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AZERBAIJAN

Azerbaijani President receives chairman of Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs

June 3 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received chairman of the Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs, head of the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Alexei Pushkov.

During the meeting, they praised development of bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Russia in a variety of fields. They stressed the role of inter-parliamentary relations in strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries even further. President Ilham Aliyev and Alexei Pushkov noted Azerbaijan and Russia were actively cooperating within international organizations, including PACE. They hailed the two countries' mutual support in PACE.

Baku forum on "Great steps for Azerbaijan's future: Azerbaijan's economy after oil" kicks off in Azerbaijan's capital

June 3 (AzerTAc). Baku forum on "Great steps for Azerbaijan's future: Azerbaijan's economy after oil" has today started in Azerbaijan's capital. Opening the event, Chief Executive Officer of Azerbaijan Future Studies Society Reyhan Huseynova stressed the importance of the event. She underlined Azerbaijan's development in ICT field.

Minister of Communications and Information Technologies Ali Abbasov highlighted Azerbaijan's diversification policy, as well as development of the non-oil industry.

The forum was addressed by well-known international experts from NASA, the National Science Foundation of the USA, Google, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Rocky Mountain Institute. The forum brought together representatives from 30 countries. One of the latest technologies which were demonstrated at the forum was the holographic presentation. Such presentation was held in Azerbaijan for the first time. The forum presented the next generation device - 3D printer.

Azerbaijani President receives Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy at U.S. Department of State

June 4 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy at the U.S. Department of State in the Bureau of Energy Resources Amos Hochstein. During the meeting, U.S. ambassador to Azerbaijan Richard Morningstar handed over a letter of President Barack Obama to the Head of State.

President Ilham Aliyev thanked the diplomat for the U.S. leader's letter. The Azerbaijani President and the U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary stressed the importance of the 20th International Caspian Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference Incorporating Refining and Petrochemicals. They also praised development of partnership relations between Azerbaijan and the United States. President Ilham Aliyev and Amos Hochstein also discussed prospects for bilateral relations between the two countries, and negotiations to settle the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

20th International Caspian Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference Incorporating Refining and Petrochemicals kicks off in Baku. President Ilham Aliyev attends opening ceremony of the event

June 4 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and his spouse Mehriban Aliyeva have today attended an opening ceremony of the 20th International Caspian Oil & Gas Exhibition and Conference Incorporating Refining and Petrochemicals in Baku. The event was opened by senior advisor of British company ITE Group Plc Andrew Wood.

The Head of State addressed the opening ceremony. U.S. ambassador to Azerbaijan Richard Morningstar read out a congratulatory letter of President Barack Obama.

Then, the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Charles Hendry read out a congratulatory letter of PM David Cameron. President Ilham Aliyev and Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva viewed the pavilions of the exhibition. It was noted that this year's anniversary exhibition "Caspian Oil & Gas" coincides with the auspicious occasion - the 90th birthday anniversary of the founder of the exhibition, national leader Heydar Aliyev. The first exhibition was held in September 1994, just before the signing of the "Contract of the Century", which defined the main directions of the large-scale development of hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian basin and laid the foundation for a new era in the history of oil production in the country. Nationwide leader Heydar Aliyev, considering this exhibition as an important platform for the attraction of international oil and gas companies to the development of Azerbaijan's oil and gas industry, supported the initiative of conducting the first specialized oil and gas industry exhibition in Azerbaijan. Since then the "Caspian Oil & Gas" exhibition has turned into a platform where leading experts of the oil, gas and energy sectors come together and memoranda and agreements on further cooperation signed. The participants of the exhibition and conference include the world's leading companies representing the oil and energy sectors. Over the years, the exhibition has been attended by 5,600 companies from more than 70 countries. It was indicated that this year's anniversary exhibition "Caspian Oil & Gas" brings together 386 companies from 27 countries engaged in the exploration and development of oil and gas deposits and maintenance services. Among them are the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), BP-Azerbaijan, OMV, Total, TPAO, Statoil, Petkim, RWE – just to name a few. The exposition covers three pavilions of the Baku "Expo Center", as well as the open air section. Five countries – Germany, China, Russia, Turkey and the United Kingdom – are represented by national groups. As compared to last year, the exhibition area has increased by 22 per cent, while the total number of exhibitors by 25 per cent. The exhibition has also been joined by companies that were not previously present on the Azerbaijani market – they account for 20 per

cent of the total number of participants. This shows a great interest in the exhibition. It was noted that advanced oil and gas equipment and cutting-edge technology in the area of oil production and transportation of energy were on display. Furthermore, exhibitors demonstrate the currently ongoing in Azerbaijan and future projects. It is encouraging that the number of local companies participating in this event has increased over the years, while this year they account for 30 per cent of the total number of participants. Sponsors of the exhibition are 20 companies, including the general sponsor, the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic, and "golden sponsors" BP-Azerbaijan and Statoil. Dozens of leading media outlets from around the world provide information support the exhibition and conference. It was brought to the attention of the President that the agenda of the conference to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition is quite extensive. The conference will create conditions for the evaluation of new trends in the oil and gas market, the potential benefits of the Caspian Sea, as well as the prospects for resolving the problems of energy security in the world.

Azerbaijani FM meets US Secretary of State

June 4 (AzerTAC). Azerbaijani Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov has met US Secretary of State John Kerry as part of his visit to Washington. Stressing that Azerbaijan is an important partner for the US, Kerry underlined Azerbaijan's contribution to NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and to the energy security of Europe, as well as the country's role in other significant issues for the US.

Noting that the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a threat to the regional stability, the Secretary of State said that the US, as a co-chair country of the OSCE Minsk Group, would do its best to solve the dispute. Mammadyarov said Azerbaijan attached special attention to bilateral relations with the US, and expressed confidence that the successful cooperation in economic, investment and energy area, as well as within the international organizations would further enhance. Speaking about the negotiations on the peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the minister noted that the status quo must be changed. Mammadyarov also stressed that in order to achieve progress in the negotiations, first of all Armenia must withdraw its troops from Azerbaijan's occupied territories.

FM Mammadyarov invited John Kerry to pay an official visit to Baku.

Members of Azerbaijan's Friendship Group at UK Parliament visit Ganja

June 4 (AzerTAC). A group of MPs led by head of Azerbaijan's Friendship Group at the Parliament of UK Christopher Pincher visited Ganja, the second largest city of Azerbaijan. The UK delegation has met head of the Ganja City Executive Authorities Elmar Valiyev. Valiyev briefed the delegation on history of the city, as well as its ancient monuments and future developing directions. Head of the Friendship Group Christopher Pincher, and MPs Lord Laird, Lady Laird, Mark Menzies, Lord Addington and Angus Macneil highlighted the activity of the Friendship Group. Following the meeting, the UK delegation was presented with a carpet, a portrait of Nizami Ganjavi, and the book "Khamasa" (Five Treasures) of the great poet.

Shah Deniz I produced over 42 bln cubic meters of gas in 6 years, says BP official

June 6 (AzerTAc). BP's Regional President for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey Gordon Birrell has said 42 billion cubic meters of gas have been produced since production started at Shah Deniz field six years ago. Speaking at the Caspian Oil and Gas International Exhibition and Conference, Birrel said the daily capacity of the processing systems at the field was 1.2 million barrels of oil and 966 million standard cubic feet or 27.4 million standard cubic metres of Shah Deniz gas. The contract to develop the Shah Deniz field was signed in 1996. Shareholders of the project are BP and Statoil with 25.5 percent each, NICO, Total, Lukoil and SOCAR with 10 percent each, and TPAO with 9 percent.

Yeni Azerbaijan Party nominates its chairman, President Ilham Aliyev as presidential candidate

June 7 (AzerTAc). The 5th Congress of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party (YAP) has today nominated its chairman, President Ilham Aliyev as its candidate to run for presidency at this year's elections in October. The Head of State was welcomed to a standing ovation of participants of the Congress of YAP, which has more than 600,000 members. Chairman of the party, President Ilham Aliyev made a keynote speech at the opening of the event.

The President highlighted the history of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party, as well as the activities of its founder, national leader Heydar Aliyev, and the party's role in the life of the country and its people. President Ilham Aliyev was unanimously re-elected chairman of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party. The party also approved its 90-man Political Council, 21-man Board and 15-man Central Supervision and Inspection Commission. President Ilham Aliyev made closing remarks at the event to thank the party members for putting their trust in him, and vowed to justify this confidence.

Another Armenia-occupied Azerbaijani city is twinned with Hungarian city

June 7 (AzerTAc). The Armenia-occupied Azerbaijani city of Aghdam has been twinned with Tiszavasvári as head of the Aghdam District Executive Authorities Nizami Sadikhov visited Hungary. The twining agreement was signed by Nizami Sadikhov and Tiszavasvári Mayor Erik Fulop. The event once again proves Hungary's full support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Azerbaijan's Shusha and Hungarian Gyongyos have earlier signed a memorandum to become sister cities.

Azerbaijani energy operator produces 1,6 bln billion kilowatt/hours electricity in May, 2013

June 7 (AzerTAc). The Azereenergy Company (generation and distribution of electricity in Azerbaijan) generated about 1.6 billion kilowatt/hours of electricity in May, 2013. The planned electricity deals with neighboring countries were continued in May. The electricity production made 9.3 billion kilowatt/hours in January-May, 2013.

Azerbaijan becomes member of International Organization of Vine and Wine

June 9 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan has become a member of the International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV). The decision was adopted at a meeting of the General Assembly of OIV in Bucharest, Romania. Azerbaijan's Minister of Agriculture Ismat Abasov, head of the Ganja City Executive Authorities Elmar Valiyev participated in the meeting. The International Organization of Vine and Wine is an intergovernmental organization which deals with technical and scientific aspects of viticulture and winemaking.

The field of OIV includes grape production for all purposes, i.e. not just wine, but also table grapes and raisin production. One of the activities of OIV is the compilation of global statistics within its field. OIV is based in Paris, and had 45 member states as of 2011.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev receives Palestinian FM Riad Malki

June 10 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine Riad Malki. The Head of State said Azerbaijan and the State of Palestine enjoyed active cooperative ties. President Ilham Aliyev praised the bilateral political relations, noting the two countries have good potential for development of economic cooperation. The Azerbaijani leader added that business investment opportunities were being explored. President Ilham Aliyev recalled the visit by President of the State of Palestine Mahmud Abbas to Azerbaijan, saying the visit created good opportunities to discuss how to bolster cooperation. The Head of State pointed out that the people of Azerbaijan and Palestine enjoyed friendly ties, saying Azerbaijan always supported initiatives concerning Palestine in international organizations, including the United Nations. Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad Malki thanked the Azerbaijani President for his intention to expand the cooperation with his country. He handed over President of the State of Palestine Mahmud Abbas's letter to the Head of State. Foreign Minister Riad Malki said that in his letter, the President of Palestine Mahmud Abbas offered his greetings to the Azerbaijani leader and thanked the country for supporting Palestine in the General Assembly of the United Nations to accord Palestine 'Non-Member Observer State' Status in the organization. President Ilham Aliyev thanked for Mahmud Abbas's letter, and asked the FM to convey his greetings to the Head of the State of Palestine.

