the party's division (Lithuanian Liberal and Center Party Šilutės Division - ELTA). I regret being stupid, because when I asked for support, I meant official support only. Maybe I was naive to having taken the money without arranging it officially. I did not do that, and I regret that,” he said in court.

It was found that from November last year, Skikas and Kalibatas met six times, and at the seventh meeting, the latter gave Skikas money. During the meetings Skikas asked Kalibatas to turn off his mobile phone.

“I admit everything. (...) I can only apologize once again for my indiscriminate behaviour and its consequences. I hope that the court will take the right decision,” said Skikas.

ELTA reminds, that Skikas is accused of requesting and provoking Vytenis Kalibatas, Head of Nacionalinis Kraujo Centras (the National Blood Centre), to give him a bribe of LTL20,000-30,000 (€5,787-€8,680).

The deputy health minister requested a bribe for not imposing a disciplinary penalty to the head of Nacionalinis Kraujo Centras as it was demanded by the National Audit Office. The bribe also was supposed to be a guarantee that the director would have protection against the leadership of the Ministry of Health, and that he could continue heading the public institution without any problems.



VIS is now enrolling primary and middle school children for the 2010-2011 school year.

Contact us for information or a school tour at admin@vischool.lt

(+370) 5 2761564; (+370) 698 83918
(+370) 698 86218

www.vischool.lt

European Court of Human Rights to hear Paksas Case

Strasbourg, Jan 29 (ELTA) - On April 28, the Strasbourg-based Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights will start hearing the action lodged by MEP Rolandas Paksas, the impeached head of state, over the alleged conspiracy of political groups against him as president in 2003-2004. According to Paksas, he was deprived of his right to a defence, and an impartial and fair trial.

"The case is open after six years since I brought the action. It is started to be heard in the face of new circumstances which again prove that there has been a conspiracy aimed to remove the president who created problems for clans - the president, who strictly prohibited the establishment of torture chambers of a foreign country in Lithuania.

"I am convinced that justice will win as this case is not against Lithuania, but against the politicized clans and the system which organized the conspiracy under the name of Lithuania," Paksas said.

In the case at the European Court of Human Rights the defendant will be the Lithuanian Government, which has its own representative to the court.

Opposition groups discuss alternative Government

Vilnius, 19 January (ELTA) - On Tuesday, discussing a joint alternative Government programme, representatives of the Seimas opposition political groups formed an alternative programme working group and discussed the possibility of a new coalition.

"We propose to change the course of the current Government, which has deepened the crisis in Lithuania. Numerous countries of the European Union are handling this difficult times much easier, because they have chosen the promotion of domestic consumption, the reduction of taxes that fall on the shoulders of the weakest. Over a year, the unemployment increased almost four times, and it hit Lithuanian families and the very social system worst," said Deputy Elder of the Social Democrats political group Juozas Olekas.

Representatives of the Order and Justice political group, Labour Party, One Lithuania political group as well as representatives of mixed parties participated in the meeting of

the heads of opposition political groups.

"Currently, there are 59 members in the opposition. We see that there are conflicts in the ruling majority, the positions of some parliamentarians are in line with our proposal, this is a strong foundation on which we can unite.

"We offer a way that is socially fairer and easier, that would help Lithuania out of the hardship," said Olekas.

According to Leader of the Labor Party Viktoras Uspaskich, before going to Brussels after the New Year, he met with the heads of the Social Democrats and Order and Justice political groups.

According to the Vice Minister of the Order and Justice, Party Valentinas Mazuronis, there is need to change the Government. It is important to change the course of the Lithuanian management.

the committee's decisions are exceptional.

Viktoras Uspaskich is one of the accused in the criminal proceedings for fraudulent accountancy of the Labour Party.

According to Prosecutor at the Department of Organized Crime and Corruption at the Prosecutor's General Office Saulius Verseckas, further proceedings will only be possible if the EP gives its consent for bringing Viktoras Uspaskich to justice and lifting his legal immunity.

Uspaskich himself sent letters to the President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek, Head of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) (Guy Verhofstadt) and Chairman of the EP Legal Affairs committee Klaus-Henrich Lehne, complaining he has become a victim of political violence and comparing his case to that of former Yukos Head Michail Chodorkovskis, who was sentenced to eight years because of tax evasion.

Foreign Minister Ušackas steps down

Vilnius, Jan 20 (ELTA) - Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas decided to step down after the president expressed no confidence in him, reported the LNK News on late Wednesday.

Such a decision was made by the head of the Lithuanian diplomacy after the sitting of the ruling coalition on Wednesday evening. The coalition partners decided that the minister could not resume his work because of the lost confidence.

"The coalition agreed on viewing Ušackas as a foreign minister favourably, but, without any doubt, it is impossible not to react to the present situation," Leader of the Liberal Movement Eligijus Masiulis told reporters after the sitting.

"It will be as the coalition has decided. It means that I will obey the agreement of the coalition. (...) Yes (I will step down - ELTA)," the foreign minister said.

Restructuring of national intelligence system

The State Defence Council has approved, in substance, the concept for strengthening the control and coordination of intelligence, which was worked out at the initiative of President Dalia Grybauskaitė and which will serve as the basis for restructuring the national intelligence system.

According to the President, the need to make immediate restructuring changes evolved not only because of the evident shortcomings in coordinating and controlling intelligence and the politicized nature and insufficiently effective activities of the State Security Department, but also because of new threats to national security.

"The work of Lithuanian secret services must be depoliticized and organized in a way that would allow politicians responsible for national and economic security to immediately receive the necessary information for decision-making.

Reaching a political agreement on the control and coordination of intelligence marks the start of building a more effective intelligence system," the President underlined.

President appoints A. Ažubalis

The President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė received candidates to the position of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Chairman of the Seimas Committee for Foreign Affairs, Audronius Ažubalis.

The parties of the meeting discussed the vision and priorities of Lithuania's foreign policy and the prospects of cooperation between the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and exchanged views on how Lithuania's role could be strengthened within the European Union and NATO and in its relations with neighbouring countries.



• Photo: Valdas Kopūstas (ELTA)

EP to decide upon Uspaskich's immunity

Brussels, Jan 27 (ELTA) - During the closed session of the EU Committee on Legal Affairs, MEP Viktoras Uspaskich's parliamentary immunity will be decided upon.

During the closed session, Viktoras Uspaskich will have an opportunity to state his position. Afterwards, the Committee on

Legal Affairs will adopt a decision on the basis of which the EP Committee might propose to approve of the request of Lithuanian prosecutor's office to waive Uspaskich's legal immunity or on the contrary, to defend it.

