

Neighbours have quite reasonable interest

Lithuanian Institute for Regional Development and Democracy keen to co-operate with Belarus in spreading information about construction of nuclear power station

By Anna Kotova

The Director of the Institute, Virginijus Smigelskas, has taken part in a roundtable session, held in Minsk, to discuss the creation of a public awareness centre in Belarus, to open this September. It would promote understanding of issues regarding ecological security during construction and the long term operation of the Belarusian nuclear power station.

“Primarily, we are neighbours, having lived beside each other and will do so in the future. Accordingly, it’s logical that Lithuanians are keen to know about the construction of the nuclear power station in Belarus and whether it will be ecologically safe. You know that Lithuania also intends to build a nuclear power station and it will be located close to the Belarusian border. No doubt, Belarusians will also be eager to know more about this,” notes Mr. Smigelskas.

He explains that the public information centre in Belarus aims to inform local people not only about our own nuclear power station but about that planned by



Lithuanian journalists have already visited the power plant under construction

the Lithuanians. “We support the idea in every way and wish to inform Lithuanians about these developments in Belarus, including

sharing information and experience — such as via our institute. It hasn’t been decided yet but you can never have too much infor-

mation — as long as it’s reliable and professionally reported. We’ll always assist in spreading such information,” he underlines.

Officially

New Minister of Foreign Affairs is announced

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, has announced Sergei Martynov’s move from the position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, appointing Vladimir Makei in his place. Mr. Makei is moving from his post as Head of Administration for the President of Belarus. Mr. Lukashenko signed corresponding decrees on August 20th.

Time is always vital element

Nikolai Bordyuzha asserts that co-operation in the sphere of preventing and dealing with emergency situations must be a priority for Collective Security Treaty Organisation

Summarising the results of the fifth session of the CSTO Co-ordination Council on Emergency Situations, hosted by Minsk, Mr. Bordyuzha, the CSTO General Secretary, noted that collaboration in the sphere of preventing and dealing with emergency situations needs to be a priority. “Issues regarding our response towards emergency situations and their prevention should be a priority for the CSTO. In December, we’ll submit joint proposals to the President regarding our response to emergency situations,” explains Mr. Bordyuzha. He also noted that the Minsk session discussed major goals regarding the tackling of emergency situations.

Deputies prepare their questions for session

House of Representatives of the National Assembly to ratify legal assistance agreement with Turkey



Deputies in session at the House of Representatives

The House of Representatives plans to ratify an agreement between the Republic of Belarus and the Turkish Republic. It will deal with legal assistance regarding civil, economic and criminal issues, and is being read at its final (for the current convocation) session, on Octo-

ber 2nd.

“The agreement aims to enable citizens from either country to receive the same legal services as those from the second state,” notes Vitaly Busko, the Chairman of the Standing Committee for International Affairs and Links with the CIS, at the

National Assembly.

The document clearly outlines the powers of departments which work within the framework of the agreement: the Justice Ministry of Turkey and Belarus’ Investigative Committee, General Prosecutor’s Office, Justice Ministry, Supreme Court and Supreme Economic Court.

According to the document, each side is obliged to act for the other in civil and economic issues, as well as criminal affairs, tackling compensation for damage. This also covers arbitrary decisions over civil and economic matters.

As far as other categories of criminal cases are concerned, mutual legal services are envisaged: delivery of documents, carrying out of expert examinations and interrogation of witnesses and experts. The agreement also gives scope for criminals to be repatriated to serve their sentences in their homeland. The authorities of one country can also arrest suspects, returning them to their home country for investigation and sentencing.

Prime time on TV and radio

By Mikhail Svetlov

TV and radio debates by candidate deputies for the House of Representatives (of the fifth calling) are to be broadcast at prime time, as will pre-election statements by candidates standing for Parliament, notes the Secretary of the Central Commission of the Republic of Belarus for Elections and Republican Referenda, Nikolai Lozovik

The Central Committee has adopted a statement on the use of the media in election campaigning, stipulating that candidates have the right to one free broadcast on public TV and another on public radio. Mr. Lozovik explains, “The Central Election Commission has provided for broadcasts being screened in prime time, when the greatest number of viewers and listeners are at home: from 7 to 8 pm on TV and from 6 to 7 pm on the radio.” He adds that television and radio debates will be held simultaneously, with air time provided free of charge.

Candidates for parliamentary seats representing Minsk are to



Nikolai Lozovik

present their election manifesto on Belarus 2 TV channel and on Stolitsa (Capital) radio. Those from the Minsk Region will use STV TV Channel and Stolitsa radio station while those registered in the other regions will appear on local television and radio.

“The CEC has asked every TV and radio station organising debates to reserve five minutes of air time for each candidate and five minutes for the host,” notes the secretary of the Central Election Commission. He adds that candidates should present their election programmes themselves, but may send authorised representatives to participate in debates.