Azerbaijan increases export of non-oil products

June 10 (AzerTAc). According to the Azerbaijan State Statistical Committee, the country's foreign trade totaled \$14.2 bln for January-April, 2013. The share of state sector in export operations reached \$11 bln while import operations made up \$ 3.2 bln. Some 61% of foreign trade operations were carried out with developed countries, while 39 % was carried out with the developing ones. The export of non-oil products increased by 16.3 % in comparison with the same period of 2012.

President Ilham Aliyev receives OIC Secretary General

June 11 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu.

During the meeting, they stressed the importance of Azerbaijan`s successful activity in all institutions under OIC. President Ilham Aliyev and Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu exchanged views on issues related to future activities of the organization.

Azerbaijani President receives Turkish FM

June 11 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu. Ahmet Davutoglu conveyed Turkish President Abdullah Gul`s and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan`s greetings to the Head of State.

They noted friendly and fraternal relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey were developing successfully on all fronts. The Azerbaijani President and the Turkish FM underlined high level meetings and reciprocal visits contribute to strengthening the bilateral ties even further.

During the conversation, they stressed the importance of high-profile international events held in Baku recently in terms of strengthening cooperation among countries and peoples.

President Ilham Aliyev asked Ahmet Davutoglu to pass on his greetings to the Turkish President and the Prime Minister.

Azerbaijani President receives Secretary General of Cooperation Council for Arab States of Gulf

June 11 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received a delegation led by Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf Abdul Latif bin Rashid Al Zayani. Abdul Latif bin Rashid Al Zayani conveyed greetings of heads of state of the organization`s member countries to the Azerbaijani leader.

They stressed the importance of the Baku-hosted international conference to assist the State of Palestine. The Azerbaijani President and the Secretary General hailed cooperation between the country and the Arab states of the Gulf. They noted relationship between Azerbaijan and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf was developing successfully both in bilateral format and within international organizations. During the conversation, President Ilham Aliyev and Abdul Latif bin Rashid Al Zayani stressed the necessity of defining new areas of cooperation. They also discussed issues related to expansion of the bilateral ties on all fronts. The Head of State asked the Secretary General to deliver his greetings to the heads of state of the organization`s member countries.

Azerbaijani, Turkish FMs meet

June 11 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani FM Elmar Mammadyarov has today met Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu. The foreign ministers hailed relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey as fraternal. Praising mutual support within international organizations, the ministers stressed the importance of continuing coordination in this direction. Elmar Mammadyarov provided an insight into the current state of peace talks to settle the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

President Ilham Aliyev receives EU Special Representative for South Caucasus

June 12 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus Philippe Lefort. They discussed development of cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union, as well as the current state of and prospects for the talks to settle the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

SOCAR president meets Spanish businessmen

June 12 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan's State Oil Company (SOCAR) Rovnag Abdullayev has met a Spanish delegation, who are in Azerbaijan to attend an Azerbaijani-Spanish business forum. Abdullayev hailed the bilateral ties between Azerbaijan and Spain. The SOCAR President stressed the importance of reciprocal visits, meetings and exchange of views in terms of expansion of the bilateral relationships. Rafael Aguilar said Spanish companies which would attend the Baku forum specialized mainly in energy, oil and chemistry, and engineering. Abdullayev provided an insight into recent global and regional oil and gas projects initiated and implemented by Azerbaijan.

Vienna hosts conference on Azerbaijan's geopolitics and Europe's energy security

June 12 (AzerTAc). A conference on Geopolitics of Azerbaijan and Europe's Energy Security has been held in Vienna at the initiative of the Industrie magazin and support of former Austrian Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer. The conference was attended by Azerbaijan's Minister of Industry and Energy Natig Aliyev, MPs Elkhan Suleymanov, Fazil Mustafa, Gudrat Hasanguliyev, SOCAR's representative in Austria Gulmirza Javadov, Austrian politicians, OMV oil and gas firm's employees, diplomats, renowned experts and journalists. Gusenbauer described Azerbaijan in his speech as the rich, rapidly developing country, which has an important geopolitical position and plays a role of the bridge between Europe and Asia. Gusenbauer touched upon the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute saying part of Azerbaijani lands was occupied as a result of the Armenian aggression. Industry and Energy Minister Natig Aliyev said oil and gas industry of Azerbaijan is based on rich traditions and history. He noted energy security is one of the major elements of the world economy and politics. According to him, Azerbaijan is the most reliable energy supplier for Europe. MP Elkhan Suleymanov spoke about the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and its characteristics. According to him, the indifference of the international community makes both peoples, in particular, over a million refugees and IDPs suffer. MPs Fazil Mustafa and Gudrat Huseynguliyev told of the European-Azerbaijan relations,

geopolitical processes in the region, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Minister Aliyev held some bilateral meetings and gave interviews to media outlets of Germany, France, Italy and Austria on the sidelines of the conference. Asked about TAP and Nabucco projects, the Azerbaijani Minister said the talks on the issue are in final stage. The participants were given books on the Khojaly genocide and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Peruvian parliament adopts resolution recognizing Khojaly genocide

June 13 (AzerTAc). The parliament of Peru has passed a resolution to recognize the Khojaly genocide. According to the Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the document says that the last stage of Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict started late in 1987 as the attacks by Armenians against Azerbaijanis in Khankendi intensified. The increase in Armenians` attacks in 1988-1989 and the disruption of political stability in the USSR in next years lead to the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis, the document says.

“On the night of February 25-26, 1992, a terrible massacre was committed against Azerbaijanis in the town of Khojaly in Azerbaijan. Consequently, 613 people including women and children were killed, 1275 people were taken hostage, 150 people went missing, 487 people became disabled, 26 children lost both parents and 130 children lost one of the parents. Following the attack estimated as a genocide and fully documented, Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions were occupied by Armenian armed forces.”

The document notes four resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council on the conflict. It also stresses that UN Security Council has once again confirmed respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of international borders by these resolutions.

The resolution says that Azerbaijan had seen tens of billions of dollars of damage as a result of the conflict. The document says that “although ceasefire was declared on May 12, 1994 at the OSCE Budapest Summit, it has been violated and such cases have intensified since 2003.” The proposals made by the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Peruvian Congress to the plenary session are as follows: “1. Expressing respect for the sovereignty of the Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples, the Congress of the Republic of Peru calls on the governments of the countries to reach agreement in an appropriate format as soon as possible to put an end to the conflict. 2. Mentioning that the injustice underwent by the conflict victims in terms of Khojaly massacre has not been eliminated yet, we should announce that the possible measures that will contribute to the strengthening of relations between peoples must be a key element of any peace agreement.”

Uruguayan President sees Azerbaijan as important partner

June 14 (AzerTAc). “Azerbaijan is an important partner for Uruguay,” the Uruguayan President Jose Mujica said in his interview with M-24 radio station while sharing his views on his country’s international cooperation. Jose Mujica highlighted

prospects for the cooperation between the two countries. The Uruguayan leader noted his country was determined to develop economic relations with Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan, Hungary present joint stamp

June 15 (AzerTAc). A first ever joint Azerbaijan-Hungary stamp has been launched in a ceremony at the Azerbaijani embassy in Budapest. Produced jointly by Magyar Posta and Azermarka, the stamp features similar motives and ornaments in the two countries' art.

Speaking to the launch ceremony, Azerbaijani ambassador Vilayat Guliyev and department head at Magyar Posta Gabor Peteffi described the stamp as a symbolic step reflecting the cultural and moral unity of the Azerbaijani and Hungarian people. The presentation was attended by Azerbaijani embassy staffers, employees of Magyar Posta, representatives of Azerbaijan's Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies, philatelists, journalists, Hungarian public figures and representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora.

US, Russian and French presidents issue joint statement on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

June 18 (AzerTAc). Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and Francois Hollande, President of the French Republic have today issued a joint statement on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The statement reads: "We, the Presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries – France, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America – remain committed to helping the parties to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict reach a lasting and peaceful settlement. We express our deep regret that, rather than trying to find a solution based upon mutual interests, the parties have continued to seek one-sided advantage in the negotiation process. We continue to firmly believe that the elements outlined in the statements of our countries over the last four years must be the foundation of any fair and lasting settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. These elements should be seen as an integrated whole, as any attempt to select some elements over others would make it impossible to achieve a balanced solution. We reiterate that only a negotiated settlement can lead to peace, stability, and reconciliation, opening opportunities for regional development and cooperation. The use of military force that has already created the current situation of confrontation and instability will not resolve the conflict. A renewal of hostilities would be disastrous for the population of the region, resulting in loss of life, more destruction, additional refugees, and enormous financial costs. We strongly urge the leaders of all the sides to recommit to the Helsinki principles, particularly those relating to the non-use of force or the threat of force, territorial integrity, and equal rights and self-determination of peoples. We also appeal to them to refrain from any actions or rhetoric that could raise tension in the region and lead to escalation of the conflict. The leaders should prepare their people for peace, not war. Our countries stand ready to assist the sides, but the responsibility for putting an end to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains with them. We strongly believe that further delay in reaching a balanced agreement on the framework for a comprehensive peace is unacceptable, and urge the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia to focus with renewed energy on the issues that remain unresolved."

Azerbaijani companies invited to participate in construction of new airport in Karbala, Iraq

June 19 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani companies are invited to participate in construction of a new airport in Karbala, Iraq, the Azerbaijan Export & Investment Promotion Foundation (AZPROMO) has announced.

German FM: "Azerbaijan is an important partner for Europe and a bridge between the East and the West"

June 20 (AzerTAc). "Germany supports Azerbaijan's relations with the European Union and the country's moving closer to European institutions. Azerbaijan is an important partner for Europe and a bridge between the East and the West thanks to its geo-strategic situation and cultural heritage," said German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle.

"We highly appreciate that by joining the Council of Europe, as well as the European Neighborhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, Azerbaijan shares European values. Thanks to participation in the Eastern Partnership program, Azerbaijan can become part of a common area of stability and prosperity," the FM added.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev meets European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso

June 21 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has met European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in Brussels. They praised the development of relations between Azerbaijan and the European Commission. They said there was good potential for expanding the bilateral cooperation in the economic and energy sectors.

The Azerbaijani leader and the President of the European Commission also discussed prospects for developing the relations between the country and the organization.

Azerbaijani President meets President of European Council

June 21 (AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today met President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy in Brussels. They hailed the Azerbaijan-EU relations in different fields. They stressed the contribution of President Ilham Aliyev's visit to development of the bilateral cooperation. They discussed ways of settling the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as regional security and stability, cooperation in the energy sector and other issues.

AZAL launches direct flight to one more Russian city

June 21 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan Airlines has started direct flights on Baku-Yekaterinburg-Baku route, the Heydar Aliyev International Airport reported. The flights will be operated by Airbus A-319 and Airbus A-320, twice a week – Thursday and

Sundays at 15.25 and 20.00, respectively. In the opposite direction, the flights are realized at 19.25 and 00.00.

Baku hosts 1st Forum of Heads of Diaspora Organizations of Member Countries of Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States

June 22 (AzerTAc). The 1st Forum of Heads of Diaspora Organizations of Member Countries of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States has been held in Baku.