The position of the committee is very important. The cases when MEPs do not approve of

CONTACTS

LiTnews is published by VŠĮ Mes Medija

The views expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the publisher.

Telephone: +370 5 2122448
Mobile: +370 617 28606

Editor
Ray Vyšniauskas
ray@litnews.lt
Deimantė Dokšaitė
deimante@litnews.lt

Alistair Day-Sirrat
alistair@litnews.lt
Information, Editorial,
Administration, Subscription,
Distribution: litnews@litnews.lt

LiTnews is available from:

Star 1 Airlines, Vilnius Airport Business Lounge, Kaunas Airport, Vilnius Tourist Information Centres, Scandinavian Business Centre, Vilnius University, Pasaka Cinema Boutique, embassies, Odontika, Verslo Namai.

Business centres - Europa, Barclays, Vilnius Business Triangle, Vilnius Municipality Building.

Hotels - Reval Hotel, Ramada Hotel, Shakespeare Hotel, Tiltó Hotel, Centrum Uniquestay Hotel, Klaipėda Hotel Vilnius, Radisson SAS Astorija, Stikliai Hotel, Centro Kubas Hotel, Grutthaus, Ramada,

Narutis, Mano Lisa, Holiday Inn, Best Western Vilnius, Mabre Residence Hotel, Hotel Barbacan Palace, Atrium, Panorama Hotel.

Restaurants - Cozy, Amatininkai, Sue's Indian Raja, Bistro 18, Zoe's Bar and Grill, The Dubliner, Tres Mexicanos, Café de Paris, Prie Universiteto, Užupio Picerija, Markus ir ko, Rene, Invino, Tapo d'oro, Le bohème, Savas Kampas, Bar Bobo, Pizza Jazz Vokiečių, Bunte Gans, Žemačiū Smuklė, Blusynė, Aula, Pilies St Kepyklėlė, Grand Casino, SkyBar.

LiTnews is printed by Grafija Spaustuvė.



Call or check on the internet for session times. All film titles written in original language, all films shown with original sound and Lithuanian subtitles.



IN THE LOOP

Director: Armando Iannucci Cast: Peter Capaldi, James Gandolfini, Tom Hollander, Steve Coogan, David Rashe Comedy, Great Britain, 2009

IN THE LOOP is a foul-mouthed comedy that draws on non-specific events to create a world that is terrifyingly familiar: The US President and UK Prime Minister fancy a war, but not everyone agrees that war is a good thing. US General Miller (James Gandolfini) The Sopranos, The Taking Of Pelham 123) certainly doesn't think so and neither does the British Secretary of State for International Development, Simon Foster (Tom Hollander) Pirates of the Caribbean, Pride and Prejudice). But when the mild-mannered minister inadvertently appears to back the war on prime-time television, he immediately attracts the attention of the PMs venomously aggressive communications chief Malcolm Tucker (reprised from The Thick of It by Peter Capaldi), who latches onto him like a hawk. Soon, the Brits are in Washington, where diplomatic relations collide with trans-Atlantic spin doctors and Fosters off-hand remark quickly spirals into an insurmountable mountain of conflict.



TAKING WOODSTOCK

Director Ang Lee, USA, 2009

A generation began in his backyard. From Academy Award-winning director Ang Lee (Brokeback Mountain, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon), comes Taking Woodstock, a new comedy inspired by the true story of Elliot Tiber (Demetri Martin) and his family, who inadvertently played a pivotal role in making the famed Woodstock Music and Arts Festival into the happening that it was.

It's 1969 and Elliot Tiber, a down-on-his-luck interior designer in Greenwich Village, New York, has to move back upstate to help his parents run their dilapidated Catskills motel, The El Monaco. The banks about to foreclose; his father wants to burn the place down, but hasn't paid the insurance; and Elliot is still figuring how to come out to his parents.

When Elliot hears that a neighbouring town has pulled the permit on a hippie music festival, he calls the producers, thinking he could drum up some much-needed business for the motel. Three weeks later, half a million people are on their way to his neighbours farm in White Lake, NY, and Elliot finds himself swept up in a generation-defining experience that would change his life and American culture forever.



Tel: (85) 261 15 16

Šv. Ignoto 3/4, Vilnius

www.kinopasaka.lt

Irish court convicts four companies for discriminating against Lithuanian employees

Dublin, Jan 19 (LETA-ELTA) - Four Irish companies have been ordered to pay a total of €24,500 to former staff who they discriminated against because they were not Irish nationals, the local newspaper *Irish Times* reports.

The Irish Equality Tribunal issued four separate rulings yesterday involving three Lithuanians and a Latvian, who were either unfairly dismissed or not paid the same redundancy payments as their Irish colleagues.

Two of the Lithuanians, Irmantas Stukonis and Vygandas Urbonavičius, worked with the 'Coalport Building' company.

Stukonis was dismissed by the company following a robbery at a building site where he worked as a security guard. He alleges that he told his Lithuanian colleague at the firm that he was assaulted by two men during the robbery and was allowed to go home. He did not speak English well and relied on his colleague to help him communicate at work.

At a subsequent meeting, the company's officials demanded that he produce medical evidence to prove the assault and denied that it had allowed him to return home after the robbery took place. When he did not produce medical evidence he was dismissed.

The tribunal found the firm did not make any credible effort to ensure the complainant understood the gravity of the allegations made against him. It did not provide interpretation during the disciplinary meeting or have a disciplinary policy at the time. It also failed to investigate the circumstances of the robbery before dismissing Stukonis and three colleagues, who were all Lithuanian.

"I am satisfied on balance that this would not have happened to an Irish employee in similar circumstances as that worker would have understood the allegation against him/her, and would have been able to articulate a defence to the charges," said the tribunal.

It awarded Stukonis €8,500 compensation for his distress.

In another case the tribunal ordered "Securazone Man-hour" to pay Lithuanian Utaras Eimas €3,000 for discrimination and €10,000 for discrimination dismissal. It found the firm discriminated against foreign nationals by refusing to allow them to rotate the more dangerous night shifts – a perk enjoyed by Irish staff. It also dismissed all four foreign national staff when there was a downturn.

In US Kubilius argues that crisis is ending in Lithuania

Vilnius, Feb 2 (ELTA) - Lithuania came out of the crisis and it is time to invest into long term state strategy, which is impossible without new technologies, said Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius at a meeting with heads of IT companies during his visit to the United States.

In California, during a meeting with international corporations Oracle, Cisco and HP, the further development of these companies in Lithuania and new investments, the application of IT innovations in private and public sectors was discussed. Kubilius presented the possibilities in Lithuania, as an IT skills and service centre in the regional market.

