

THE BELARUSIAN ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS

Mass Media Week in Belarus

Info-posting September 14 – October 4, 2015

Several of the violations registered by the Monitoring group of BAJ directly or indirectly related to the electoral campaign.

On September 17, a journalist from Mahilou **Aliaksandr Burakou** received a reply to his complaint he had left in the book of suggestions of the Lenin district administration in Mahilou. On August 21, an employee made the journalist delete photos of the information stands near the administration building. The pretext was that the journalist was taking photos of the building, whereas the latter argued he just copied the information on the stands. The reply says that the facts outlined by the journalist in his complaint were not confirmed, and the actions of the employee were lawful. The journalist stayed disappointed, says the officials failed to refer to any law forbidding him to photograph information stands.

On September 22, the judge of the Hrodna region court **Mikalay Rachynski** upheld the fine imposed on **Ales Dzianisau** and **Ales Kirkevich** by the court of the Lenin district court of Hrodna on August 19. The journalists were fined 25 b.a. each under art. 22.9 for allegedly preparing an illegal report about a doll exhibition in Hrodna, published on *Belsat* website.

On September 23, it became known that the regional non-state newspaper *Borisovskiye Novosti* again received a refusal from the monopolists *Belposhta* and *Belsayuzdruk* in reply to their applications for distribution services. Both the state enterprises dismissed the request for services with excuses that art. 391 of the Civil Code grants any physical or legal entity the freedom in concluding contracts.

The independent newspaper has been out of the state distribution systems since 2006. The newspaper temporarily returned to subscription catalogues in kiosks of the Minsk region on June 1, 2013, but was left out five months later.

On September 23, the website of the campaign for observation of the presidential elections was subject to **DDoS attack**. A coordinator for the campaign **Dzianis Sadouski** reported that the attack was conducted at around 1 am, but they failed to establish from what country. Two hours later there was noticed an attempt of someone to gain passwords to the administration panel of the website. The attack failed, the website resorted to enhanced security.

On September 29 it became known that Belarusian Embassy to Russia had a meeting with managers of REN TV where it “firmly indicated at the obviously negative character” of a recent report about sex tourism in Belarus. The information was given by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alena Kupchyna. According to the document dated September 25, the Ministry holds regular monitoring of reports about Belarus in foreign mass media.

As reported **on October 2**, the republican enterprise on control of electronic communications BELGIE (Belarusian State Inspection for Electronic communications) published **a tender for the purchase of systems revealing anonymizers** in Internet access. The purchase is to be completed

and set to work by the end of November 2015. A representative of the company said the law obliged them to detect anonymizers, and they were doing it manually, but decided to order a robot because there are thousands of anonymizers. The enterprise detects them, publishes the lists, and then providers block them.