The event brought together representatives of diaspora organizations, as well as state and government officials, NGOs, scientific and cultural institutions of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. The forum started with a presentation of a documentary on the activity of the Turkic-speaking countries and Azerbaijani diaspora. Speaking to the event, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States Halil Akinci thanked the Azerbaijani government for excellent organization of the forum. He said the cooperation between the Turkic-speaking countries had strengthened after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and stressed the important role of the diaspora organizations in terms of expansion of relations and recognition of Turkic-speaking countries in the international level and in the solution of problems. Addressing the event, head of the Azerbaijan's State Committee for Work with Diaspora Nazim Ibrahimov wished successes the Forum. He said the political geography of the Turkic world has been expanded thanks to Turkic-speaking countries, who gained the independence. Ibrahimov underlined national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev has always supported the unity of the Turkic-speaking countries, adding "currently, President Ilham Aliyev worthily continues this policy". He noted today diaspora organizations of the Turkic-speaking countries have millions of members in the world, adding the main duty is strengthening unity and solidarity among Turkic peoples. Commenting on the efforts made by Turkic-speaking countries towards the political and cultural unity, the Committee chairman said: "Today, diaspora organizations of Turkic-speaking peoples have millions of members in various countries of the world. This is a sufficiently serious power and gives us an opportunity to join our force in order to interests of our people". Chief of the Department for Political Analysis and Information of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan Elnur Aslanov read out President Ilham Aliyev's congratulatory letter to the Forum participants.

The attendees have also heard congratulatory letters from presidents of Turkey, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Addressing the forum, first deputy chair of the Board of directors of the World Association of Kazakhs Talgat Mamashov stressed the importance of the 1st Forum of Heads of Diaspora Organizations of Member Countries of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, adding the forum will give an opportunity to Turkic-speaking countries to expand relations. Labor, Migration and Youth Minister of Kyrgyzstan Aliyasbek Alymkulov thanked Azerbaijani government for the organization of the Forum. He stressed the importance of unity among the Turkic-speaking peoples. Head of the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities Kemal Yurtnac said the forum was very important in terms of providing unity and protecting interest of Turkic-speaking people and "delivering the rights voice to the world". Secretary General of the

International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) Dusen Kaseinov, in turn, underlined the importance of the 1st Forum of Heads of Diaspora Organizations of Member Countries of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States. He informed the attendees on work towards bringing together diaspora organizations of Turkic-speaking countries. Addressing the event, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA) Ramil Hasanov spoke of the work done towards strengthening of diaspora organizations. He expressed confidence that the Baku Forum will play a significant role in speeding up the process of bringing together Turkic-speaking peoples. Other speakers of the Forum included president of the Turkic Academy, rector of the Kokshetau State University, academician Shakir Ibrayev, president of the European Azerbaijanis Congress Samira Patzer-Ismayilova, chairman of the Turkic-speaking Peoples Assembly Mustafa Camgoz and chairman of the World Azerbaijani Youth Union Ramin Mammadov. The forum also adopted a Baku Declaration and address to Presidents Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Almazbek Atambayev of Kyrgyzstan and Abdullah Gul of Turkey.

The Declaration stresses the importance of strengthening unity between Turkic-speaking peoples in terms of providing peace and security in the region. The document suggests coordination of activity of diaspora organizations of member countries of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States within nine directions. The Declaration says the Forum attendees stress the importance of support of the process for organization of diasporas of the Turkic-speaking peoples, creation of regional centers aimed at coordination of activity of the diaspora organizations, communities and institutions and ensuring full information on history, culture and modern life of the Turkic world to the world community. In the address to presidents of the Turkic-speaking countries, the Forum attendees assure the heads of states that they will do their best to ensure unity between the Turkic-speaking peoples, protection of interests and to deliver their right voice to the world.

\$144.4bn invested in Azerbaijan since 1995, minister

June 23 (AzerTAc). Thanks to the determined socioeconomic policy implemented in Azerbaijan, the country's GDP has grown 3.4-fold and per capita GDP threefold. Thanks to the determined socioeconomic policy implemented in Azerbaijan, the country's GDP has grown 3.4-fold and per capita GDP threefold over the past decade. The statement came from Minister of Economic Development Shahin Mustafayev speaking at the conference "Identifying outcomes of national consultations in Azerbaijan in period after 2015". The minister also said that the volume of producing capacities in Azerbaijan has risen 2.8 times over the past decade and the state budget revenues have grown by 19 times while the budget deficit did not top 1% of the GDP. "Thanks to the good investment climate created in the country, \$144.4bn has been invested in Azerbaijan since 1995. In general, the volume of investments in nonoil sector of the country has risen 18.7 times and domestic investments 22.1 times over the past decade", he said. He said that these achievements have created a favorable ground for the active step to address poverty in the country. According to him, the poverty rate in 2012 stood at 6% against 46.7% over 2002. "Thus, we have already reached the goal set by 2015", the minister said. He noted that the number of jobs created in the country has topped 1,100 of which 869 are in the regions.

World Bank, Azerbaijan to cooperate in ICT sector

June 24 (AzerTAc). A delegation led by Randeep Sudan, the Sector Manager for Information and Communication Technologies at the World Bank, has met with the staff of Azerbaijan's ICT Ministry. The sides focused on the ICT projects being realized in Azerbaijan. Noting high development of the ICT sector in the country, Randeep Sudan said the World Bank and Azerbaijan are keen to cooperate mainly in the development of national broadband network, cyber security questions and e-government services. The ICT Ministry's department chief Bakhtiyar Mammadov spoke of the experience in ICT sector, the works done to build e-government services. The sides had comprehensive exchange of views to widen further cooperation in ICT sphere.

Azerbaijani President attends military parade to mark 95th anniversary of Armed Forces

June 26 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan has marked the 95th anniversary of the founding of its Armed Forces with a grand military parade at the Azadliq Square featuring troops, military hardware and an impressive air-show. President, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev attended the parade, which was watched by state and government officials, first lady, president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva, MPs, foreign ambassadors in Baku, heads of religious communities, employees of international organizations, war veterans and members of the general public. Defense Minister, Colonel-General Safar Abiyev reported to President, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev on the readiness of the troops. The Supreme Commander-in-Chief saluted the troops. After a military orchestra of the Defense Ministry played Azerbaijan's National Anthem President, Supreme Commander-in-Chief Ilham Aliyev made a speech. The President touched upon the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and reiterated that his country's territorial integrity would be restored. He said all international organizations were supporting Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

The Head of State said Azerbaijan enjoyed a strengthening international image and position.

The President highlighted the country's achievements in different areas, particularly in army building and defense industry. The parade involved nearly 5,000-strong personnel of all types of troops, as well as 300 military vehicles and weapon systems, over 100 fighter jets and helicopters, and nearly 40 ships.

U.S. to host Days of Azerbaijani Culture in 2014

June 26 (AzerTAc). The United States will host the Days of Azerbaijani Culture next year as Paul Michael Taylor, Director of the Smithsonian Institution Department of Anthropology, Asian Cultural History Program, is on a visit to Baku to discuss preparatory issues. The visit is taking place under a cooperation program with the Nizami Ganjavi International Center. Among other issues the visit saw Mr. Taylor discuss the possible opening of the Washington branch of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev receives Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta

June 27 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has today received a Romanian delegation led by Prime Minister Victor Ponta. The Head of State praised the Azerbaijan-Romania cooperation. The President hailed the bilateral relations as strong. He stressed the importance of exploring opportunities for building cooperation in the private sector, as well as expanding collaboration in economy, investment making and other areas.

The President expressed confidence the Romanian Prime Minister's visit would create good opportunities for holding discussions over expansion of the Azerbaijan-Romania relations.

Romanian Premier Victor Ponta praised the political dialogue between the two countries. He said Romania would remain one of Azerbaijan's closest friends in the European Union.

The Prime Minister noted the importance of the Azerbaijani President's visit to Romania, and the Romanian leader's visit to Azerbaijan. Victor Ponta stressed the role of political and economic contacts in strengthening the bilateral relationship. They also discussed implementation of joint projects, energy cooperation and a range of other issues.

6th ministerial meeting of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway Project kicks off in Kars

June 27 (AzerTAc). The 6th ministerial meeting of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway Project has started in the Turkish city of Kars. Azerbaijan is represented at the event by Transport Minister Ziya Mammadov. The meeting will see the ministers discuss the progress on the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, and explore ways of solving the existing problems.

Shah Deniz consortium chooses TAP to carry Azeri gas to Europe

June 28 (AzerTAc). The consortium developing Azerbaijan's Shah Deniz gas field has chosen the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) for natural gas deliveries to Europe, Gordon Birrell, BP Regional President for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey said on Friday.

Hailing the cooperation memorandum signed as part of a visit of President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso to Azerbaijan, Gordon Birrell said that the decision on transport of Azerbaijani gas to Europe was based on commercial interests. Stressing that Azerbaijan's gas reserves was 2 trillion cm, SOCAR President Rovnag Abdullayev said that additional gas supplies would enter into market by 2020. The Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) supports the European Union's strategic goal of securing future energy supply. TAP will transport natural gas from the giant Shah Deniz II field in Azerbaijan, via Greece and Albania, and across the Adriatic Sea to Southern Italy, and further to Western Europe.

TAP offers the shortest and most direct link from the Caspian region to the most attractive European markets with the most competitive gas tariff. The project is designed to expand transportation capacity from 10 to 20 bcm per year, depending on supply and demand.

TAP also allows for the development of natural gas storage facilities in Albania to further ensure security of supply to European markets during any operational interruptions.

TAP will promote economic development and job creation along the pipeline route and it is the only pipeline in the Southern Gas Corridor not dependent on public money. The Trans Adriatic Pipeline will bring natural gas from the Caspian region to Europe.

The shareholder structure of the Trans Adriatic Pipeline project comprises of Swiss Axpo (42.5%), Norwegian Statoil (42.5%) and German E.ON (15%). TAP AG has its headquarters in Baar, Switzerland and branch offices in Athens, Rome, Tirana. TAP Representatives are also working in Brussels and Istanbul. Currently, TAP employs approximately 60 oil and gas specialists from 24 countries and over 200 experts from contracted service companies.

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan archaeologists discover Saka princess tomb

[*Tengrinews*](#), Jun 3, 2013

The burial site of the high-ranking young woman was discovered during reconstruction of Taskesken-Bakty road in Urdzhar region of East-Kazakhstan oblast. An expedition made of professors and students of Semipalatinsk and Pavlodar pedagogical institutes discovered the stone tomb-chest with remains of the young woman at the depth of 1.7 meters under a burial mound.

The things found in at the burial site certify that the woman was from a distinguished tribe. According to the archaeologists, the golden head wear that looks like Kazakh Saukele (national headgear of women) is the most valuable item for the research. "The pointed golden head wear with zoomorphic ornaments has the top that looks like the arrows and is decorated with a spiral made of golden wire and jewels. A similar head wear used to be part of the official costume of the Saka tribe chieftains. It is quite possible that the woman was a daughter of a king of Saka Tigrakhauda tribe," Timur Smagulov said.

According to him, it is quite possible that young Tomiris who later became a warrior-queen used to wear a similar head wear. According to the expedition's members, ceramic and wooden vessels, as well as bones of a sacrificial sheep were also discovered

in the tomb. Pieces of blue and green clothes remained on the woman's remains. Golden earrings and a stone altar were found next to her head.

"According to the preliminary information, the tomb of the "Urdzhar princess" is dated 4th or 3rd century B.C.," Smagulov said. According to him, a similar tomb discovered in Issyk burial mount (the "Golden Man").