The prime minister noted that 40% of Lithuanians have a university degree, which is two times higher than the EU - 15 average, 92% use e-banking services and 88% declare their income to tax online, to illustrate the country's openness to innovation.

Oracle President Safra Catz

agreed that crisis is the best time for new changes and essential reforms. The heads of Oracle expressed their willingness to share their experience in developing e-governance projects and interest in investing into the areas of education and tax collection.

Cisco heads suggested setting up joint working groups to examine opportunities related to the development of e-governance, implementation of modern management systems, opportunities to set up data centres in Lithuania and develop the next generation computer infrastructure.

The prime minister underlined the Government's commitment to support the development of high technology, as well as ambitious Government's plans to seek that IT, laser technologies, biotechnologies, nanotechnologies would reach 25% of GDP by 2015 and 80% of the country's export.

Kubilius Presented Top Government Priorities to the President

Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius says that, with the aim of seeking more guidance and clearer results, the working style of the Government is going to change by clarifying year-to-year priorities and presenting major works to be done to the President and the public at the beginning of every year.

"We are planning our activities so that our people would know what the top priorities of the Government are and who is responsible for the work to be done. The Government intends to base its activities on strategic planning principles, priority setting and the tightening of responsibility of ministries for the implementation of those priorities", Prime Minister Kubilius said.

Reducing unemployment was among the most pressing priorities. "Last year our main goal was to maintain financial stability. This year we will focus on the reduction in unemployment and job creation. Unemployment has a tendency to continue growing for some time even after the economy has recovered; therefore this issue

calls for increased attention by the central and local authorities. This should also help address the alarming and growing problem of immigration," the Head of the Cabinet said.

The Prime Minister identified four key priorities:

- Job creation, reduction in unemployment and encouragement of economic growth;
- Structural reforms in social care, health care, education and energy;
- Combating corruption; modernisation of public administration systems and public service;
- Consolidation of society for the creation of a vision for the future of the country "Lithuania 2020".

The Prime Minister also said that each minister would submit a list of specific priority actions of their respective ministries in 2010. Hence society will be able to see the results of Government activities and evaluate performance of separate ministries and the Government.



Palanga - One of Europe's Best Beaches

One of the most popular resorts in Lithuania - Palanga has been listed in the 'Hot List' by the British *Sunday Times*. The list compiled by *Sunday Times Travel* reveals Europe's 20 best beaches for sun and sea for the summer of 2010.

Palanga is portrayed as "a cracking little resort town with a white, sandy beach, pine forests, sand dunes and fizzing nightlife" – a perfect description of Lithuania's most popular holiday destination.

The article by *Sunday Times* mentions the relative low prices in the country, which should be a major selling point for visitors in the current economic climate.

"A terrific amber museum"

which houses one of the largest amber pieces in Europe, the "Sun Stone" and Botanical Gardens are highlighted as the most popular cultural activities in the resort. The Jewel in the crown – the Curonian Spit is listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, is just a short drive from Palanga.

Augusta Jaudegytė, UK Director of the Lithuanian National Tourism Office said: "Lithuanian seaside is a perfect choice for a beach holiday, which is sometimes overlooked by British tourists. The vibrant towns surrounded by shifting dunes and pine forests have lots to offer from beautiful beaches to vibrant towns and unique culture."

Firemen trusted most, MPs least - survey

Vilnius, Jan 19 (ELTA) - At the end of 2009, Lithuanian residents trusted the Fire and Rescue Service most and, almost traditionally, members of the Seimas least.

Over 85% of all participants of a public survey expressed trust in the fire-fighters.

A lot of trust was shown in the Church (71%), the Presidential Service (69%), national defence (59%), the Lithuanian media (53%), the State Border Guard Service (52%), the Constitutional Court (55%), the state social insurance fund SoDra (51%).

More than half of adult residents trusted each of these institutions.

According to the same survey conducted by the public research and marketing company Baltijos Tyrimai on December 19-29, people distrust the Seimas and

the Government most: 84% distrust the Seimas, 76% distrust the Government.

More than half of all residents also distrust courts (69%), the prosecutors' office (61%), commercial banks (61%) and municipalities (57%).

Since November, the number of people satisfied with the Government, the police and State Border Guard Service increased slightly - by 3 percentage points.

Over a month, the number of people satisfied with the state social insurance fund SoDra slumped 8 percentage points.

Over November, the number of respondents satisfied with the State Security Department decreased by 4 percentage points, Special Investigation Service and trade unions - by 3 percentage points.

Odontika

Dental clinic

www.odontika.com

- Highly professional dental specialists
- Friendly English speaking Doctors and Staff

- Modern Clinic in Vilnius Old Town
- Full range of treatments, including:
 - Implants • Whitening and Hygiene • Crown and Bridge work
 - Veneers and Onlays • Fillings

Open Monday-Friday 9am-8pm
Weekend appointments available upon agreement

Krivikų str. 5, Vilnius
Tel. / fax 00 370 5 2153135, mob. 00 370 614 42098
E-mail: info@odontika.com, www.odontika.com

Classifieds

This issue we introduce our new Classifieds. Looking to sell something, get a job, need a worker, rent a place or offer some other service - see if our readers can help.

English Lessons

English-Lithuanian tutor (native speaker) available for private lessons.

Interested clients please call +370 687 52408.

Apartment for Sale

One bedroom apartment for sale, 45.83m², third floor of six with underground parking.

Close to transport, schools and shops.

Grey finish, south facing in Pilaitė. Available immediately, priced to sell at LTL 200,000.

Phone: +370 5212 1677

Property Management

Rental & Property Management Service - We offer a full range of tenant sourcing and property management services to meet your needs.

We have prospective tenants for all regions and in particular apartments needed in the Mindaugo str/ Centre areas. Call Tomas: +370 614 42092

Sports Touring Teams

Would your Club or Pub team be interested in touring Lithuania? The Lithuanian Cricket and Rugby Federations are looking to host fixtures in 2010. Email: info@cricketlithuania.com



Lithuania Breeds 'em Tough

Ray Vyšniauskas

The perennial favourite filler on the news is the granny who takes her first skydive on her hundredth birthday. It's always a woman, and the newsreader, nearly always a man, comments that he'd love to be that sprightly at her age.

You see these x-gen grannies, but I'll tell you now that they're no match for our own Lithuanian pensioners.

You see these grannies in the West, and they are so tightly secured to an instructor and are required to do nothing other than have a nap, and you feel the instructor could jump from 10,000 feet with a goldfish bowl and not spill a drop.

