

Belarus KGB Attempts to Recruit Informants – Digest of Belarusian Politics

Belarusian authorities have not changed their ways in 2012. The former presidential candidate Mikola Statkevich will be transferred to a detention facility with harsher conditions, the KGB is trying to recruit new informants and more democratic activists are under pressure.

Statkevich to be moved to cell-type prison. On January 12, in a trial that took place in Correctional Institution #17 in Shklow, Mahilyow region. The convicted former presidential candidate Mikalay Statkevich was [found guilty](#) of violating prison rules and must be moved from the facility to a higher-security prison for three years. The charge was brought against Mr. Statkevich because of his missing number tag and failure to mention handkerchiefs among his personal items. In May 2011, a district judge in Minsk sentenced Mr. Statkevich to six years in a medium-security prison, finding him guilty of organizing "mass disorder" in connection with the December 19, 2010 post-election protest.

Opposition youths say that KGB attempted to recruit them as informants. Five members of an opposition youth group called Malady Front (Young Front) [revealed](#) to reporters on January 9 that officers of the Committee for State Security (KGB) had attempted to recruit them as informants. The young men were contacted by KGB officers while they were serving jail sentences in the detention center on Akrestsina Street following their arrest in Minsk on December 19, 2011.

Two jailed over protest in front of KGB office. An opposition activist Mikita Kavalenka who demonstrated in front of the headquarters of the Committee for State Security (KGB) in

Minsk on January 8 and a Belsat TV reporter Alyaksandr Barazhenka who filmed the protest were [sentenced](#) to jail terms on January 09. Kavalenka was sentenced to 15 days in jail, Barazhenka was handed an 11-day jail term. Both were found guilty of participation in an unauthorized demonstration under Article 23.34 of the Civil Offenses Code. Dunja Mijatovic, the OSCE representative on freedom of the media, [condemned](#) on January 11 the sentencing of Belarusian journalist Alyaksandr Barazhenka.

Seven Russian urban explorers left Belarus after serving out jail terms. On January 12, seven Russian urban explorers [served](#) out their 10-day jail sentences and boarded a train for Moscow. They were part of a group of 13 young people from Russia who were arrested at a hotel in Minsk on January 2 following complaints about their rowdy behavior and sentenced to jail on charges of disorderly conduct. The Russians have been banned from traveling to Belarus in the next five years.

Vitsebsk opposition activist Siarhei Kavalenka faces three years of prison. Vitsebsk activist of the Conservative Christian Party “Belarusian Popular Front” Siarhei Kavalenka may be [imprisoned](#) for up to three years for alleged violation of suspended sentence restrictions. The activist is currently held in a local detention center and has gone on a hunger strike in protests against the criminal prosecution.

Siarhei Kavalenka refuses to stop his hunger-strike. Siarhei Kavalenka, a Vitebsk member of the Conservative-Christian Party “Belarusian Popular Front”, has been placed in a [detention](#) facility. He has been on hunger strike from December 19 protesting against criminal prosecution. He is charged with violating article 415 (avoidance of serving sentence) for violations of the rules of serving suspended sentence. The activist may face up to three years in prison.

Sviatlana Chornaya continues hunger strike against death

sentence for Kanavalau and Kavalidou. A disabled woman in Minsk continues her [hunger strike](#) in protest against the death sentence passed on Dmitri Konovalov and Vladislav Kovalyov in the subway bombing trial in Minsk. Svyatlana Chornaya, who has a second-degree disability, began the strike on November 30.

The new Belarusian calendar for the next 8 years. Advertising consultant Julia Lyashkevich and designer Baba-Zhaba have created "[Prison Calendar](#)" to help understand the feeling of time in custody. The Calendar is to remind people of political prisoners and all unjustly imprisoned in Belarus.

Law Enforcement Officers Have Access to Restricted Sites in Bynet. The amendments to the Code of Administrative Offences and the Procedural-Executive Code of Administrative Offenses have taken [effect](#) on January 6. Now Internet providers, still making access to the restricted information in the government offices and educational institutions available, will be subject to a fine. Law enforcement agencies are the only open-shelf representatives of state structures. As [Euroradio reports](#), about 60 online resources are included in the list of restricted access in Belarus. Most of the "blacklisted" resources are pornographic, but as well as some prominent opposition websites such as charter97.org, belaruspartisan.org, spring96.org, prokopovich.net, prokopovi.ch, Lipkovichea.livejournal.com.

BHC is under threat of liquidation. The Ministry of Taxation requests the Ministry of Justice to initiate a process of [liquidation](#) of the Belarusian Helsinki Committee. Under the law, NGO activities can be suspended or liquidated if an NGO has received two warnings over a one year span of time. BHC has received two warnings for violating tax laws. BHC is the single registered human rights organization of the national level in Belarus.

Justice ministry suspends consideration of Belarusian Christian Democracy's registration application. The Belarusian

justice ministry has notified Belarusian Christian Democracy (BCD) that consideration of the party's application for registration has [suspended](#) for a month, without explaining the reason, BCD Executive Secretary Dzyanis Sadowski said. The party filed its registration application on December 20, 2011, after holding another, fourth founding conference.

Belarus Digest prepared this overview on the basis of materials provided by Pact. This digest attempts to give a richer picture of the recent political and civil society events in Belarus. It often goes beyond the hot stories already available in English-language media.