Kazakhs launch 'Silk Road' China-Europe rail route

[*Reuters*](#), Jun 10, 2013 by Raushan Nurshayeva

ASTANA - Kazakhstan has launched a new transit railway linking China to Europe, aiming to beat rival routes for journey time in the competition to handle a growing flow of goods along the ancient Silk Road trade route.

Now it takes just 15 days for trains carrying containers with electronic goods, construction materials and other cargo to cover the 10,800 km (6,750 miles) route from Chongqing in southwest China to Duisburg in Germany's industrial Ruhr region.

Late last year, Kazakhstan completed construction of a 293-km (183-mile) stretch from Zhetygen to Korgas at the Chinese border, looping it in to the existing national railway network and opening the second China-Europe link across its territory.

The annual volume of freight turnover along the new route, guaranteed by China, was set to total 2 million metric tons (2.2 million tons) this year and would rise eventually to 15 million metric tons.

Europe-bound trains from China cross from Kazakhstan into Russia. Then they go via Belarus and Poland before reaching Duisburg in Germany.

LUCRATIVE BUSINESS

Transit routes are a major earner for Kazakhstan's fast-growing economy, already established as a route for pipelines to pump Central Asian oil and gas to China, reducing the region's foreign dependency.

This railway, with the Dostyk-Alashankou crossing at China's border, handled a record 16.5 million metric tons of cargo to and from China in 2012, Meirbekov said, predicting that it would reach its maximum annual capacity of 25 million metric tons soon.

Sending goods by sea is very cheap - of course, if the client agrees to wait for 45 days, but markets are fickle, and you have to move fast. Goods to be delivered to Europe from China via Russia's Trans-Siberian railway would cover 12,000 km and transit time would take between 18 and 20 days, the Kazakh government says, touting its own route.

Kazakh state railway company Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ) has estimated that cargo transit via its network would reach 35 million metric tons by 2020 and eventually rise to 50 million metric tons.

KTZ handles 90-95 percent of all Kazakh transit cargo. (Writing by Dmitry Solovyov; Editing by Douglas Busvine and William Hardy)

June 12, 2013

Kazakhstan Begins Transition to 'Green' Economy

Half of Kazakhstan's Electricity will come from Alternative Sources and Renewables by 2050, According to Presidential Decree.

Renewable and alternative energy sources will provide 50 percent of all electricity produced in Kazakhstan by 2050, according to a Decree signed by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev on May 30. The goal is part of Nazarbayev's broad Strategy Kazakhstan-2050 initiative, which is designed to modernize and diversify the nation's carbon-reliant economy.

The 2050 plan calls for the aggressive development of Kazakhstan's alternative energy generation as well as water resource, agriculture and waste management sectors. It also contains measures aimed at reducing carbon emissions and increasing energy efficiency in the industrial, housing, utilities and transport sectors.

Kazakhstan's Minister of Environmental Protection Nurlan Kapparov spelled out the plan at a June 5th briefing at the Central Communications Service. "If domestic natural gas prices remain high, 11 percent of our electricity will come from wind and solar sources, 10 percent from hydro and 8 percent from nuclear by 2030," Minister Kapparov said. "The remainder will come from coal (49%) and natural gas (21%). By 2050, the share of wind and solar sources will increase to 39 percent, nuclear and hydro will make up 14 percent, gas stations – 16, and the remaining 31 percent will fall to coal stations, which will be upgraded to rely on cleaner-burning technologies," he added.

If natural gas prices become more affordable, the share of gas-fired power plants will increase to 26 percent by 2030 and 32 percent in 2050. What's more, energy efficiency measures will allow overall electricity production to be reduced by 10 percent by 2030.

The Strategy Kazakhstan 2050 plan seeks to use the country's estimated 3.8 trillion cubic meters of natural gas reserves as a bridge between coal and renewable sources for electricity. As development and conversion capacity increases, gas will gradually replace coal plants until they are upgraded or shuttered entirely.

The gradual phasing out of coal will help lay the foundation for large-scale development of the renewable energy and gas chemical sectors while protecting jobs in the coal sector as well. As coal production in absolute terms will not reduce over the next two decades, significant reductions in employment are not foreseen. At the same time, development of new high-tech renewable energy sectors and gas chemical sectors as well as development of gas transportation infrastructure will allow to create new, high paying jobs.

The President's Decree sets a water resource management goal of transitioning to the more effective and careful use of water resources to meet the growing demands of both the economy and population. The plan also calls for a more productive regional dialogue on joint use of rivers that are shared with the neighboring countries that should be based on fairness and economic attractiveness.

The Decree also set ambitious goals for Kazakhstan's agriculture sector. Gradual increases in grain yield productivity are coupled with reductions in the amount of water that can be used for irrigation. Both can be achieved through a combination of farmers being provided with affordable financing for equipment procurement and high quality fertilizers, an increase of crop rotation for reducing land degradation, and the application of advanced irrigation technologies.

The President's vision also calls for the establishment of a robust waste recycling industry, which would provide great opportunities for the creation of new jobs. By 2050, Kazakhstan aims to use public-private partnerships to help build a non-waste, so-called "circular" economy.

In order to reduce air pollution, the Central Asian nation aims to adopt European emissions standards by 2030.

Minister Kapparov also stated that green modernization need not be a heavy load on the national economy. The transfer to the green economy, he said, will have a positive impact on the country's economy -- increasing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by as much as 3% by 2050 compared to the status quo. It will also provide for the creation of up to 600,000 new jobs in different sectors of economy. Minister Kapparov said that the overall volume of public and private investments for implementation Kazakhstan Strategy 2050 would be around 3.2 billion U.S. dollars per year until 2050. This is about 1% of the annual GDP.

D.Mukhtarov, Trend, June 14, 2013

Internet users number grows in Kazakhstan

As of last year, the number of Kazakhs having computer skills and use the Internet comprised 10 million people (62.6 percent of the population), press service of the Ministry of Transport and Communications stated on Friday.

"According to the latest ranking of the United Nations, Kazakhstan ranked 2nd on 'e-participation index' among 192 countries (31st in 2005)," the statement says.

On the 'e-government development index' the country rose to the 38th place (from 65th in 2005), and ranked 14th in on-line services. Electronic licensing in Kazakhstan was named the best project for business under WSIS international competition this year.

"It is also planned that by 2015, e-learning system will be introduced already in 50 percent of all educational institutions," the statement notes.

Kazakhstan Opens New Opportunities

Jun 25, 2013

By Marat Tazhin, Kazakhstan Secretary of State

First published at the website of Information and Analysis Center of the M.Lomonosov Moscow State University on June 5, 2013

Ranked among the top five fastest growing economies in the world, Kazakhstan has begun implementing its strategy up to 2050. The country is positioning itself as a firmly established state. Its long-term planning horizon underlines the fact that the country's transition period is over. The transition from a former Soviet republic with an administrative-command system to a sovereign state with a market economy has finally been completed.

However, this does not mean the preservation of today's political and socio-economic processes. On the contrary, the Strategy "Kazakhstan – 2050" marks the beginning of great changes, filled with new content and determined by the logic of an established state.

Taking into account how quickly circumstances change and the considerable influence of external factors, planning development over such a period is rather difficult. It is not a coincidence that Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev named the acceleration of historical time as the top global challenge since the strategy is built upon the understanding of such changes.

From this point of view, the attempt to calculate a specific configuration of the economy for decades to come or to predict what technologies will dominate at that time is like playing Russian roulette. Therefore, when planning strategically, we need to rely not on future changes, but on our preparedness to face them. In other words, to plan social, economic and political conditions, which will ensure that we stand ready for future changes.

So what is our vision of a new Kazakhstan?

Resources in exchange for technologies

The economic agenda includes reducing the degree of state regulation and shifting the centre of gravity towards private entrepreneurship. To overcome the effects of the global crisis most countries in the world have implemented measures of state support. Kazakhstan is no exception.

However, when speaking of reducing the role of state now, we do not mean simply a return to the pre-crisis period. We are talking about fundamental changes.

Our general goal is to change the face of Kazakhstan's economy by reducing its dependence on exports of hydrocarbons and other raw resources and increasing the share of high-tech sectors. This goal calls for action in key areas.

Kazakhstan has already managed to attract about \$170 billion of foreign investments. The decision to lift the moratorium on development of new mineral deposits will certainly increase this figure.

At the same time, the provision of access to raw materials in exchange for creation of related processing industries will become the cornerstone of investment policy. Put very simply, this represents the formula “oil in exchange for technology.” At a deeper level, this means transition to a new level of cooperation that will provide great benefits to both sides.

Liberalization of the tax and customs administration will stimulate domestic growth and exports. At present, Kazakhstan is already providing businesses with very comfortable tax conditions. This is evident when comparing with other countries.

Now, the aim will be simplification of tax reporting. This will provide the opportunity to use to the full the benefits of low taxes.

Over the next five years, all businesses will move over to an electronic online reporting system. Direct contacts between entrepreneurs and the tax service will drop to the minimum. In other words, it reduces not only delays but also risks of corruption.

In the context of a favourable fiscal regime overall, the additional incentives are on offer to those who invest in manufacturing industry and new technologies.

The system for granting permits is also progressing, which finds approval in authoritative international rankings. The long-term Strategy has the goal of cancelling completely all approvals and licenses that do not directly affect security of human lives and activities. Instead of authorization-based procedures for doing business, there will be a system of notifications.

The next stage is transitioning to self-regulation and self-imposed controls by business of the quality of its goods and services. In addition, some state functions will be granted to business-associations, which will be consolidated by a National Board of Entrepreneurs.

The presence of the government in business will diminish not only as a supervisor but also as an owner. The Strategy says that there will be a second wave of large-scale privatization (the first one started in the 1990s when Kazakhstan was going through the process of establishing a market economy). Enterprises and services of a non-strategic nature will pass into private hands.

The list of all innovations is very wide. However, the ideology is one: instead of being a player in the economic field, the Government will concentrate on creating opportunities for business to do its work.

On the one hand, this means developing substantial infrastructure (transport and logistics facilities not only in Kazakhstan, but also overseas). On the other hand, this requires developing legal infrastructure, above all, real guarantees of private property rights and protection of contract commitments.

Authority instead of responsibility

Stimulating economic initiative of the non-resource sectors should level out the imbalance between the regions. This is the focus of new political priorities directed at transferring the emphasis to local authorities. We have created a strong state in Kazakhstan, but we need strong regions.

Eliminating this imbalance means not only assistance to the depressed regions. There is also the issue of monotowns, where prosperity depends solely on one enterprise. The Soviet system created cities that grew up around a single-factory. Today we cannot depend only on one enterprise forming a town to support its social sphere. The construction is too unstable. Only by creating alternative sources of income and jobs in these cities, can we provide stability.

It is hard to imagine moving the center of gravity to local administration without transferring powers of authority. Here is the core of political liberalization. Kazakhstan will develop local self-administration and introduce elections of heads of local administrations.

These reforms will take place without delay. The elections of heads of district cities and villages will start this year. This is almost 92% of all heads of local administrations in the country.

Elected leaders of local authorities will receive the necessary financial and human resources. However, this is not the end of reform. The essence of the decentralization of public administration, as set out in the Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050," is in its qualitative change.