The granny always says something like: "That was fun and I can't wait to do it again." But let's face it, she's only saying that because likely she has slept through the whole thing, and it was only the camera crew that woke her up for the interview.

I would like to see a granny really go for it. I would even settle for an 80 year old say, standing by the open door of a plane and throwing her parachute out first, and having to jump after it, put it on and pull the rip-cord before hitting the ground, now that would be something to see. But where to find such grannies?

Well I see them everyday here in Lithuania. They may be frail looking, but these girls are tough, and that's why I was a bit worried recently when the pensioners had a few protests against the government - they could have made the riots in front of parliament in 2009 look like a kindergarten playground.

I've seen them on busses that lean more than most motorbikes as they tear through town and country. As I hang on for dear life I see the faces of these grannies, my fellow passengers, no concern for their safety, simply picking up the odd potato that centrifugal force sends flying across the aisle. In fact I try to position myself between a couple of them as make-shift airbags as they stand in their huge fur coats.

I can see in their eyes that they are not thinking of their own safety, instead wondering why the bus is going so slow.

I see these grannies in the streets. In the snow I'm not used to walking on frozen ground, and shuffle down the ice lanes as if my pants have been poohed and I hold on to any walls I can reach. Just to mock me the grannies go zooming past, impatiently nudging me aside as they speed off over the horizon in front of me. They carry a week's grocery shopping and usually they travel in packs.

And you get between a gang of grannies and a sale of cucumbers or tomatoes at the market and you will know the feeling of running with the bulls.

And how do they breed them so tough? Well in the land of pork, potatoes and pints they teach them discipline. How else would Lithuania girls have the lowest body fat index in the EU? They send them out in the snow, on cobblestone streets covered in ice - in high heels. And then there's the legendary goat training.

Don't know what I'm talking about? Well read on, maybe you remember this story from a couple of years ago that was widely

reported around the world:

Miss Popova from Klaipėda was 93 years old, but not quite as frail as she looked and shocked two young robbers by fighting back fiercely and grabbing one of them by the testicles.

The plucky pensioner, who says she developed a "grip like iron" due to her many years of milking goats, held on tightly until police arrived on the scene to rescue the whimpering man.

She told police: "He started screaming like an animal and his friend was trying to pull him free, but I have a grip like iron."

When officers arrived Miss Popova, who still had the man's wedding tackle tightly in her grip, finally released her prey so police could take the injured man to hospital and his accomplice off to jail.

A police spokesman said: "They would not have got far, one of them could hardly walk and seemed pleased when he saw the police car."



New Board for World Lithuanian Youth Association

The new World Lithuanian Youth Association (Pasaulio Lietuviu Jaunimo Sajunga or PLJS) board was elected in South America during the 13th Congress recently, and comprises: Kęstas Pikūnas (pictured - UK, Chair), Martynas Gaurilčikas (Germany), Juan Ignacio Forment Kalvelis (Argentina), Giedrė Kazlauskaitė (USA), Sta-

sys Kuliavas (Canada), Saulius Simonavičius (Canada), Petras Vaičiūnas (Canada), Nicolas Velo (Uruguay).

The next and 14th Congress will be held in the UK in the summer 2013. One more member was added to the board later, a representative from the UK and head of the organization committee: Karolis Adomaitis.



IWAV Food Drive

The International Women's Association of Vilnius (IWAV) recently held an action to collect food for the needy in our society.

In conjunction with Prisma at the Ozas Shopping Centre, IWAV volunteered their services to collect donations of food to be given to Mother Teresa Sisters of Charity Shelter, the village of Dailidės and the Village of Rudiškės.

The public responded generously and IWAV were already well on their way to collecting the 1000 kilogram target of food that they were aiming for by the Saturday.

The children of IWAV members and supporters were also eager volunteers and worked tirelessly throughout the whole weekend to make the event a success.

A Truly Thai Massage
"A new experience of an ancient Eastern world."

Thai massage

Where you can renew your body and mind...

SALATHAI: Gacno g. 1, tel. +370 5 261 5613
Mob. +370 694 19 684, info@salathai.lt
www.salathai.lt Open Daily 10.00 - 21.00

Woven Sash Symbolises 20 Years of Independence



The slogan 'Believe in Freedom' and the stylized pattern of a woven Lithuanian sash will symbolise the twentieth anniversary of the Re-establishment of Lithuania's Independence. The pattern is the main graphic symbol in the logo of the anniversary, which is celebrated this year.

Believe in Freedom reflects the main value which united the Lithuanian nation and helped it to keep alive the aspiration to re-establish statehood and led towards the 11th of March 1990.

For the creation of the logo, designer Giedrė Jaronytė used the colours of the Lithuanian national flag, which represent the country's traditions, values and freedom.

The tiniest graphic elements of the logo - rectangles and squares - form a pattern with traditional motifs, and alludes to modern technologies such as a digital code. The original and modern expression of motifs from Lithuanian folk-art in the logo points to the innovative state of Lithuania.

The logo will be used during the events marking the twentieth anniversary of the 11th of March, also in publications, posters, media and internet, on souvenirs and document forms of state institutions.



Lithuanian jazz power team plays at 606 and Charlie Wrights International

10 and 11 February, 2009. Leonid Shinkarenko, an acoustic and electric bass virtuoso, and his band Jazz 4 are appearing at 606 club on 10th February and at Charlie Wrights International on 11th February. Next to the leader of the band Leonid Shinkarenko, the concert features one of the best jazz trumpet players in Lithuania Valerijus Ramoška, pianist 'one man orchestra' Dainius Pulauskas and the drummer Linas Būda. The concert is presented in collaboration with the Lithuanian Embassy in London, Star 1 airlines and Lithuanian weekly Londono žinios.



Another Burns Night Success

The fearsome Saor Patrol stole the show bringing the unique sound of Scottish pipes and drums into the 21st century at the 11th Annual Burns Night, a traditional charity event held at Vilnius Rotušė (Town Hall) on Saturday 30 January.

The Gala Charity ball and raffle, drawn by Rūta Mikelkevičiūtė, raised over LTL15,000 for Mamu Unija Foundation, which supports parents of children with cancer in Lithuania.

The event was attended by 230 guest who were treated to fine Haggis (traditional Scottish dish) and ceilidh dancing with the Benachally Ceilidh band.



Sir Roger Moore in Vilnius Again

Sir Roger Moore made his second visit to Vilnius, this time to attend a concert at the Philharmonic which he himself suggested and helped organise. He also attended a charity dinner, both in his role as UNICEF ambassador.

