
Interview of the Chairman of the Russian Investigative Committee to the Interfax News Agency



Mr. Bastrykin: the rights of refugees from Donbas and Ukraine should not be breached in Russia

Mr. Alexander Bastrykin, Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, in an interview to Interfax, spoke about assistance to internally displaced persons from the Republics of Donbas and Ukraine and about migration problems and his ideas for migration policy improvement.

— Alexander Ivanovich, in recent months more than 3 million people from Donbass and Ukraine have arrived in Russia. Almost all state authorities are involved in arranging conditions for their adaptation in our country. What does the Investigative Committee pay attention on in this regards?

Officers of our department provide assistance to people who were forced to leave their place of residence and come to Russia. Special mobile groups have been created in the territorial investigative bodies to resolve the social and other problems of refugees promptly, and our members also take part in interdepartmental working groups. I have approved a plan for constant assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons in the reception, accommodation and housing on the territory of the Russian Federation. This refers to juveniles, including orphans, children left without parental care, women, senior citizens and the disabled.

Our Officers continue to analyze information incoming to the hotline around the clock and promptly respond to it.

For example, in the Chelyabinskaya oblast, a procedural inspection was organized due to the fact that a disabled person from the DPR was not provided with vital medicines and medical equipment, as a result, we achieved the restoration of his rights. Assistance was provided to an elderly lady, resident of Mariupol, in obtaining temporary housing. We helped a lady from the LPR to get an examination at an oncology clinic. Many problems of that kind have already been solved in fact.

— Probably there are also systemic problems that require certain changes in the regulatory framework, in addition to specific issues that can be resolved in the current conditions?

Indeed, there are such problems, including problems related to the need to amend Russian legislation. The existing gaps create real obstacles to the integration of people into Russian society.

One of the most important issues is the ability to legally work on the territory of our country, in connection with which it is stated as a priority to increase the efficiency of employment of migrants. Currently, the issue of recognition of Ukrainian documents in Russia (e.g. documents on education, qualification certificates, acts of civil status etc), their equivalence to Russian documents is being worked out.

I also want to add, that many people, who have previously entered into Russian citizenship, are highly qualified ones and they, having professional experience, could be very easily engaged in state and municipal service. However, for a number of reasons, they cannot formalize the withdrawal from Ukrainian citizenship. In this regard, I consider it necessary to resolve this issue at the legislative level, creating conditions under which the rights of these persons would not be violated.

— You pay great attention to the training of personnel in the Russian Investigative Committee. In one of the interviews, you mentioned that you are already accepting children from Donbas to study. Is it necessary to provide for separate measures in terms of training young migrants?

Education and professional approach is the basis of any affair. We must extend our principles, attitudes and opportunities in the field of education to internally displaced persons. Officers of the

Department provide all kinds of assistance to children from the DPR and the LPR, including paperwork for admission to educational institutions of the Investigative Committee.

In May of this year, I issued an order, according to which a special admission quota was established for children of military personnel, in particular, those taking part in a special military operation on the territory of the DPR, LPR and Ukraine.

Also, in the work on the implementation of the preferential procedure for the admission of arriving young people to Russian educational institutions, we focus on the issues of education and adaptation to the educational process of children with disabilities.

Despite the measures taken, we understand that the regulatory framework in the field of education, social assistance, and civil registration needs to be finalized, taking into account the needs of refugees.

Undoubtedly, it is very important to pay special attention to the state support for young families at the birth of children. But currently there are no legal grounds for paying maternity capital and other benefits to families of migrants, where children were born already inside of our country. This should be resolved as soon as possible, securing the possibility of receiving such payments.

— The State Services Web.Service allows us to speed up in many processes, maybe it is also worth using it for refugees?

We just discussed this possibility with relevant departments. The Investigative Committee believes that it is necessary to create an information platform for refugees similar to the "single point of contact of the MPSC" (Multifunctional Public Services Center), integrated with the relevant databases of relevant ministries and departments. The formation of an information database, which will include information about persons who arrived in the Russian Federation from the territory of a special military operation, will allow the prompt search of citizens, ensuring family reunification, including children whose parents died or went missing.