The idea of reform is redistribution of not power and budget but of the roles of the state and local communities. People will have the opportunity to solve local issues directly and hold to account the heads of administrations that they elected.

In addition to local governance the democratization of the entire political life in Kazakhstan will continue. In particular, at the central level Parliament's powers will be strengthened.

The time has come

In this way, the key areas of Kazakhstan's development are based on one principle: less external regulation, and more responsibility on the participants in the process.

In the economy, business will have more freedom for maneuver. Right up to the point where it will be able to assess the quality of its work by itself. This is not just organizational reform. This is a change in the system of thinking. We have to learn to negotiate and work out our common positions, including in the field of fair competition, and then implement them by ourselves.

In politics, people will have the opportunity to build the agenda of relevant local issues, develop solutions, and ensure their enforcement. This civic engagement is different from delegating votes elected politicians. It means that local communities will agree common positions on their issues independently without instructions from above.

In the social sphere, Kazakhstan's strategy is for the state to guarantee people the opportunities to receive specialist qualifications and support those who want to find a place in the labor market. Using these opportunities is the choice of the individual.

In general, this approach fits into the logic of an established, "adult" state, based on combining opportunities and responsibility, where progress rests on private initiative, backed by government support. Only this kind of Kazakhstan will be ready to face the global challenges.

We have embarked on a strategic course to become one of the 30 most developed countries in the world. That is why we are adopting the appropriate system of coordinates.

The evolutionary although rapid path taken by Kazakhstan has led us to shed many illusions. However, the need for the formula "opportunities plus responsibility" is now our conscious choice. That is why there is every reason to believe that it will become reality.

All of the above apply not only to our internal policy. We clearly understand that the implementation of Strategy "Kazakhstan-2050" will depend on external conditions. This dependence will grow with our integration into international processes. We are making our state system stable, but it has its limits. These depend on how global challenges will be resolved. Most important among these is the change in the culture of dialogue.

On the global level a form of decentralization has become necessary. Emphasis in addressing global economic problems should move in the direction of the participants, i.e. all states. All formats that are being reduced to the deliberations of a select few, have no effect because they do not objectively correspond to the nature of global issues.

There is a need to learn how to negotiate. One of the tools is the G-Global proposed by Nursultan Nazarbayev. It gives an opportunity to everyone to be heard in the process of building a system of collective responsibility for our future.

The story of our common success can only be written together.

Jun 27, 2013

The Central Asian Journal goes global

By Sh. Adambekov, Faina Linkov

The Central Asian Journal of Global Health was launched last year and has published two issues and more than 70 articles. It is already the most recognizable journal in the region.

CAJGH ranked number 1 out of 30 million hits for "Central Asia Journals," in the Google page ranking. It also ranked number 9 out of 300 million for all "Global health journals," according to the same ranking. In less than a year, CAJGH is on the world stage. To our

knowledge, the Central Asian Journal of Global Health is the only English language, peer reviewed, open access journal in Central Asia.

The Central Asian Journal of Global Health is a result of a collaborative effort between Nazarbayev University and the University of Pittsburgh. It was built on a platform of University of Pittsburgh Library Systems and is established as a free open access journal. The Editors of the journal strive to keep the quality high and also to make sure the journal is accessible to researchers from developing countries. The CAJGH highlights the excellent health research done in Kazakhstan and Central Asia and incorporates best practices in Health Science in the region.

The journal is accepting articles for its third issue on medical and epidemiological research. It invites authors and reviewers to join its network of over 1300 scientists from all the countries in Central Asia.

Also, please come and visit our journal (cajgh.pitt.edu). It features the best health articles in Central Asia.

For more information, please contact Sh. Adambekov (sadambekov@nu.edu.kz) in Astana, Kazakhstan, and Faina Linkov (faina.linkov@gmail.com) in Pittsburgh.

One of the biggest mosques in Asia has been built in Shymkent.

The Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Mosque, which can accommodate 6,000 worshippers, was inaugurated by Dr. Hadeef Bin Jua'an Al Daheri, minister of justice, as a cluster of projects funded by the foundation. The mosque is situated on a total area of 8,000 square metres. It includes a separate prayer area for women and a parking area for nearly 120 vehicles, the foundation reported. "Estimated at 45 million dirham, the mosque's construction was completed in a period of three years," Al Daheri said. "The mosque serves worshippers in Shymkent and its design is based on the Islamic architectural style. It aims to provide a suitable place for worship and serves as a centre for cultural enlightenment for Muslims in Kazakhstan as well as a large public library, which includes copies of the Quran and several cultural and Islamic books," he added. Additionally, about 15 million dirham (\$4.08 million) has been donated by the KZHF to complete the construction of two clinics and a nursery in Shymkent.

The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan is formed on the principle of mandatory membership

National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan will become one of the factors increasing the efficiency of the economy, Deputy Minister of Regional Development of Kazakhstan Serik Zhumangarin said presenting the draft law "On the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan" in the Mazhilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan. "The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs is established by the Government of Kazakhstan

and the Republican Union of the Association of Private Enterprise Entities in the form of a non-commercial organization. The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs is formed on the principle of mandatory membership for its entrepreneurship entities registered in Kazakhstan, excluding those that are subject to mandatory membership in the other non-commercial organizations and state bodies,” Zhumangarin said. He also emphasized that when developing the draft law, an analysis of international practices was conducted, showing that consolidating the entrepreneurs in the chambers is one of the most important factors for increasing economic efficiency.

Similar associations of businessmen are successfully functioning in Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Turkey, the Netherlands and other countries. “In order to ensure the formation and operation of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs, a period of one year is given and the transition period is expected to take five years, during which the government jointly with the National Union will be founding members,” he noted, adding that during the transition period, the government reserved the right to veto decisions of the Chamber.

Chamber organizers are also proposing the formation of executive and representative bodies in the structure of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs. Chamber affiliate organizations are expected to be opened in outlying regions, as well as in the regional centers in big cities.

Centuries-Old Sanskrit Inscription Discovered in Dolankara Mountains

By Aigul Bidanova

SEMEY – On May 9, Semey scientists discovered a rock inscription dating back to the 17th century in the Dolankara Mountains (Tarbagatai ridge). The discovery is believed to be the first Sanskrit inscription found in Kazakhstan. The find was made by experts of the Scientific Centre of Historical and Sociopolitical Research named after Academician Kozybayev, a branch of the Semipalatinsk State Pedagogical Institute. The Institute’s director Mukhtarbek Karimov was tipped off by local resident Murad Ramazanov on the presence of mysterious rock inscriptions in the Dolankara Mountains. Unfortunately, Ramazanov died before the expedition was organized. These inscriptions were found with the help of another local, Nurlan Zhumagazin, who was also a guide in the mountains for a senior researcher from the Center, Muhametbek Asylbekov, and a faculty member from the Medical University, Galymbek Bazarbekov. The exact location of the inscriptions was difficult to reach, but the inscription could be seen from afar as it was about one metre long with 15 centimetres high characters.

The inscription turned out to be the well-known Buddhist mantra, “Om mani padme hum” or “Oh, pearl shining in the heart of the lotus” written in Sanskrit. The accuracy of

the translation and the discoverers' conclusions concerning the authenticity of the inscription have been confirmed by well-known Sanskrit scholar, leading researcher of the Institute of History in Kalmyk Republic and Doctor of Historical Sciences Professor Elsa Bakayeva.

The researchers believe the inscription was made in the 17th century and that its author is the prominent Buddhist scholar, theologian and statesman Zaya Pandit. It is believed that he spent the winter of 1642 in the region. According to Karimov, parts of the northeastern, southeastern and eastern region of Kazakhstan were under Jungar rule in the 17th and 18th centuries. To this day, traces of this era remain, including the Amirsana Zhambyl Jungar fortress-monastery in Tarbagatai. Back in 1952, silver bars were also found in the Chingiztau Mountains with the image of a Buddhist saint on them

Tashkent Visit Affirms Strong Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan Ties

By Nadezhda Khamitova

President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan held talks in Tashkent on June 14 during President Nazarbayev's official visit there which focused on bilateral ties but also on pressing regional issues such as managing water resources and ensuring the security in Central Asia after the international coalition withdrawal from Afghanistan.

During a press briefing after the talks, President Nazarbayev said that the visit is further evidence of strong ties between the two neighbouring countries and emphasised that Kazakhstan attaches great importance to its relationship with Uzbekistan. "Our work has a constructive approach towards solutions on all issues. Peace and security in the region and further common prosperity will largely depend on the interaction and common positions of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Our summits on the highest level have become a tradition, and this is a very good sign," President Nazarbayev said. He also stressed the symbolism of the fact that the visit was taking place in the year of the 15th anniversary of the eternal friendship agreement between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Of the new agreements signed during the visit, President Nazarbayev said, "I am confident that the agreement on strategic partnership that we signed today will lead to a qualitatively new level of relations between our two countries."

President Karimov thanked the Kazakhstan president for accepting his invitation to visit the country, stressing that it is of strategic importance for the development of relations between the two countries.

“We consider the official visit of Kazakhstan’s delegation as an important step in the development of Uzbek-Kazakh multifaceted relations. It is a good opportunity to continue to exchange views on issues of our mutual interest,” he said.

President Nazarbayev noted that for the development of an economic partnership it is important to strengthen the work of the intergovernmental commission on bilateral cooperation and expand cooperation within the framework of the Business Council, which has been established at the instructions of the two heads of state. President Karimov also stressed that the foundation of cooperation between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is their economic relationship, which should be developed in all areas.

Following the talks, the heads of state signed a strategic partnership agreement. This document sets out the basic principles and priority areas of bilateral cooperation in political, economic, trade, transport and communication, cultural, humanitarian, military, technical and other fields.

The agreement confirms a single coherent position regarding the development of a fair system of water management in Central Asia intended to resolve all issues in the water and energy sector, including the construction of new hydropower plants on rivers in accordance with universally recognised norms of international law and taking into account the interests of all states in the region.

“A great deal depends for our future on how [Central Asia] cooperates and trusts each other and how we resolve together our questions without hindering other states,” President Nazarbayev said. “Our approaches on many issues, including the water problem in the region, coincide,” he said of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. “And we want to send a friendly message to our neighbours that we ourselves have to resolve these questions. There are no unresolvable problems and questions.” Meanwhile, Uzbekistan opposes the plans to build the Rogun hydropower dams on the Vakhsh River in Tajikistan and the Kambarata dam on the Naryn River in Kyrgyzstan, which could affect water supplies to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and the environments and economies of the two downstream states.

President Nazarbayev said of the issue that disputes could be solved “only on the basis of negotiations and the strengthening of mutual trust, without confrontation.” He said that the leaders of downstream states understand the economic needs of their upstream neighbours, but “one question cannot be resolved at the expense of another state, that is all we are saying.” The parties also signed a programme of cooperation in the field of culture for 2013-2015, an agreement on cooperation between the Ministries of the Interior and a protocol between the State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan and the

Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan on the exchange of preliminary information about goods and vehicles crossing the customs border.

The two leaders also participated in the opening ceremony for the new building of the Embassy of Kazakhstan and the monument to the great Kazakh poet and philosopher, Abai Kunanbayev.

