

Lukashenka: Other Export Vectors Should Be Looked for

Minister of Interior Navumau Resigned

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On April 6, 2009, Alaksandar Lukashenka accepted the Minister's of Interior resignation. Officially, Uladzimir Navumau sent in his resignation "for health reasons." However, the majority of commentators cast doubts on this explanation, as being 53 years old, Ul. Navumau has been regularly showing his adherence to the healthy way of living. In particular, he is fond of race walking and

mountaneering. Once, Ul. Navumau told he was going to climb up the mountain of Everest. Also he participated in 100 km long marathons. In other words, the ex-Minister has always highlighted his perfect physical stamina.

The following version is domineering among all other plausible reasons for the Minister's dismissal. Numerous independent experts believe that Lukashenka would like to cajole Europe into closer relations this way. Ul. Navumau was the last governmental official in the range of civil servants, mentioned in the sensational report on disappearances of political opponents of Belarusian regime, presented by a PACE deputy Christos Purgurides.

All other personalities, suspected by the European structures of having relation to the disappearances and included by the EU in the list of "personas non-grata" – Yury Sivakou, Viktor Sheyman and Zmicier Paulichenka – had been placed in the shadow before.

"The head of state is removing the people, who provoked unpleasant questions in the West, from the public field," concludes a well-known Belarusian analyst Alaksandar Klaskouski. He notes among other as follows: "The implacable opponents of the regime in power say that the authorities are covering the tracks this way, as the disappearances haven't been investigated properly yet. However, it should be taken into account that the European politicians are predominantly

neophytes in the “Belarusian issue”. They usually react to the things that “irritate their eyes”.

A political analyst Andrei Liakhovich notes that Ul.Navumau’s resignation is indicative of “strong positions of groups in the ruling elite that stand for the authoritarian modernization and the controlled creeping political liberalization” in Belarus. He means a grouping, led by Viktor Lukashenka, the President’s elder son and his aide on the national security issues as well as the technocrats’ grouping, led by the Prime-Minister Siarhei Sidorski. “They initiated significant rotations in the state security and controlling structures. Among other, it was done in order to promote their proteges,” A. Liakhovich emphasized. “The importance of state security bodies (KGB and the Ministry of Interior) and state controlling structures (State Controlling Committee, the Public Prosecutor’s office) is reduced in the political system of Belarus. They are controlled by the groups that support the guarded and well-considered changes in Belarus,” concluded the analyst.

Lukashenka’s tough statement in relation to the Kremlin caused a similarly wide public response last week. In particular, during a trip to Homiel region on April 7, 2009, the President of Belarus expressed his indignation at non-compliance with agreements on lifting restrictions in the mutual trade by the Russian side.

“As for Russia, we are observing a quite indecent attitude to us. Ans I’m not afraid to tell about that in public,” Lukashenka noted. Moreover, he ordered his subordinates to stop “kowtowing” to the Russian officials in their “cabinets”. “If they feel reluctant to let

us to their markets, we will look for other vectors of export,” Lukashenka said.

However, during a meeting with the governor of Leningrad region Valery Sierdiukov on Wednesday, Lukashenka stressed that he didn’t see any future for Belarus “without Russia”. “We are condemned to live together with Russia,” he said in particular. Independent observers conclude that the Belarusian official leader was trying to level his previous attacks on the Kremlin.

Belarusian analysts name Lukashenka’s foreign policy doctrine “the switcher’s tactics”. In their opinion, the Belarusian head of state is keenly making use of contradictions and mutual fobias of Russia and Europe. It is a risky game. Still, Lukashenka doesn’t have any other way out, as Belarus is economically highly dependent on Russia. Moreover, the EU irritates him with the demands in the fields of democracy and human rights. This way or another, the flirt with Europe helps Lukashenka to strengthen the positions of Belarus in opposing to the Russian pressure, independent experts emphasize.

By the way, Lukashenka blabbed out certain information about the pressure during the trip to Homiel region on April 7, 2009. According to him, the Kremlin pre-conditioned free access of Belarusian manufacturers to the Russian market with a demand to get a part of assets of Belarusian enterprises: “...Give us the plants, give us this and that.” “We will sell nothing for a song in the current crisis conditions,” the Belarusian head of state retorted decisively.

However, independent economists doubt if the President will be able to “hold the line” for a long

period of time. They note that the government has prepared a sequester under the pretext of introducing “amendments to the state budget.”

Severe hardships of the present-day financial and economic crisis, including a rapid fall of export and the reduced revenues from taxes have made the government take this step. Thus, according to the draft bill, presented by Prime Minister S. Sidorski to the President recently, the income of the consolidated state budget 2009 reduced from 73.9 trillion Br to 62.8 trillion Br. The budgetary expenditures have been reduced even more considerably.

The Head of Mizes Research Center Yaraslau Ramanchuk calculated that taking into account the easily forecast devaluation level of Belarusian ruble, the income part of the consolidated state budget will shrink by USD 15.8 billion, i.e. approximately by 50%. “Situation with expenditures is even more dramatic, as they can be reduced by as many as USD 17 billion,” the expert noted.

A number of Belarusian analysts believe that Russia will try to make use of financial and economic difficulties of Belarus to facilitate the expansion of its capital, to fasten the “financial noose” as well as to reach certain political concessions.

A political analyst Viachaslau Pazniak noted in his interview to “Radio Liberty” that “the Kremlin’s all-sided pressure on Belarus is very risky. Continuation of concessions in preferences and further sales of property to Russian partners create a real threat to the independence of Belarus. Therefore, the stakes are very high. Further steps of Belarusian official

authorities will determine the dynamics of relations with Russia for the long-term perspective.”

