



Border guards at Belyany checkpoint, from Grodno detachment, serve and protect

Border is under full protection

Alexander Lukashenko approves resolution on protection of state borders of Belarus in 2013

By Vladimir Khromov

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, has demanded that threats and challenges to border security be tackled effectively. He stresses, "Anti-Belarusian sanctions by the West have caused provocation along the border, aggravating challenges associated with border protection, bringing the need for special attention and serious analysis of the current system. The latest violations of the state border have led to a need for strict personnel decisions. I have given appropriate instructions to improve the security of the border and inter-agency coordination in this area."

Mr. Lukashenko is eager to assess the success of measures to improve Border Agency efficiency but emphasises that everyone can do their part to aid national security. He has asked state agencies to report regularly on their strategies used to counter emerging threats, with particular reference to our airspace, saying, "Which challenges remain and what solutions do we have?"

Mr. Lukashenko adds, "You know what the state border means to me, as a former border guard. My personal relationship with the Border

Agency and military men in green caps is based on this. I've heard rumours that I'm on ill-terms with the present head of the Border Agency but it's nonsense."

Meeting recently with the Chairman of the State Border Committee, the President stressed that he has his ear at all times, as he well knows. He asserted, "Colonel Alexander Boechko, like all previous heads of the Border Agency, and those sitting around this table, ministers and high officials, have the same direct access to the President. I want all border guards, who protect and defend our country, to hear this. All speculation should end, leaving our border guards to do their job, proudly defending the peace of the Belarusian people, along every metre of the border. This is our daily task, and people should be assured that we'll fulfil it," said Mr. Lukashenko.

Mr. Boechko has told reporters that the head of state has approved the programme for the protection of the state borders of Belarus in 2013, which is focused on tackling external challenges, using a number of new approaches and means. "Looking at past violations of the state border, the head of state has set specific tasks to remove these

shortcomings in 2013," Mr. Boechko notes. He underlines that the Border Agency will be working to fulfil the new programme, protecting the economic interests of the country.

According to Mr. Boechko, 14 people involved in organising or facilitating illegal migration have been arrested, as have 318 people who have entered the country illegally. Over 9,000 potential illegal immigrants have been identified, with the Polish, Ukrainian and Lithuanian borders seeing the greatest number of violations.

Four major syndicates involved in smuggling goods have been terminated, alongside nine drug smuggling organisations. The law enforcement authorities of Belarus, Lithuania, and Russia have worked together, detaining about 100kg of drugs and more than 6kg of psychotropic substances. In addition, 142 weapons, nearly 5,000 rounds of ammunition and 3.5kg of explosives have been withdrawn.

Meanwhile, our borders are processing a greater number of passenger vehicles: over 29 million people last year. The number of trucks also rose, with about 10 million crossing the border.

Ministerial consultations in focus

By Alexey Pimenov

Makei and Lavrov discuss interaction between Belarus and Russia within international arena

Belarus' Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei, has joined the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, in discussing a wide range of issues,

during a meeting in Moscow.

In particular, they looked at the agenda for governing bodies of the Union State over the coming year, ways of improving the functioning of the Single Economic Space and progress towards the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union. Co-operation between Russia and Belarus within the international

arena, including within international organisations, came under debate, as did bilateral collaboration in the spheres of economics and humanitarianism.

Urgent issues of ministerial interaction, including a joint meeting for the Foreign Ministries of Belarus and Russia, were among the main topics for discussion.

Promising trade and economic partnership regardless of distance

National Assembly's House of Representatives and National Assembly of Cambodia sign co-operative agreement

The Chairman of the National Assembly's House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, negotiated with the Chairman of the National Assembly of the Cambodian Parliament, Heng Samrin, during his recent meeting, signing an agreement on co-operation between the two parliamentary institutions.

Mr. Andreichenko notes that

the document should inspire bilateral relations and the expansion of trade-economic collaboration. He has told Cambodian journalists that Belarus hopes to raise trade turnover, which is yet to meet its true potential.

Mr. Samrin has called on Cambodian partners to work closely with Belarus, especially in the spheres of industry and agriculture. The latter's visit to Belarus in 2012 laid the foundations for greater partnership and bilateral projects.

Belarus values Cambodia's role

in helping it liaise with the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the Association of South-East Asian Nations and sees the country as a promising partner in South-East Asia. The Chairman of the House of Representatives especially stresses that Belarus is guided by long-term interests and is keen to see Cambodian specialists trained at Belarusian universities. He believes that the spheres of trade, industry, agriculture, science, technology, education and culture are ripe for expansion.

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