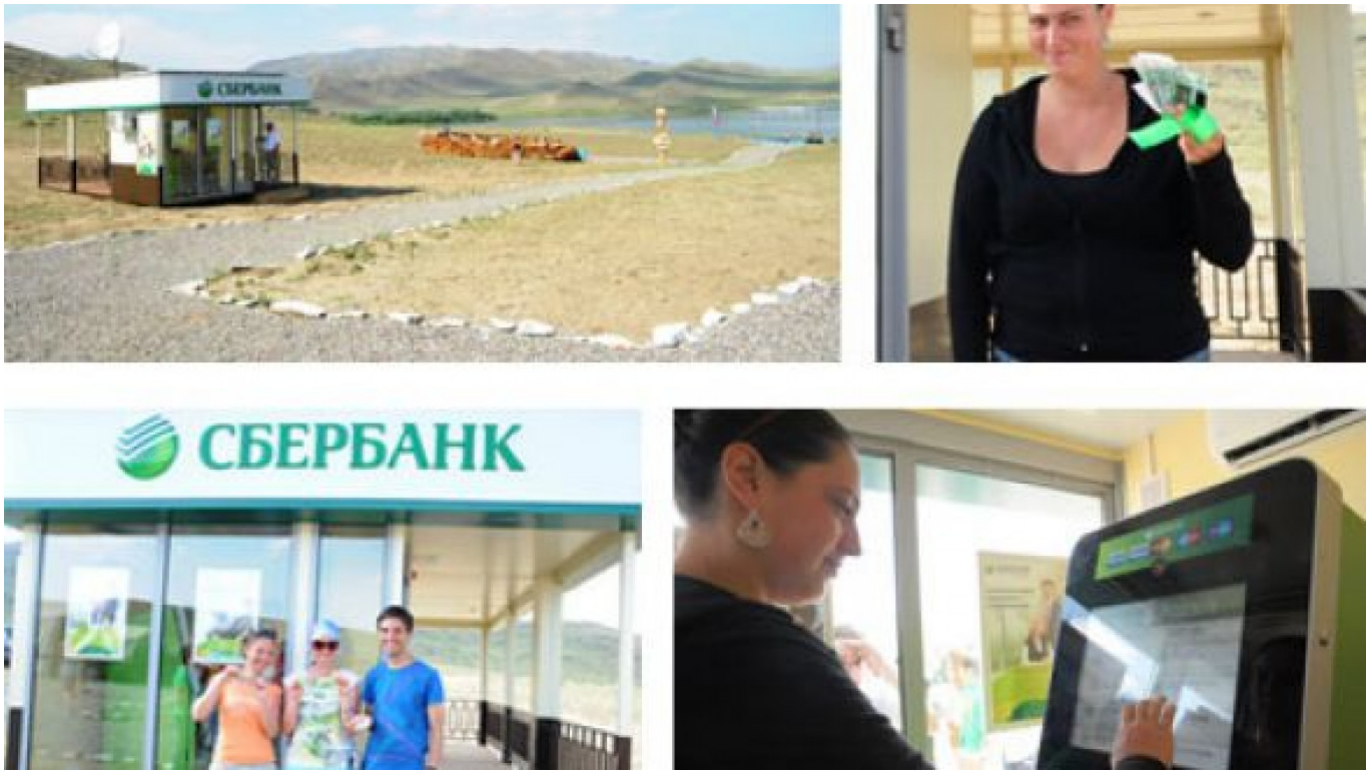
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Tyva Gets Country's First Solar-Powered ATM

By The Moscow Times

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Russia's first solar-powered ATM, located in the Tyva republic **Viktoria Lachugina**

A remote corner of the steppe in the Tyva republic has become the unlikely site of a technological first in Russia: a solar-powered ATM.

The eco-friendly ATM is in an archaeological camp called the Valley of the Tsars, 40 kilometers from the regional capital of Kyzyl, the republic's government said in a statement on its website.

Besides handling cash transactions, the Sberbank ATM, which runs exclusively on solar power, allows inhabitants of the camp to pay their cell phone and Internet bills and pay for a host of other services.

The structure housing the bank machine is expected to be moved along with the archaeologists as they continue their expedition.

Valentina Oorzhak, head of the Kyzyl branch of Sberbank, said in a statement posted Monday that the solar-powered ATM was specially designed to work in a remote region and that it represents the first attempt to operate a mobile terminal far from populated territories and without a permanent source of electricity.

The five-year archaeological expedition, sponsored by the Russian Geographical Society, is in place to recover cultural and historical artifacts discovered along the route of a rail line being constructed to Kyzyl, the organization said in a statement on its website.

The statement said that more than 70 archaeological sites have already been discovered along the track path, which will eventually connect the Tyvan capital to the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

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