“The lyrics of Abai, his words of edification and philosophical thought, all these are not only the spiritual heritage of the Kazakh people, but also of the entire Islamic world. His works appeal to knowledge, hard work, justice and brotherhood. His works are truly immortal. Over time, they become more and more relevant, defining benchmarks for social, cultural and spiritual life,” President Nazarbayev said at the opening ceremony.

Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on November 23, 1992. According to data from 2012, trade between the two countries grew 9.6 percent and reached US\$2.75 billion, including Kazakh exports of US\$1.67 billion and imports of US\$1.07 billion. The share of foreign trade with Kazakhstan came to 10.5 percent for overall foreign trade of Uzbekistan, making Kazakhstan the third largest trading partner for its southern neighbour.

Today, 178 companies operate in Uzbekistan with the participation of investors from Kazakhstan, including 143 joint ventures and 35 companies with 100 percent Kazakh capital. More than 120 enterprises established with the participation of residents of Uzbekistan are registered in Kazakhstan. There are more than 810,000 ethnic Kazakhs living in Uzbekistan and about 460,000 ethnic Uzbeks are citizens of Kazakhstan, making them the third largest ethnic group in the country after the Kazakhs and the Russians.

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan: Mutually Beneficial cooperation Key for economic Development and Strengthening Security

Mendygaliyev (Ret.)

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, along with other countries in the region occupy key positions in Central Asia due to their exclusive geopolitical location, presence of large reserves of minerals, their energy, transit and transport potentials, as well as investment attractiveness. The peoples of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have a long history, culture and spiritual closeness. Both countries have numerous diasporas and ethnic communities on each other's territories. In both countries, Islam is a dominant religion, while other religions also live in tolerance. Commonality of interests and inextricable ties of fates of the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks make the basis of relations of these two countries, which is evidenced by the course of history.

The peoples of both countries participated in the Great Patriotic War in the fight against the common enemy, the Nazi Germany. At that time, defense factories were evacuated to the region from the European part of the Soviet Union and refugees arrived from regions near the front line. In the difficult situation, the people of these republics produced everything necessary for the front and the victory. Military units were formed here. They heroically fought at the war fronts. One of these units is the famous Panfilov Division, which defended Moscow in the hard period for the country. Thereafter, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan participated in the making of a strong union state. Good-neighbourliness and friendly mutual assistance between the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks clearly manifested themselves at the times of troubles. The 1966 earthquake that destroyed the most of Tashkent echoed in the hearts of people with pain. Representatives of all republics of the former Soviet Union participated in eliminating the consequences of the disaster. The whole USSR came together to rebuild the capital of Uzbekistan. Fraternal assistance of the Kazakh people in the rebuilding of Tashkent and rendering of humanitarian aid to its population was invaluable. In turn, the brotherly Uzbekistan, along with other republics of the former Soviet Union, in 1973, assisted in the prevention of a possible dam break in the mountains above the then Kazakhstan capital Alma-Ata. The threat to the then capital of Kazakhstan was removed thanks to continued and hard work of engineers, workers and people of many professions. Mutual assistance between the Kazakh and Uzbek peoples cannot be forgotten for centuries, it is traditional for our countries.

In modern days, according to the 2050 Strategy, Kazakhstan's foreign policy top priorities include comprehensive strengthening of the regional and national security, active development of economic and commercial diplomacy, intensification of international cooperation in cultural, humanitarian, scientific, educational, and other related fields. In 2012, in Kazakhstan, there were 493,000 ethnic Uzbeks, making them the third largest ethnic group in the country. According to Wikipedia, a total of 78 schools with the Uzbek language of teaching are working in the places of compact residence of the Uzbek population. Currently, more than 900,000 Kazakhs live in Uzbekistan. A total of 493 schools with Kazakh language of teaching operate there, and seven universities have faculties of Kazakh language and literature, according to the Uzbek statistics.

The indicators trade and economic cooperation between these two countries are of no less importance.

According to the 2012 data, the volume of trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan made US\$2.16 billion, with Kazakhstan exports reaching US\$1.3 billion, and imports making up US\$ 817 million. In the next two to three years, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan plan to increase the volume of trade turnover to US\$5 billion by expanding

the range of reciprocal deliveries. The main Uzbekistan imports from Kazakhstan are petroleum products, food products, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, chemical products. The main Uzbekistan exports to Kazakhstan are natural gas, food and chemical products.

“The success and prosperity of the two countries are based on the friendship, cooperation and mutual support, and such a content of partnership is not only a diplomatic politesse, by the demand of the time,” President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan noted. Uzbekistan has made tremendous achievements in economic, social and political life, in the fields of education and culture and the increase of the international prestige.

President Nazarbayev has emphasized that Kazakhstan considers Uzbekistan a brotherly country, a good neighbor and a strategic partner in Central Asia. Stressing the importance of the relationship between our two countries, President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan has said that “Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were and still are true partners and allies. We appreciate, cherish our historically formed friendly and traditional good-neighborly relations, common roots, values and interests that have been binding our people for many centuries. I am convinced that the awareness of these roots, a solid understanding of the common interests of our people provide the foundations of development, the strengthening of bilateral relations, despite the vicissitudes of today’s challenging times in which we live.” Back in February 2005, in his state-of-the-nation address to the people of Kazakhstan, President Nazarbayev stressed the need for integration of the Central Asian states in order to meet today’s challenges in the region. “Our further integration is the path to stability and progress in the region, economic, military and political independence. Only in this case, will the region be respected in the world. Only in this way will we ensure safety, and will we deal effectively with terrorism and extremism. Last but not least, such unification meets the interests of ordinary peoples living in our region.”

This idea is built upon in the provisions of the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, which states: “We should continue to be aware of our responsibility for regional security and to contribute to the stabilization of Central Asia... Intra-regional integration is the best way to stabilize Central Asia. That is the way forward through which we can reduce the conflict potential in our region, to address pressing social and economic problems, untie the knot of water and energy and other contradictions.” The development of a common position and strategy on water and energy issues in the region is invaluable for the development of the economy of both countries. In this connection, it is necessary to agree on this position with upstream neighbouring countries, within territories of which the sources of the trans-border rivers flowing downstream through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are located. Along with the goals and measures for the strengthening

and development of the economy, one of the common tasks for Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is ensuring security in Central Asia given the withdrawal of the international coalition from Afghanistan. This requires from the leadership of both countries to develop and implement further common approaches to preserving and enhancing stability and prosperity in the region.

Despite the fact that Uzbekistan withdrew from the Collective Security Treaty Organization, that country intends to address these security issues on a bilateral basis with the relevant countries. For example, it can be done based on the Treaty of Eternal Friendship between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, which was signed on October 31, 1998 and entered into force on January 17, 2000. The same treaties are concluded between Uzbekistan and Russia, as well as other countries in the region.

During the official visit of President Islam Karimov to Kazakhstan on September 7, 2012, a joint statement on consolidation and further strategic cooperation between the two countries was issued. At that point, the President of Kazakhstan noted the symbolism of the official visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Kazakhstan held on the eve of the 20th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. It was emphasized that in this period a solid legal base, including more than a hundred agreements, was developed, allowing for further progressive development of the mutually beneficial cooperation.

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are expanding cooperation in combating transnational threats and challenges through multilateral organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and others. Both countries have made a significant contribution to the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia, according to the Treaty of Semipalatinsk signed on September 8, 2006 and ratified by member countries on January 5, 2009.

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are also states - parties to the CIS Treaty on a free trade zone. During the Kazakh-Uzbek summit in Astana on September 7, 2012, an agreement on joint practical steps on registration procedures for Uzbekistan's accession to that Treaty was reached. The Council of CIS heads of government approved the decision of Uzbekistan to accede to the free trade zone in Yalta on September 30, 2012.

The peoples of the fraternal countries pin high hopes on June 14 visit of President Nursultan Nazarbayev to Uzbekistan that it will give an additional impetus to further development of bilateral relations. The mutual intention of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan towards deepening the strategic partnership is for the benefit of their peoples and all-round prosperity of both countries.

The author is the acting head of the Institute of Statehood, Security

On June 19, President Nursultan Nazarbayev approved amendments to state budget for 2013-2015.

The head of state signed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Introduction of Amendments and Additions to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the National Budget for 2013-2015,” aimed at clarifying the macroeconomic development of the country this year. The revised forecast of real GDP growth in 2013 remained at the earlier forecasted level (6 percent), but the forecast for nominal GDP growth dropped from 15.8 percent to 13.5 percent. The forecast for the average oil price in 2013 was increased from \$90 to \$100 per barrel. Inflation projections remained at the earlier forecast of 6 to 8 percent by the end of 2013.

Transfers to the state budget were increased by 27.206 billion tenge (\$178.2 million) to 1.544 trillion tenge (\$10.1 billion) due to transfers from the National Fund in the amount of 25.5 billion tenge (\$167 million) and transfers from regional budgets in the amount of 1.7 billion tenge (\$11.1 million). The state budget’s expenditures for 2013 were decreased by 121.288 billion tenge (\$794.4 million) and approved at 6.099 trillion tenge (\$39.9 billion). The budget deficit for 2013 was increased by 85.397 billion tenge (\$559.3 million) and hit 870.573 billion tenge (\$5.7 billion) or 2.5 percent of GDP.

Golovkin vs. Macklin: GGG Defeats Mack the Knife by 3rd-Round KO

[Bleacher Report](#), Jun 29, 2013

by Brian Mazique

WBA middleweight champion Gennady "GGG" Golovkin (27-0, 24 KO) continues to prove to the world that he is more than hype at 160 pounds.

Golovkin defeated Matthew "Mack the Knife" Macklin (29-5) by KO on Saturday night at MGM Grand at Foxwoods Resort in Mashantucket, Conn.

GGG decimated Macklin in the third round with a left hook to the body that snatched the air from the challenger's body. This was supposed to be Golovkin's first legitimate test of his career. If you subscribe to that concept, he passed with flying colors. From the beginning of the fight, it was clear it was just a matter of time before Golovkin would claim another KO win.

He has been the WBA middleweight champion since 2010, but he's just beginning to get the respect he deserves. Criticism of his competition is waning as he continues to up the ante; Macklin was his most respected victim yet.

The more Golovkin wins—especially in front of American audiences—the more he will become a household name in the sport. After fighting his first 23 bouts outside the United States, GGG has now fought three of his last four fights on American soil. All of

those fights have resulted in stoppage wins and all have been a part of an HBO broadcast.

The exposure has been good for him. He's now stopped 14 straight opponents and upped his KO percentage to just under 89 percent.

The success on the big stage could lead to a unification bout between him and WBO champion Peter "Kid Chocolate" Quillin, or the winner of the Daniel "Real Deal" Geale and Darren Barker bout for Geale's IBF crown.

There are a plethora of possibilities for Golovkin, but we'll have to wait and see who wins and who steps up to the challenge in the division.

Whoever decides to oppose GGG better be ready for punching power few can deny.

KYRGYZSTAN

IDA to allot \$1M for improvement of Kyrgyzstan's education assessment system

10/06-2013 15:28, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Kaliya DUISHEBAYEVA

The International Development Association (IDA) will allot \$ 1.65 million grant to improve the education assessment system in Kyrgyzstan. The information was announced today by the Minister Kanat Sadykov at a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Budget and Finance.

According to him, the project objectives are improvement of the monitoring and assessment system of the school-level education, strengthening of the institutional capacity of existing government structures in the application of new and current assessment methods and standards, providing the country with required number of teachers and experts in the development, management and analysis of national education assessment tools .