At this point, of course, it is necessary to provide for the possibility of exchanging information with the competent authorities of the DNR and the LNR. At the regional level, it is important to eliminate bureaucracy, excessive formalism in making managerial decisions, to prevent the level of corruption factors and the spread of abuses by officials at all levels.

Therefore, an additional set of measures is needed to ensure a clear and well-coordinated work of regional executive authorities and local self-government, aimed at effective assistance in resolving issues of internally displaced persons.

— Earlier, you have repeatedly drawn attention to the problems of migrant crime. What is the situation now?

In 2021, law enforcement agencies investigated 36,420 crimes committed by expatriats, which is almost 6% more than in 2020. At the same time, almost 8 thousand (7 910) crimes were committed by labor migrants, more than 2.8 thousand - by illegal migrants. In the first half of 2022, 21,048 crimes were investigated, which also indicates an increase of 10 percent compared to the same period last year. 1685 crimes were committed by illegal migrants.

There is an increase in cases of serious and especially serious crimes - murders, rapes, kidnappings, extremist content is also spreading. More recently, in the Moscow oblast, a criminal case was launched against a migrant who could not pay a taxi driver and decided to kill him. In the Novosibirsk oblast, a young man committed the murder of a girl. In the current year, there have been many cases of resistance to the demands of Law Enforcement Officials and attacks on LEOs. All mentioned leads to an aggravation of the crime situation in Russia and, of course, is a subject to citizens concern. People write comments to us on social networks, asking us to pay attention to this.

— **In your opinion, what factors provoke migrants to illegal actions?**

The crimes committed by migrants don't have any specific features. Disadaptation, prolonged stay in the territory of a foreign state away from the family, domestic disorder and financial difficulties, social insecurity - all these factors, psychologically oppressing, provoke migrants to search for criminal ways out of the existing situation.

Most crimes are committed by middle-aged migrants who do not work and do not have a stable source of income. The bulk of these crimes are thefts, and offence against the person.

One of the reasons, contributing to the commission of crimes by labor migrants, is their low level of living, due to their engagement in unskilled and low-paid work, often without registration of labor relations, especially in cases with illegal migrants. As a result, employers pay migrants much smaller amount for the work done, than was previously agreed. Because of their illegal stay in Russia, migrants do not turn to law enforcement agencies to protect their rights, but try independently to obtain full and get their fair remuneration for their labor, including by committing illegal means.

It is illegal migration that contributes to the unfavorable migration situation in the country. Investigative units of the Investigative Committee actively participate in permanent special groups and interdepartmental headquarters at various levels, created to coordinate law enforcement work and promptly suppress the activities of extremist and terrorist organizations, ethnic organized criminal communities and illegal migration channels.

This interaction is productive and contributes to the identification and high-quality investigation of crimes in this category.

— **Is it necessary to amend the legislative acts for migration?**

The legal norms governing migration relations in Russia are established in many regulatory legal acts. This is a number of Federal laws, several dozens of Interstate Treaties and Agreements.

In this regard, it is worthwhile to work out the issue of codifying migration legislation, which will make it possible to systematize socio-economic, labor, and other organizational aspects, to provide guarantees, taking into account existing international agreements.

In one normative act, it is possible to stipulate all patterns of migration, and the rules related to the registration of expatriates, the issuance of quotas for employment, and also clearly define the procedure for their registration. Codification should be based, first of all, on the provisions of the Concept of the State Migration Policy of the Russian Federation for 2019-2025, which will allow following a single line strictly in the further improvement and optimization of legal norms.

Summing up I'd like to note that within the work in Interdepartmental Commission of the Security Council of Russia in subjective to the state migration policy being improved, relevant issues in this area are being promptly discussed. This helps to ensure national security in the migration sphere and regulate migration processes in the interests of the country's socio-economic development.

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