Reportedly, Alaksandar Lukashenka will pay another visit to Moscow on April 10, 2009.

POLITICS

Lukashenka: Other Export Vectors Should Be Looked for



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The President of Belarus Alaksandar Lukashenka has stated that the Belarusian officials have “to stop kowtowing to the Russian cabinets.”

During his trip to Homiel region, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the performance of agreements on canceling restrictions in the mutual trade on the part of Russia.

Among other, he stated that in case Russia would like to let Belarus enter its markets, “new export vectors” should be looked for. According to Lukashenka, Russia shows a more and more unfair attitude towards us [i.e. Belarus - www.belarus-live.eu].“

“We agreed on getting gas for USD 150 [for 1,000 cubic meters - www.belarus-live.eu]. Then other people

come and tell they need more,” noted the Belarusian head of state.

He mentioned that in return to lifting limitations for the access of Belarusian producers to the Russian market Russia proposed Belarus to give it a part of property, belonging to the Belarusian state.

“Give us this and give us that. Nobody will sell anything in the present conditions. We should diversify the export little by little and enter other markets,” A. Lukashenka said.

Radio Liberty

OFFICIALLY

Minister of Interior Navumau Resigned



photo.bymedia.net

Alaksandar Lukashenka accepted the resignation of Minister of Interior Uladzimir Navumau.

The governmental official asked the head of state to get him dismissed, complaining of poor state of health, the [Interfax](http://www.interfax.com) News Agency reports.

OPPOSITION

Belarusian Opposition Members Deprived of Foreign Financial Assistance

Belarusian opposition faces financial difficulties because of discontinuation of inflow from abroad.

Deputy Chairman of the Party of the Belarusian Popular Front Viktor Ivashkievich said that opposition actions were no longer financially supported by foreign countries.

According to him, the party cannot ensure campaigning before the street actions, and also has problems with paying office rent. Ivashkievich pointed out that opposition parties count on “mobilizing resources of civil society”.

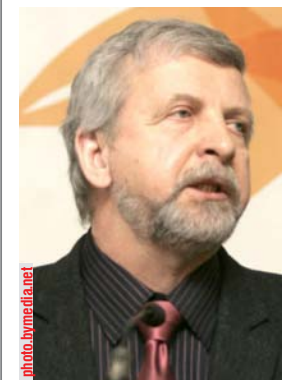


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Leader of the Movement for Freedom Alaksandar Milinkievich acknowledged that foreign partners had in practice ceased financial relations with Belarusian opposition. The former presidential candidate believes that resources should be looked for inside the country.

“There are many well-to-do people who want changes. We are already receiving assistance. Though, it is solely on conditions of anonymity”, Milinkievich said.

Interfax

ECONOMY

The Stock of Ready-Made Production Exceeded 200%

The stock of ready-made production has exceeded 200%, Eduard Naryshkin, the Head of "Bellehpram" state concern noted in his interview to the [BelaPAN News Agency](#).

The most considerable surge of stockpiles happened at the beginning of 2009.

Eduard Naryshkin stated that the state concern had signed a program of common actions with the Ministry of Trade in order to solve the problem. In particular, all enterprises in the state concern will introduce 8% discounts. Also, the organizations got permitted to cut down even more significantly the wholesale prices, in case of getting proposals from trading organizations.

Thus, e.g., the "Palessie" enterprise from Pinsk made use of this opportunity and reduced the costs of some kinds of its production by 70%. Due to the step, it managed to realize a profit after two months of holding this experiment.

SOCIETY

The Belarusians Believe Civil Servants Make a Burden to Them

More than 70 per cent of Belarusian citizens think that the state machinery should be reduced in the country,

"Komsomolskaya Pravda in Belarus" reports with a reference to the "Lusterka-Info" research center's survey results.

49% of respondents supported an idea of getting the state machinery considerably reduced at that. The Belarusians believe this step could soften the economic crisis consequences. It should be noted that nobody supported an idea of employing additional civil servants. By the way, the civil servants made 4% of respondents in the survey.

Surprisingly, the majority of respondents (44%) do not think that the workers of Belarusian ministries and state agencies will be capable of cutting down their salaries. It is worth mentioning that governmental officers in Latvia took this step several months ago.

CULTURE

Forty Reproductions of Napoleon Orda's Works Donated to a Museum in Ivanava District

Forty reproductions of Napoleon Orda's lithographs from holdings of the National Museum in Warsaw were donated to the Napoleon Orda Museum Complex in Ivanava district, Larysa Drychyc, researcher of the museum told [BelaPAN](#).

They memorialize architectural monuments and historic places of Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania. The lithographs were made by the artist in 1860th - 1870th.

According to Larysa Drychyc, reproductions were made at the initiative of the Consulate-General of Poland in Bierascie and were already exhibited in several Belarusian and Polish cities. The ceremony of their donation to the museum complex was held in the village of Varacevichy, Ivanava district, the birthplace of this renowned artist, musician, composer, and pedagogue, on April 1st. Consul-General of Poland in Bierascie Jaroslaw Ksiazek took part in this event.

The holdings of the museum complex already have about three hundred works of the famous fellow-countryman, the researcher pointed out.



CENTRUM STOSUNKÓW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



EUROPEAN RADIO FOR BELARUS



Polish aid

There are various sites devoted to events in Belarus, which are, however, little known in Western Europe, and among people dealing with politics towards Belarus who do not understand the Russian or Belarusian languages.

The site [belarus-live](#) fills this gap. The site allows to order weekly reception of news in English, Polish, Belarusian, Russian.