The members of the relevant committee approved the draft law On ratification of the Letter of Agreement between the Kyrgyz Republic and the International Development Association to finance the second phase of READ (Russian Education Aid for Development) project, signed on March 6, 2013 in Bishkek.

Tamchy airport to start accommodating all types of planes in 2014

10/06-2013 09:12, Cholpon-Ata – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia BENGARD

The government and tour operators of Kyrgyzstan will do their best to attract tourists, Zhantoro Satybaldiyev told journalists today when opening bathing suit season on Issyk-Kul lake.

According to him, first they need to reconstruct Tamchy airport. “In 2014, I hope, it will start accommodating all types of planes. As for 2013, for the time being it is accommodating charter planes, not airliners. As for Karakol airport, it’s acting too and can accommodate mainline airlines,” the head of the government said. “Infrastructure and road building are important, too. In the beginning of June we will start reconstruction of southern road around Issyk-Kul lake jointly with Kumtor, after which will proceed to northern one in course of other projects,” the Prime Minister said.

Bishkek hosts Japan Culture Week

11/06-2013 13:43, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Kanykei MANASOVA

Bishkek hosts Japan Culture Week which started on June 10 and will last till June 14, Kyrgyz Republic-Japan Center for Human Development (KRJC) reported.

According to its information, exhibition of photographs about activities of the center has been organized as a part of the program in one of Bishkek shopping centers. Japan culture master classes are also taking place. All desirers can take origami classes (Japanese art of paper folding) today. Tomorrow, June 12, there will be ikebana classes; on June 13 – classes of making of eco-bags from newspapers and on June 14 - calligraphy classes.

International Beauty Festival to start in Kyrgyzstan

13/06-2013 12:53, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Ivan MARCHENKO

International Beauty and Model Festival 2013 will start in Kyrgyzstan on June 13, director of World Beauty Congress Zamir Huseinov said at a press conference today.

As it was reported, the contest includes Miss Bikini nomination, fashion and national costume contests, and benefit ball. The final show will start on June 21 at 6.00 p.m. in Opera and Ballet Theatre. Models from Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia are among the participants.

According to Zamir Huseinov, this is the first large-scale festival in Central Asia with participation of models from all over the world. It’s a momentous event for an unstable

country. Participation of girls will show that it's safe here. "If beauties safely visit Kyrgyzstan, a common person can visit it even more. This will prove that tourism in the country is fine," Zamir Huseinov said.

Almazbek Atambayev recommends twofold increase in financing of state language development

17/06-2013 11:44, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia MOKRENKO

The President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev recommended twofold increase in the financing of the state language development from 2014, Information Policy Department of the President's Office reported.

According to it, today Almazbek Atambayev held a meeting where the participants discussed further development of the state language and, in particular, a draft presidential decree, which stipulates not only for the formation of a language policy improvement group, but also a number of immediate measures for the development of state language which is to be implemented in the nearest future.

"From now on the government will not spare resources for the development of the state language, and funding in this area should be increased at least two times from 2014," the president said.

According to the President, the language policy should be balanced and move from the stage of a protracted discussion to the action mode. Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Strengthening the unity of people and ethnic relations concept, approved by the President, set the task of educating a new generation of multi-lingual Kyrgyz citizens who will be fluent in the state Kyrgyz, the official Russian, as well as one of the international languages.

Kyrgyz President signs law on denunciation of agreements on Transit Center at Manas

27/06-2013 07:19, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency

Almazbek Atambayev signed a law on denunciation of the agreements on the Transit Center at Manas between Kyrgyz and U.S. governments, the Kyrgyz President's Office reported.

According to its information, on June 26, 2013, the President of Kyrgyzstan signed a law on denunciation of two agreements between Kyrgyzstan and USA: on denunciation of Cooperation agreement between the governments of Kyrgyzstan and the United States, and the second one – on the Transit Center at Manas International Airport and any

other related facilities and real estates on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Both agreements were signed in Bishkek on June 22, 2009.

Recall, the law was adopted by the Parliament on June 20, 2013. It says the above mentioned agreements will be denounced on July 11, 2014. The Foreign Affairs Ministry is ordered to inform the U.S. government about denunciation of agreements.

The law takes effect from the date of its official publication.

Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee supports NATO's cargo transit through Kyrgyzstan

17/06-2013 10:39, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Dilya YUSUPOVA

Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee of Kyrgyzstan supported ratification of the agreement on NATO's cargo transit through Kyrgyzstan. Such decision was made at its today's meeting.

According to the draft law on Ratification of the agreement between Kyrgyzstan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on land (rail and mechanical) transit of cargo of the International Security Assistance Force, it's permitted to transit peaceful cargoes only (food products, construction materials etc).

Besides, members of the committee approved the draft agreement between Kyrgyzstan and Great Britain on land transit of cargo through Kyrgyzstan's territory due to withdrawal of British troops from Afghanistan.

Almazbek Atambayev holds number of meetings in Turkey

19/06-2013 07:48, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia MOKRENKO

Almazbek Atambayev, the President of Kyrgyzstan, held a number of meetings in Turkey, where he arrived at the invitation of his colleague, the President's Office reported.

According to its information, Almazbek Atambayev met with the President of Turkey Abdullah Gül and the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The heads of the states discussed actual issues of bilateral cooperation and further relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. Also, Almazbek Atambayev and Abdullah Gül discussed regional issues.

Almazbek Atambayev noted that Kyrgyz and Turkish relations are developing at high speed and are propped up by certain agreements on all levels of cooperation. The

Kyrgyz President and the Turkish Prime Minister discussed attraction of direct foreign investments to Kyrgyzstan.

Electronic visa introduced in Kyrgyzstan

19/06-2013 12:24, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Darya PODOLSKAYA

Electronic visa is being introduced in Kyrgyzstan, representatives of the Foreign Affairs Ministry said at a meeting today.

According to them, introduction of electronic visa will take 1 million soms, so the country has to find sponsors for it. “An electronic visa is introduced only for those countries with which the country has an appropriate visa regime. I am not talking about 45 countries that need no visa to enter Kyrgyzstan,” Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Erlan Abdyldayev added.

Kyrgyzstan ready to cooperate with Azerbaijan in health care

19/06-2013 08:54, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia BENGARD

Kyrgyzstan is ready to cooperate with Azerbaijan in the health care sphere, the Health Care Ministry of Kyrgyzstan reported.

According to its information, Kyrgyz Minister of Health Care Dinara Saginbayeva and Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kyrgyzstan Hidayat Orujov discussed bilateral cooperation.

Saginbayeva noted that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, most people don not have opportunity to improve their skills and share experience with their colleagues from other countries. Besides, Kyrgyzstan is ready to cooperate with medical universities of Azerbaijan in exchange of students. The Health Care Ministry of Kyrgyzstan is willing to “make friends” with Azerbaijan’s medical and scientific centers.

Osh strengthens inter-ethnic harmony

21/06-2013 07:21, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia BENGARD

Inter-ethnic harmony is being strengthened in Osh city through social conflicts prevention, press service of the Interior Ministry reported.

According to the Ministry, a campaign was held on June 18 in Amir-Timur urban district of the southern capital to prevent inter-ethnic conflicts, strengthen friendship of the

residents, preserve and multiply cultural values of people, historical heritage and traditions of interaction.

Participants of the campaign called representatives of various ethnic groups not to give way to rumors and provocations, to assist law enforcement personnel in conflict prevention and promptly report on such cases. Officers of the 10th Interior Ministry Department hold similar campaigns almost in all regions of the republic.

Islamic Development Bank issues Kyrgyzstan \$10-million loan to repair of road in Kyrgyzstan

22/06-2013 09:20, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Darya PODOLSKAYA

The Islamic Development Bank issued Kyrgyzstan a \$10-million loan to repair of Talas-Taraz-Suusamyр road. The parliament is discussing ratification of the draft agreement now.

The Islamic Development Bank will grant \$10 million. The same amount of money will be granted by the Saudi Fund For Development, too. Additional co-financing of Kyrgyzstan reaches \$2,8 million.

The loan was issued for 25 years with a 2,5 percent interest rate and 7-year grace period.

Bishkek to host meeting of SCO Defense Ministers

24/06-2013 15:22, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Ivan MARCHENKO

Meeting of Defense Ministers of SCO members- states will be held in Bishkek on June 26, Information Department of the Ministry of Defense of Kyrgyzstan reported.

As it was noted, the meeting will be chaired by Taalaybek Omuraliyev, Minister of Defense of Kyrgyzstan. Participants of the meeting will be: Defense Minister of Kazakhstan Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan, Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu, Defense Minister of Tajikistan Sherali Khayrulloev, First Deputy Minister of Defense of Uzbekistan Shavkat Normatov, SCO Secretary General Dmitry Mezentsev and Director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Anti-Terrorism Structure Zhang Xinfeng.

Kyrgyz delegation heads for meeting of CSTO Military Committee

24/06-2013 14:50, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Ivan MARCHENKO

Kyrgyz delegation left for Moscow to participate in meeting of the Military Committee of the Defense Ministers' Council of CSTO member states, the Ministry of Defense of Kyrgyzstan reported.

As it was noted, the delegation is headed by Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Kyrgyz Republic, Colonel Emil Tukaev. The meeting is to take place on June 25. "The committee was established by the Council of Defense Ministers of CSTO member states on December 19, 2012. According to the regulation, it's a subsidiary agency of CSTO that coordinates activity of the general headquarters of the armed forces of the organization in military policy, coalitional military construction, military technical cooperation, and planning for use of troops," the Ministry noted.

European Union to grant Kyrgyzstan €30 million

24/06-2013 09:05, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Dilya YUSUPOVA

The European Union will grant Kyrgyzstan €30 million as part of the Kyrgyzstan-EU parliamentary cooperation.

To obtain the grant and discuss Kyrgyzstan-EU partnership in democracy development, creation of fair state administration, and establishment of rule of law in Kyrgyzstan, a group of Kyrgyz deputies left for the 9th Meeting of the Parliament Cooperation Council between the European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic, which takes place in Brussels. The Kyrgyz delegation is led by Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Human Rights, Constitutional Law, and State Structure Abdymanap Kutushev.

Temir Sariyev: Export of ore from Kyrgyzstan increases annually

25/06-2013 14:59, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Kaliya DUISHEBAYEVA

"Export of ore from Kyrgyzstan increases annually," Minister of Economy of Kyrgyzstan Temir Sariyev said at today's meeting of the Committee for Fuel and Energy Complex and Subsoil Management.

According to him, export of ore from Kyrgyzstan reached 41,000 tons in 2011 and 85,000 tons in 2012.

"Last year we suggested to impose a 30percent tax on export of metal concentrate. The Parliament, however, didn't approve it, and ordered to refine the draft law. Now we suggest 15 percent tax on export of ore. Kyrgyzaltyn JSC is exempt from tax till the end

of ore processing plant construction. We will be auditing and controlling the process,” Temir Sariyev noted.

SCO Defense Ministers discuss extension of military cooperation

26/06-2013 15:21, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Anastasia BENGARD

Defense Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s member states met today in Bishkek, Information Department of the Defense Ministry of the Kyrgyz Republic reported.