During Roger's first visit to Vilnius in May 2009 he suggested to UNICEF staff that he could help or-

ganise a concert with Itamar Golan and Julian Rachlin, who were both born in Vilnius. Sir Roger works with these classic musicians regularly and was instrumental in bringing them to Vilnius along with Richard Hyung-ki Joo and Aleksey Igudesman.

President Dalia Grybauskaitė attended both events as patron and

stressed the importance of raising funds for the construction of schools in the Ghor Province where Lithuania leads reconstruction efforts.

Sir Roger and wife Kristina Tholstrup enjoyed their second visit to Vilnius, though they were somewhat surprised by the especially cold weather.



Cultural Capitals move on

Essen, Pécs and Istanbul celebrate their debut as European capitals of culture

Three European cities have kicked off a year-long culture fest featuring exhibitions, music and theatre.

The cities chosen as this year's European capitals of culture are Essen and the Ruhr region of Germany, Pécs in southern Hungary and Istanbul in Turkey. Taking over from Linz (Austria) and Vilnius (Lithuania), the three have put together a packed pro-

gramme of events that should attract tens of thousands of visitors.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the EU's culture capital programme. Events must reflect the city's European character and directly involve residents. They must also promote the cities' overall development. To that end, each 'capital' receives €1.5m in EU funds.

Organisers of the Ruhr programme hope to contribute to the revival of the heavily urbanised area in western Germany - home to well over 7 million people. Istanbul is playing up its history as a crossroads of European civilisation and a bridge between Europe and Asia, and the Hungarian city of Pécs is highlighting its rich multicultural heritage.

SUE'S INDIAN RAJA
RESTAURANT

You gave us the inspiration and we have established Your name for posterity's sake from Lithuania to Estonia by setting up a chain to serve Indian and Thai food.

Our existing restaurant "SUE'S INDIAN RAJA" in Vilnius has done India proud by its standards of excellence...not long ago, our once owned Riga restaurant by the same name was among the 100 best restaurants in the world.

In humility, we bask in Your glory and stand committed to carry forward our good work as a dedicated team to make

"SUE'S INDIAN RAJA"
Odiming Str. 3
LT- 01122,
Vilnius

A hallmark of India - far away in Lithuania so that the coming generations would thank You for settings up the foundation.

suesrestaurants@gmail.com

ANNA VAASI
ORIGINAL CROCHETED WEDDING & EVENING DRESSES

M.K.Čiurlionio Str. 7/1-1
Vilnius, Lithuania
+370 687 45773
annavaasi@inbox.lt
www.annavaasi.lt

E-commerce accounted for 12% of turnover in EU27 in 2008

In January 2009, 93% of enterprises with ten or more employees had access to the internet in the EU27 and 82% had a broadband internet connection. Among other uses, internet access enables enterprises to buy and sell products electronically: in the EU27 in 2008, 12% of turnover was generated from e-commerce, according to Eurostat.

Almost all enterprises in Finland, Denmark, Austria and Slovakia have internet access

In January 2009, the highest proportion of enterprises with internet access in the

EU27 were recorded in Finland (100%), Denmark, Austria and Slovakia (98%) and Germany (97%). The percentage was less than 90% in only six Member States: Romania (72%), Bulgaria (83%), Latvia and Hungary (87%), Cyprus (88%) and Greece (89%).

The proportion of enterprises with a broadband connection in January 2009 was above 90% in Finland (94%), Spain and Malta (93%) and France (92%). Only in Romania (40%), Lithuania (57%) and Poland (58%) did less than 60% of enterprises have a broadband connection.

On the job front

How well-equipped are European companies to meet the challenges of global competition and the recent recession? The 2009 European Company Survey provides some clues.

Eurofound an EU research agency based in Dublin, surveyed 27,000 public and private-sector employers across the 27 EU countries and Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The main results are not due out until March. But the first findings show many companies use hiring, pay and work policies that are flexible - that is to boost their ability to respond to changes in the business climate. Labour market flexibility is a key element of the EU's strategy for making Europe more dynamic and competitive.

About two out of three companies use freelancers or other forms of temporary help, and more than half employ at least one person on a fixed-term contract.

Part-time work has also become more widespread. Two-thirds of the companies questioned offer part-time work but part-timers in highly skilled positions are still uncommon.

Just over a third of employers offer performance-related pay, while just 14% of the private firms surveyed have profit-sharing schemes.

Flexibility cuts both ways. About 56% of European companies now let employees vary their work hours to suit personal schedules - up from 48% five years ago.

Moog's Research and Technology Development Centre to be Established in Lithuania

The U.S. company Moog Medical Devices, which owns the Lithuanian company Viltechmeda, will invest another €4 M in Lithuania to establish its major European scientific research and technology development centre in the nearest future.

Moog Medical Devices will employ 50 Lithuanian professionals in the new establishment based in the science and

business valley Santara located in the capital city. The centre will focus on the development of medical technologies and innovations.

Moog Medical Devices, a part of the international Moog Inc group, acquired a 100% holding of the Lithuanian company Viltechmeda for €15 M in January 2009.

Ūkio bankas issues fixed-rate bond issue in euro

From 22 January to 19 February of this year Ūkio bankas will offer medium-term (369 days) bonds in euro with the fixed annual return of 5%. The nominal value of one bond is EUR 100. The accrued interest will be paid at maturity on 24

February 2011. Ūkio bankas bonds will be available from all the bank's branches and units, as well as from the electronic banking system Eta bankas.

Swedbank economic predictions

According to the forecasts of Swedbank analysts, the economic recession in Lithuania is to be over in the second half of 2010; however, the rate of recovery will depend on the situation in export markets and on the government's ability to manage the growing debt and reduce taxes.

Although in the second half of the year the economy is expected to grow, the country's GDP this year will balance

at the level of 2009. In 2010, the unemployment rate will reach its peak; while exporters will recover gradually, business oriented to domestic consumption will continue to experience the burden of the crisis. In 2011, the country's GDP is expected to grow by a modest 3%. These forecasts are given in the most recent macroeconomic overview of Sweden and Baltic states prepared by Swedbank.

Three Lithuanian Success Stories

Some of the most innovative projects of the European Union Structural Funds will be presented during the RegioStars 2010 Awards in Brussels.

Lithuania is represented by three success stories: Computer literacy training by Association Langas į ateitį, social integration in the restaurant Mano Guru and website www.esparama.lt

The RegioStars awards are given for the most successful EU-funded projects which are being implemented by applying the best ideas, progressive and innovative methods. These awards are made by the European Commission. 87 projects from 27 EU Member States were nominated for RegioStars 2010 Awards. The RegioStars Jury chose 24 finalists, who presented their projects 27 January.

