

Hospitality in strict compliance with law

President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko approves annual decision to conduct the state border policy and ensure border security

By Dmitry Krymov

The situation of a 'locked down border' is no longer applicable today; how can a transit country deny passage to cargoes or people. Belarus is crossed in all directions: by planes, trains and automobiles. Accordingly, border guards need to present an amiable face, being the first to meet foreign guests and bid farewell to their fellow countrymen. Comfortable conditions need to be created for law abiding citizens crossing the border. Of course, this doesn't imply a relaxation of strict control, since security is also vital. However, as the world changes, so do border guards' methods.

Last year, the State Border Com-

mittee's soldiers, sergeants and officers detected 793 border crossing violations (against 564 in 2010). Twenty people thought to be part of organised illegal transit migration were arrested. Seven channels were stopped and around 20 possible channels of human trafficking were detected. In monetary terms, border guards confiscated 45 percent more smuggled goods than in the previous year, showing that the country's economic interests are being protected. Moreover, 131kg of drugs and 1kg of psychotropic substances were detected, alongside seven channels of drug trafficking.

Evidently, analytical and field work is thorough, producing valuable results for our country, and for neigh-

bouring states.

Before the session began at which the President approved the annual decision to conduct the state border policy and ensure border security, I pondered these figures. The event is traditionally attended by the heads of all security agencies, during which the Commander-in-Chief specifies his targets. This time, the President explained the need to ensure 'border security under today's conditions' and to ensure 'the efficient co-ordination of the work of various agencies.' He added that it is 'vital to improve the quality of the State Border Committee itself.'

Earlier the State Secretariat of the Security Council studied several areas

of State Border Committee activity, at the instruction of the President. Mr. Lukashenko summed up, "I'll say directly that not everything happening within our border service agencies meets the enhanced requirements of today's world. The character of these weaknesses indicates that the current environment isn't being assessed properly; as a result, our major tasks have not been determined correctly."

The President asked the Chairman of the State Border Committee, Major-General Igor Rachkovsky, about the threats and challenges faced at the border, requesting to know which present the greatest danger to the state and how he foresees these being identified and neutralised. The

others in attendance were asked to assess various threats and explain how their departments help in state border protection.

The main goal is to improve the co-ordination of border security efforts, raising efficiency.

Opening the session, the Belarusian President asserted, "I ask you to remember that the border department isn't just a security agency. It is a structure located along the perimeter of that piece of land whose sovereignty we must ensure. To what degree are our military ready to perform this task?"

From Igor Rachkovsky's report it became clear that, in 2011, the border security agencies fulfilled their tasks. It is from this position that we proceed.



Service follows usual regime at Kamenyuki border point

Two states sharing so many common interests

Republic of Korea to expand economic, cultural and educational interaction with Belarus, notes Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Korea to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Kang Weon Sik, at evening dedicated to 20th anniversary since establishment of Belarusian-Korean diplomatic relations

By Galina Grishkovets

The diplomat stressed that, for the past 20 years, our two states have managed to achieve great results in bilateral collaboration despite being separated by many miles. Although trade remains modest, there is a mutual desire to expand it.

The Ambassador also underlined that both countries have established good cultural exchange. Artistic groups from Korea successfully perform in Belarus while Belarusian bands are a success in Seoul. Mr. Kang Weon Sik is convinced that Belarus boasts great potential for further development of co-operation



Korean Language and Culture Centre in Minsk

in all areas. He believes that, since independence, Belarus has achieved much in the spheres of economy and science.

He noted that the Republic of Korea is also strengthening its position within the international arena — in politics, economy and IT. In 2010, Seoul hosted the G20 Summit and, in March, will welcome the Nuclear Security Summit. Meanwhile, EXPO-2012 is to open in the South Korean city of Yeosu this May, dedicated to water resource development.

Belarus' Deputy Foreign Minister, Alexander Guryanov, a former Ambassador of Belarus to the Republic of Korea, notes the importance of

interaction with this country. In his opinion, for the past 20 years, relations between our two countries have been developing well in all directions, with over 20 intergovernmental agreements signed. Mr. Guryanov also stresses the vital role played by both states' embassies in strengthening mutually beneficial co-operation.

Nina Ivanova, Chair of the Presidium of the Belarusian Society of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, emphasises that ties are developing not only at state level but also between individual citizens. Over 600 Koreans currently reside in Belarus, bringing with them their culture and traditions.

Improving awareness

By Inessa Pleskachevskaya

Minsk's House of Press hosts presentation of special issues of *Belarus and China* magazines, dedicated to 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Republic Belarus and the People's Republic of China

As the first such project implemented in the history of our bilateral relations, it has already attracted great attention in both states. In February, the special edition was presented in Beijing while the Minsk presentation was attended by representatives of almost two dozen Belarusian media, alongside Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Tozik and the Chinese Ambassador to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Gong Jianwei.

China is becoming ever closer to Belarus — as was the keynote of the



presentation. Much was spoken of friendship and mutual understanding, as is usual at such events. However, the forum also dealt with statistics showing rising turnover. The project aims to change stereotypes among Belarusians regarding China while allowing the Chinese to learn more about Belarus.

The joint project by *Belarus and China* magazines aims to promote mutual understanding, highlighting the whole range of our bilateral relationships — from politics and economics to the growing Belarusian diaspora in China.

Civil servants gradually shifting to e-mail

By Alexander Velikhov

Belarusian Government adopting gradual move to e-services through single portal

State bodies and organisations are to move to e-services in three stages. The first is to be implemented from 2012 to 2013, placing documents in e-form, to allow saving, in addition to information about other e-services which are planned for introduction. The second stage is to be realised in 2013, being devoted to an opportunity

to fill in online forms of documents via a single portal of public electronic services (including e-payments for e-services provided on a paid basis). Plans also envisage online payments (such as for fees and penalties) through an all-state automated information system.

The third stage is to be realised in 2014, offering electronic documents as a result for the fulfilled e-services, with a secure identification system being set up for individuals and companies, allowing interaction with other elements of the e-government's infrastructure.