

This morning President Toomas Hendrik Ilves who is on a working visit in Ida-Viru county at first met with County Governor Ago Silde who gave an overview of the rapidly developing county's progress and problems.

"Ida-Viru county can be characterised as a county with a long-lasting industrial tradition, where there are many production plants, steadily developing small enterprises and improving service sector," Governor Silde said. "At the same time Ida-Viru county has an excellent opportunity to become the most rapidly developing region as no other region can be better than our county from the viewpoint of development of trade between the European Union and Russia."

County Governor explained to President Ilves why it is necessary to build a new bridge in Narva. According to prognoses in 2011 about 450 000 trucks per year will pass through Narva from Estonia to Russia and vice versa, the year before last 400 000 vehicles crossed the present bridge, 70 000 of them were trucks. The Head of State stressed the necessity to design and construct a new highway bridge as soon as possible.

The first place that President Ilves visited was Wienerberger AS brick factory at Aseri where he himself moulded a handmade brick. The enterprise is the biggest employer in Aseri municipality; it employs about 200 people and exports more than half of its production to Russia, Lithuania, United Kingdom and the Nordic countries. At the end of November a new brick factory will be launched; 250 million kroons were invested into that project and it would create 30 new jobs.

After giving a lecture during a civic education lesson at the Narva Humanitarian Gymnasium, President Ilves visited the rowing base of the Narva Sports School "Energia". From among the sportsmen who have trained or are presently training there Leonid Gulov finished fourth (together with Tõnu Endrikson from Pärnu) in the men's double scull at the Olympic Games in Athens and this year Igor Kuzmin won a bronze medal in the men's quadruple scull (together with Andrei Jämsa, Tõnu Endrikson and Allar Raja) at the World Rowing Championship 2006. Today Igor Kuzmin also met with President Ilves.

In Narva the President of the Republic met also with the Mayor Tarmo Tammiste and the Chairman of the Narva City Council Mihhail Staluhhin.

At Sillamäe the Head of State together with Tiit Vähi, Chairman of the Council of AS Sillamäe Sadam, participated in the corner stone laying ceremony of a new pier. The forecasted turnover of Sillamäe Port for this year is a little less than one million tons of cargo, but the forecast for the next year is almost three million tons. One kilometre long pier, which got its corner stone today, will have four berths and the expected capacity of Baltic Chemical Terminal Ltd. will be 1 million tons of ammonium and 0.5 million tons of liquid fertilizes per year.

At Sillamäe, where Estonians make up only three percent of population, the Head of State met also with representatives of the local Estonian Society. The Society was founded in 2003 and there are several hobby circles and ensembles working at the Society.

In the evening President Ilves will go to Avinurme where he will meet with representatives of a number of various local societies.

Public Relations Department of the Office of the President
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