"Computer Literacy Basics for Lithuanian E-citizens" implemented by "Langas į ateitį", the work rehabilitation project initiated by Public Institution Social Assistance Projects implemented along with a popular salad bar Mano Guru in Vilnius, and EU structural assistance website www.esparama.lt were established during the 2004-2006 financing period and have not only reached their goals and met the criteria established by the RegioStars Jury, but also are unique due to their wide scope, continuity, popularisation of partnership ideas and created value added.

The project designed for modern social rehabilitation being implemented in salad restaurant Mano Guru in Vilnius has been nominated for RegioStars 2010 Award category "City Star: the integration of migrants or marginalised groups in urban areas".

The oasis of healthy food opened in Vilnius five years ago distinguishes itself not only for its healthy food, but also for its staff. Some of the staff of Mano Guru have successfully

overcome dependence and undergo work rehabilitation - the integrated rehabilitation method is highly popular abroad, but only recently introduced in Lithuania. In 2009 Mano Guru was voted the most hospitable café in Vilnius.

In the Information and Communication category the project implemented by Langas į ateitį has been selected. In the name of one goal to provide fundamentals of computer literacy to economically active residents of Lithuania - it developed partnerships between the government and the leaders of Lithuanian telecommunications, banking and internet business. During the project implementation computer literacy fundamentals were provided to 50,400 adults.

In RegioStars 2010 Information and Communication category "Websites offering quality information and showing the European added-value" the EU structural assistance website www.esparama.lt has been nominated, which is administered by the Ministry of Finance and 14 other EU assistance administering institutions. This website is the basic source of information on EU structural assistance to Lithuania updated on daily basis.

One more project which will participate in the presentation by the finalists is INTERREG project "Establishment of Multi-centres in Marijampolė and Olshteen" being implemented by Lithuania together with Poland, which aims at instalment of computer rooms and e-libraries in public libraries of the aforementioned towns. The basic operator of this project is the public library of Olshteen in Poland and the partner of the project is public library of Petras Kriaučiūnas in Marijampolė.

The Awards Ceremony will take place in May 2010 in Brussels.

First Solar Cell Factory Opens in Vilnius

The first solar cell production line was opened in Vilnius on 26 January. Modernios E-technologijos (MET) and Precizika Metrology (PM) invested €2.9 million into the project.

Dainius Kreivys, the Minister of Economy, participated in the opening of the production line and expressed his hope that this was the birth of the totally new sector in Lithuania's economy, which could grow into a significant industry and would become a pillar of growth.

"It is estimated that the clean-tech

sector is creating seven times more of added value than traditional industries. I hope that this investment will become a great example of how high technology is becoming an every day reality in Lithuania's industry," said Mr. Kreivys during the opening ceremony of the factory.

According to Precizika Metrology CEO Algimantas Barakauskas, it is estimated that the line should generate about €5.8 million in the annual revenue, even though the 2010 revenue might reach €2.9 million.

New Flights from Star1

From 28 March 2010, Star1 will offer direct flights from Vilnius to Edinburgh on Thursdays and Sundays, and from 7 May on Fridays and Sundays. Star1 will also be adding a direct Girona flight in May, on Thursdays and Sundays, and will resume its Dublin - Vilnius service on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 29 May.

airBaltic and Reval Hotels Join Forces in Co-branding

airBaltic and Reval Hotels have announced extended co-operation. The companies will join forces under the "Reval Hotels, Member of airBaltic Hotels" brand, in order to differentiate and better promote their services and high standards. This kind of co-branding exercise is the first of its scale in the region, and leverages business for both companies in the Baltic region, Russia, Scandinavia and Western European markets.

Customers of both companies will have an opportunity to experience seamless and high quality travel service. Both companies will reciprocally market each others services.

Star1 Holidays reaches turnover of 24m litas in H1

Vilnius, Jan 19 (ELTA) - Star1 Holidays, the new tour operator which entered Lithuania's tourism market in the middle of last year, served over 15,000 clients in its first six months of activities in Lithuania. The company reached a turnover of LTL24 million (€6.9528 million).

According to Star1 Holidays communications head Jurate Rupšienė, the most popular resort in 2009 was Turkey which accounted for 43% of Star1 Holidays destinations. Greece was next at 21%, 20% travelled to Egypt and the remainder chose resorts in Spain, Bulgaria and Tunis.

Presently, the company has about 30% market share in Lithuania.

Number of passengers served by Lithuanian airports down this year

Vilnius, Jan 22 (ELTA) - In 2009, the number of passengers arriving and departing from Lithuania's airports was 1.9 million, a decrease of 26.8% year on year.

According to the Department of Statistics, the majority of passengers were from the United Kingdom (17.1%), Latvia (12.6%), Germany (9.9%), Ireland (8.5%) and Denmark (8.9%).

Compared to 2008, the number of passengers going to and from Latvia increased almost three fold due to changed flight scheduling. The number of passengers going to and from the United Kingdom decreased by 10.2%, Denmark by 25%, Germany - 28.7%, Ireland - 32.8%.

In 2009, Lithuanian airlines transported a total of 675,000 passengers, a decrease of 41.9% year on year.

airBaltic to Launch Four New Routes from Vilnius

airBaltic will launch new flights from Vilnius to Dublin, Hamburg, Manchester, and Oslo, thus offering already 13 direct flight routes from Vilnius. airBaltic will start direct flights to Dublin on March 29, to Hamburg on March 30, and to Manchester on March 31. The airline will operate the first flight to Oslo on May 17.

Tero Taskila, Chief Commercial Officer of airBaltic: "After profitable year 2009 and with a positive outlook for 2010, airBaltic is expanding the network of direct routes from Vilnius to strengthen our position in Lithuania."

SUDOKU

Medium

9		4						
		3	8		9			
8	6			4	3	7		
	7				5			4
3			4		7			2
1			9					8
		7	5	2			1	6
			7		6	5		
						2		8

Hard

6	9	3		1				7
				7				2
7		2		3		9	8	
	8		3			4		
		7			5			1
	7	4		9		6		1
3				6				
1				5		3	7	9

Solutions for Issue 4

Medium

2	6	4	5	1	8	7	3	9
9	3	1	6	7	4	8	2	5
8	5	7	9	2	3	1	6	4
4	8	6	2	3	5	9	7	1
5	7	2	4	9	1	3	8	6
1	9	3	7	8	6	4	5	2
7	2	5	3	4	9	6	1	8
3	4	8	1	6	2	5	9	7
6	1	9	8	5	7	2	4	3

Hard

4	7	8	5	2	6	3	1	9
5	3	1	8	7	9	4	6	2
2	6	9	3	4	1	5	8	7
8	9	3	6	5	2	1	7	4
6	1	5	7	9	4	8	2	3
7	2	4	1	8	3	6	9	5
3	8	7	2	6	5	9	4	1
1	4	6	9	3	7	2	5	8
9	5	2	4	1	8	7	3	6

Lithuania to be part of the US temporary worker visa program

On 22 January 2010, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano designated Lithuania as one of 11 new countries whose citizens are eligible to participate in the H2-A and H2-B non-immigrant visa programs.

These programs allow U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the US to fill temporary or seasonal jobs for which American workers are not available.

Before applying for a temporary worker visa at a US Em-

bassy, applicants must obtain an approved petition from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The petition must be submitted by the applicant's prospective employer to DHS no earlier than 6 months before the proposed employment start date.

For more information about the H2-A or H2-B visas please visit the US Embassy website at: http://vilnius.usembassy.gov/non-immigrant_visas.html under "Information for Temporary Workers" link.



• Photo: Kęstutis Jankauskas (ELTA)

Five companies tender for new nuclear power plant

Vilnius, Feb 1 (ELTA) - The Lithuanian Ministry of Energy has chosen five potential strategic investors that could participate in the building of the new nuclear power plant. According to Minister Arvydas Sekmokas, 25 energy companies expressed an interest in the project.

In April all five selected companies are to submit non-binding proposals for participation in the building of the new nuclear power plant. It is planned that by the middle of summer only two companies will remain, and finally, one strategic investor will be chosen.

New Loans to Help Lithuanian SMEs

EIF and Šiauliai Bankas signed an agreement under which Šiauliai Bankas will provide loans worth €40 million (over LTL138 million to) Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Lithuania.

Šiauliai Bankas will manage the newly created Funded Risk Sharing product under the JEREMIE initiative, designed to stimulate lending from banks to SMEs over a two year period.

The EIF will provide €20 million to Šiauliai Bankas, which will be matched by an equal amount from the bank, therefore totalling €40 million. This transaction enables Šiauliai Bankas to accelerate lending to Lithuanian SMEs during the current economic recession.

Richard Pelly, Chief Executive of the European Investment Fund stated: "This agreement is very good news for Lithuanian SMEs and will enable increased lending to this important sector of the economy."

Sekmokas did not reveal which five companies were selected after the first round because of confidentiality agreements.

The key criteria for a strategic investors was experience in the nuclear sector, the execution of big energy projects and financial requirements.

According to Sekmokas what technology will be used in the Visaginas plant will only become clear after the investor is chosen. It is planned that the strategic investor will be offered 51 percent of the nuclear power plant shares. The new nuclear power plant will cost €3-5 billion.

"Šiauliai Bankas was chosen to implement this initiative following a detailed selection process. It is the only local bank in Lithuania to be selected for this purpose which reflects the strength of its management and its ability to provide enhanced access to finance for SMEs.

Šiauliai bankas will begin lending to Lithuanian enterprises in the first quarter of 2010 with an expectation that the full amount will be lent within a two year period.

About JEREMIE

JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises) is a joint initiative launched by the European Commission (DG Regional Policy) and the European Investment Bank group to improve access to finance for SMEs in the EU within the Structural Funds framework for the period 2007 - 2013.

Main socio-economic indicators of Lithuania	Period	Value	Change as compared to previous period, %	Change as compared to corresponding period of previous year, %
Population, beginning of year, thous.	January 2010	3329.0	-0.07	-0.6
Unemployment rate, %	III Q 2009	13.8	0.2 pp	7.9 pp
Average gross monthly earnings, LTL	III Q 2009	2142.2	-1.4	-7.7
Real earnings, %	III Q 2009	x	-0.3	-8.7
Agricultural production, million LTL	III Q 2009	3692.1	x	4.6
Industrial production, billion LTL	Dec 2009	4.2	4.7	-7.3
Construction own-account work carried out in Lithuania, million LTL	III Q 2009	1620.6	5.8	-49.3
Retail trade (EVRK Rev.2 45+47), million LTL	Nov 2009	2005.9	-8.5	-25.9
Inflation, %	Dec 2009	x	-0.3	1.3
Inflation, by HICP, FORECAST, %	Jan 2010	x	1.0	-0.4
Lithuanian origin commodity exports, million LTL	November 2009	2445.4	-2.5	-12.6
GDP (second estimate), million LTL	III Q 2009	23,953.7	13.1	-14.2

Eastern Europe is the wrong label - The Economist

London, Jan 29 (LETA-ELTA) - The economic downturn has made it harder to speak sensibly of a region called "Eastern Europe", *The Economist* wrote.

It was never a very coherent idea and it is becoming a damaging one, the article says. "Eastern Europe" is a geographical oddity that includes the Czech Republic (in the middle of the continent) but not Greece or Cyprus (supposedly "western" Europe but in the far south-east). It makes little sense historically either: it includes countries (like Ukraine) that were under the heel of the Soviet empire for decades and those (Albania, say) that only brushed it. Some of those countries had harsh planned economies; others had their own version of "goulash communism" (Hungary) or "self-managed socialism" (Yugoslavia).

The nearly 30 states that once, either under their own names or as part of somewhere else, bore the label "communist" now have more differences than similarities. Yet calling them "Eastern Europe" suggests not only a common fate under totalitarian rule, but a host of ills that go with it: a troubled history then; bad government and economic misery now.

The economic downturn has shown how misleading this is. Worries about "contagion" from

the banking crisis in Latvia raised risk premiums in otherwise solid economies such as Poland and the Czech Republic - a nonsense based on outsiders' perceptions of other outsiders' fears.

Ten "eastern" countries that joined the EU are in so bad a mess. They include hotshots and slow-coaches, places that feel thoroughly modern and those where the air still bears a rancid tang from past misrule.

Slovenia and the Czech Republic, for example, have overhauled living standards in Portugal, the poorest country in the "western" camp. Neither was badly hit by the economic downturn. Together with Slovakia, Slovenia has joined the euro, which Sweden, Denmark and Britain have not. Estonia - at least in outsiders' eyes - is one of the least corrupt countries in Europe, easily beating founder members of the EU such as Italy.

Ten countries that joined in the big enlargement of 2004 and in the later expansion of 2007. They are a mixed bunch, ranging from model EU citizens such as Estonia (recently smitten by a property bust, but all set to gain permission this year to join the euro) to Romania and Bulgaria, which have become bywords in Brussels for corruption and organised crime respectively. Eight of them

(Romania and Bulgaria are the exceptions) have already joined Europe's Schengen passport-less travel zone. Most (Poland is a big, rankling exception) also have visa-free travel to America.

Four countries - Poland and the three Baltic states - worry a lot about Russian revisionism (or revanchism). Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are concerned too, but more about energy and economic security than military sabre-rattling. Yet elsewhere, in the former Yugoslavia for example, such fears seem mystifying and even paranoid.

The new and future members also share capital-thirstiness. All need lots of outside money (from the EU's coffers, from the capital markets and from foreign bank-lending) to modernise their economies to the standards of the rest of the continent.

But the usefulness of the "new member state" category is clearly declining as the years go by. Oxford University still has a "New College" which was a good label in 1379 to distinguish it from existing bits of the university. It seems a bit quaint now. Poles, Czechs, Estonians and others hope that they will drop the "new" label rather sooner, so that they can be judged on their merits rather than on their past.





• Photo: Mindaugas Kulbis

Alekna second best of the last decade

Track and Field, the influential sporting magazine widely regarded as the Bible of Sport, selected its top ten athletes of the last decade in their March issue.

The editors based their choice on overall impact and stressed quality over quantity in athletic performance.

Kenenisa Bekele of Ethiopia, a distance runner was the number one choice, but of most interest to us was second place which went to Virgilijus Alekna, our discus thrower who has done us proud as an athlete and an ambassador to Lithuania.

Six Lithuanian athletes to participate in Vancouver Winter Olympics

Vilnius, Jan 21 (ELTA) - Six Lithuanian athletes will represent Lithuania in the Vancouver Winter Olympics 2010. This will be the smallest our delegation since Albertville Winter Olympic Games in 1992.

The country's Olympic team was approved at the sitting of the Executive Committee of the Lithuanian National Olympic Committee (LTOK) on Thursday.

25 year old biathlete Diana Rasimovičiūtė, 4 skiers - 25 year old Irina Terentjeva, 24 year old Aleksejus Novoselskis, 23 year old Mantas Strolia and 20 year old Modestas Vaičiulis, along with 24 year old alpine skier Vitalijus Rumiancevas will represent Lithuania in Vancouver.

LTOK President Artūras Poviliūnas will head the delegation; Olympic Champion Vida Vencienė will be Chief of Mission. Terentjeva, who will participate in the Olympic Games for the third time, will carry the flag at the opening parade. The 2010 Winter Olympics, officially known as the XXI Olympic Winter Games, will be held on 12 – 28 February 2010 in Vancouver.



• Photo: Mindaugas Kulbis

Žalgiris represents Lithuania

As we wrote last issue, the optimistic mathematician got it right, and Žalgiris was the sole Lithuanian team to make it to the Final 16 of Euroleague.

With just three wins from 10 games, Žalgiris was in fact able to secure third position in Group G.

The first task for the team in green was getting everyone working together.

Romanov had some presents for new coach Butautas in the way of young point guard Capin and forward Delas to add to the squad, and with their final two wins in the first round it was the return on investment he was looking for.

The Final 16 is a big ask for the inexperienced Žalgiris, but they performed admirably well in their first encounter with Asseco Prokom.

The final 24 point margin didn't paint an accurate picture as Žalgiris were in the competition most of the way.

Next round however was at home, and every visiting team treats 'The Green Hell' with respect, especially Moscow CSKA, who have a great

history of classic encounters going back to the Soviet years.

Žalgiris had also defeated CSKA recently in the Unified League and must have felt in with a good chance to beat one of the Euroleague title favourites on their home turf.

And that's how it was. A 10 point lead at half time was testament to both the defence, rebounding and outside shooting of Žalgiris, still without league leading rebounder Travis Watson.

But every coach will tell you that a halftime lead can be curse that rejuvenates the opposition, and CSKA came out firing. Šiškauskas, with only one point in the first half, found his range and showed why he was joint MVP last round.

Žalgiris hung on and were still a chance in the last quarter, but the class of CSKA shone through. There was no better illustration of the difference between the two teams than when Capin took some early shots and missed a layup, while CSKA in the same position moved the ball around, found the hot hand and steadily moved into a comfortable position

to ensure the win well before regulation.

It wasn't so much bad play on the part of Žalgiris or Capin as much as a demonstration of where these two teams are at. CSKA know and trust each other and share the load, while at Žalgiris they're still finding their feet.

The main thing Žalgiris proved on the night is that they will have some bearing on final make-up of the group.

Lietuvos Rytas

Rytas on the other hand was on holidays. After missing out on the Final 16 Kurtinaitis ordered his charges to take a holiday, preferably where there was some sun.

Rytas also sold Bojan Popovic to Efes Pilsen, swapped Brazdauskis for Valančiūnas from Perlas, brought back Kenan Bajramovic and included Igor Milosovic to share point guard duties with Ginevičius.

Vainauskas promised a renewed effort for the rest of the year, and the focus remains very much on defending their titles and working to next year.



• Photo: Tomas Tumulovčius, reporteris.com

Halls Winter Rally 2010

Latvians took the first four places at this year's Halls Winter Rally held in Utena. Janis Vorobjovas and Guntaras Zicanas completed the 12 section course, with a combined length of 105.6 kilometres, in one hour, three minutes 5.2 seconds, at an average speed of 99.12 kph.

Rokas Lipeika and his daughter Inga were the best placed Lithuanian team coming in fifth in a field of 43. This year was the 16th running of the Winter Rally.

Main Standings at 4 Feb 2010



GROUP G		Šiauliai	14/2	Žalgiris	12/2
Asseco Prokom	2-0	Lietuvos rytas	13/1	Lietuvos rytas	11/0
CSKA Moscow	2-0	Žalgiris	12/0	Ventspils	7/5
Unicaja	0-2	Juventus	8/6	Šiauliai	7/5
Žalgiris	0-2	Neptūnas	8/7	Valmiera	5/8
		Sūduva	7/8	Rock	5/8
		Techasas	7/9	Kalev	6/6
		Rūdupis	5/9	VEF Riga	4/8
		Perlas	5/10	Lauvas	2/11
		Alytus	5/11	Nevėžis	2/8
		Sakalai	4/10		
		Aisčiai	4/10		
		Nevėžis	2/11		

SKYBAR
It's Happy Hour at the Skybar every workday from 5 pm to 7 pm!

Enjoy 3 cocktails for the price of 2!
SEE YOU THERE!

Reval Hotel Lietuva, Konstitucijos pr. 20, Vilnius
Skybar, 22 floor, www.sky-bar.lt
VII – IV 17.00 – 01.00
V – VI 17.00 – 02.30