According to the department, representatives of Kazakhstan, China, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan took part in the meeting. They discussed issues of cooperation in the current international and regional situation, as well as strengthening cooperation in the field of defense and security, summed up cooperation results for 2012-2013 and approved the plan for 2014-2015.

The members of the meeting unanimously noted the need to consolidate efforts of defense ministries to jointly counter new challenges and threats, and also recognized the desirability of further joint Peace Mission anti-terror military exercise. The meeting was followed by adoption of a joint communique.

Bishkek hosts 15th Central Asia Media Conference

27/06-2013 09:17, Bishkek – 24.kg news agency , by Shavkat TURGAYEV

The 15th Central Asia Media Conference opened in Bishkek. Journalists, representatives of international organizations and media experts took part in the event.

In his opening speech the Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister of Kyrgyzstan Erines Otorbayev outlined that Kyrgyzstan has more than a thousand registered mass media. “We take a prominent place in the Central Asian region. We have no censorship. Mass media have a big impact in our country so they must bear great responsibility. It is important to maintain ethical standards of journalists,” Erines Otorbayev said.

TURKEY

Turkey accelerates defense Silicon Valley

4 June 2013

Turkey's commercial capital Istanbul generates an annual \$140 billion and houses about 50 universities, but the country's defense heavyweights are overwhelmingly located in and around the official capital Ankara. Now it's time defense companies put one foot in Istanbul to make sensible partnerships with the world's most prominent advanced technology companies and university-generated "science" in Istanbul.

The Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM), Turkey's sole defense procurement agency, wants the accumulated scientific and industrial knowledge in Istanbul to be introduced to the national defense industry. The venue for that ambition will be Teknopark Istanbul that opens late in August.

"Our principal mission is to contribute to the national innovation system and to boost the local industry's international competitiveness through multinational partnerships and technological advancement. That's a mission fully in line with the Turkish government's strategic objective of creating an increasingly independent, competitive and export-oriented local industry," explains Teknopark Istanbul's CEO, Turgut Şenol.

Turkey's "defense and aerospace Silicon Valley," will operate a 950,000-square-meter indoor space at the Sabiha Gökçen Airport, accommodating more than 30,000 people, 1,000 top advanced technology companies, 18 universities and targeting \$10 billion in defense and nondefense business annually, to become one of Europe's largest technology parks.

Turkish premier addresses Algerian national assembly

5 June 2013

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, who addressed to Algerian National People's Assembly, expressed continued support for the Syrian opposition who seeks to oust the Assad regime.

In an official visit in Algiers, Erdogan said "We will continue our strong support the Syrian people in their fight for the democratic regime in both bilateral and international levels."

Erdogan indicated that Turkey's total foreign trade volume approached about \$400 billion, adding," policies were intended for the mutual benefit and friendship with all

countries of the world and they were effective in this achievement. Today close to 3, 500 Turkish companies are operational in over 100 countries. These companies employ hundreds of thousands people."

Stating that the investment of Turkish businessmen abroad reached \$25 billion, Erdogan said, "These positive developments attract the attention of foreign investors. The foreign investment which was \$9 billion in 2010 exceeded \$16 billion in 2012. Here, I want to call in the presence Algerian people and the Algerian businessmen help increase the mutual contacts visits and cooperation."

Turkey and Tunisia penned 21 new agreements

7 June 2013

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said at the Turkish-Tunisian Business Forum that Turkey and Tunisia established a bilateral economic relationship based on strong foundation.

Erdogan said that from now on the economic relations among Turkey and Tunisia would be maintained under the secretaries of ministers especially foreign ministers of both countries.

"We are establishing a strong economic relationship based on strong foundation. We are at the final stage of ending the custom duties between the two countries," said Erdogan.

Erdogan said that Tunisia were also reducing the custom duties step by step; moreover, the custom duties would be ended for Turkish industry goods in June next year.

Erdogan also reminded that Turkey declared a 500 million USD financial support to Tunisia.

Erdogan stressed that Tunisia, with its intellectual young population, qualified workforce, strategic position opening to Africa, had opportunities as transit trade and logistics centre.

"I believe that our entrepreneurs will efficiently use these opportunities with their Tunisian counterparts," said Erdogan.

Erdogan said that trade volume among the two countries should rapidly rise to 3 billion USD from a billion. Compared to Erdogan's statements, Tunisian Prime Minister Ali Laareydh pronounced the number "four" to increase the trading volume among the two countries.

Erdogan stressed that Turkish companies, which have global experience at construction sector, should be involved in the superstructure projects in the next term in Tunisia.

"Turkey is the second country at the construction sector after China in the world," said Erdogan.

Erdogan also visited Turkish Embassy in Tunisia, and met with Tunisian leader of Al-

Nahda Movement Rashid Al-Gannushi.

After the meeting with Al-Gannushi, Erdogan left Tunisia for Turkey.

Turkey and Egypt to sign agreement on environment

10 June 2013

Turkish Minister of Environment & Urbanization Erdogan Bayraktar and Turkish Minister of Development Cevdet Yilmaz arrived on 9 June in Cairo to sign memorandum of understanding on environment between Turkey and Egypt.

They also attended the handover ceremony of 150 garbage carters which Turkey donated to Egypt.

Turkey to continue to support Libya

11 June 2013

Turkish Foreign Ministry said Turkey would continue to support Libya in all areas related to the attack that left more than 30 dead in Benghazi.

"The resolution of the problems encountered in the way of democratization within the framework of a common sense and dialogue has great importance for the future and stability of the region" said a statement released by the ministry on 10 June.

Clash between security forces and members of a tribe left more than 30 dead and 100 injured on 9 June in Libya's eastern province of Benghazi.

Turkish FM continues diplomatic efforts on Syria crisis

12 June 2013

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has continued diplomatic efforts to find a settlement to the Syrian crisis.

According to diplomatic sources, Davutoglu spoke to several foreign ministers in the last three days including those of the United States, Qatar, Britain, France and Jordan.

Davutoglu spoke to US Secretary of State John Kerry and Qatar's Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber bin Muhammad Al Thani on the telephone over the weekend.

Davutoglu had also separate phone calls with his British counterpart William Hague, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius and Jordan's Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh on Tuesday, as well as with EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton.

Davutoglu also met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr during his visit in Azerbaijan's capital Baku, where he participated in the conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Turkish foreign minister discussed all dimensions of the Syrian issue and latest developments and evaluated a planned international peace conference in Geneva.

Mossad chief met Turkish intelligence head

12 June 2013

Mossad director Tamir Pardo secretly met with the head of Turkish intelligence earlier this week in Ankara to discuss the latest developments in Syria and Iran.

Pardo held talks with Hakan Fidan, Turkey's intelligence undersecretary, in the Turkish capital on 10 June, according to the information received from mainstream newspapers. Pardo reportedly asked to meet with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, but the Turkish premier had not responded.

According to Hurriyet, the two men shared information on Syria, particularly Iran's role in the uprising that has engulfed the country. Sources told Hurriyet that Iranian Revolutionary Guards operatives and Syrian intelligence were both working against Turkey.

Pardo and Fidan also discussed the Istanbul protests against the Erdogan government that have attracted international attention.

Turkey to open new chapter in EU

12 June 2013

Turkish Minister of EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bagis stated on 12 June that Turkey would open a new chapter on regional policies after 3 years on June 26.

Speaking in candidate city's presentations for EXPO 2020, Bagis stated that opening the 23rd and 24th chapters of candidate countries was high on agenda during his meeting with new French Minister of EU Affairs Thierry Repentin.

"On June 26, we will be in Brussels with our Minister of Development Cevdet Yilmaz. Turkey will open a new chapter after 3 years on regional policies," Bagis said.

Stating also on the protests at Istanbul's Taksim Square, Bagis noted, "Turkey is a democratic, secular, social state of law. In each democratic country, some acts can occur [...] Incidents, occurring now in Turkey are not different from those happening in Paris, Berlin or Brussels."

Bagis emphasized that Turkey had paid off its debt to IMF, reached a different level in fighting terrorism and its economy started to develop. He added, "Total cost of the third airport (in Istanbul) and new nuclear power plant is more than the gross national product of Turkey in 1985. For the first time Turkey became indebted with a decrease of 4.7%. For the first time, unemployment rates declined to 8.8 percent. Turkey grows in each level what some wanted to stop. However, we won't play into the hands of those provokers. Nobody will be strong enough to scale down Turkey. It's none of anybody's business."

Number of Syrians in Turkey at 200,091

13 June 2013

Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Directorate (AFAD)

announced that there were 200,091 Syrians currently staying in tent and container cities in Turkey after fleeing clashes in their country.

In a written statement released on 13 June, AFAD reminded that they set up 5 tent cities in Hatay, 2 in Sanliurfa, 3 in Gaziantep and one each in Osmaniye, Kahramanmaras, Adana and Adiyaman and 2 container cities in Kilis, and one each in Sanliurfa, Malatya and Gaziantep.

AFAD said that Syrian citizens taking shelter in Turkey over two years were provided with lodging, food, health services, security, social activities, education, religious services, banking, translation services and communications.

It was said that 324,290 Syrians fled to Turkey so far and 124,199 of them returned to Syria.

Turkey leaves EU behind in industrial production growth with 3.4 %

14 June 2013

Industrial production in April rose in Turkey compared to same month last year, leaving Euro region behind with an increase of 3.4 %.

In April, Turkey left 25 countries of European Union and whole Euro region behind, where a decline of 0.8 percentage in EU and 0.3 % decrease in Euro region took place. Inactivity continued in European industry production of April, where it rose 0.3 % on a monthly basis but receded 0.8 % on a yearly basis, according to the data AA compiled from Eurostat and Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat).

Turkish industrial production grew 1.3 % in April compared to March and 3.4 % compared to last year's April. Biggest economy of Europe Germany's industrial production increased 1.2 %, whereas France with 0.1%, Italy with 4.6, Spain with 1.8 and Britain with 2.6 % decreased.

Amongst the EU countries, in which industrial production on yearly basis increased most, were Romania with 12.6 % and Lithuania with 5 %. On monthly basis, most industrial production increased in Norway with 5.4 %, Ireland with 3%, France with 2.3 and Romania with 1.9 %. Turkey was 5th with an increase of 1.3 %.

On yearly basis in EU countries, Finland became the country with most decrease in industrial production. Finland with a percentage of 10.2, Norway with 5.3 % and Italy with 4.6 % regressed in industrial production. Most declining countries on monthly basis were Norway with 5.1 %, Netherlands with 4.3 % and Portugal with 3.6 %.

April's industrial production index rates are as following:

	Monthly Basis	Yearly Basis
Euro Zone	0.4	-0.6
EU	0.3	-0.8
Romania	1.9	12.6

Lithuania	-3.3	5
Turkey	1.3	3.4
Bulgaria	1.1	-1.3
Czech Republic	-0.7	-3.4
Denmark	0.7	0.1
Germany	1.2	1.2
Estonia	-3.3	2.7
Ireland	3	0.4
Greece	-0.2	-2
Spain	-0.9	-1.8
France	2.3	-0.1
Italy	-0.3	-4.6
Latvia	0.5	-1
Malta	-2.2	-0.8
Netherlands	-4.3	0.2
Poland	0.8	-0.9
Portugal	-3.6	1.8
Slovenia	1.1	-1.1
Finland	-5.1	-10.2
Sweden	-1.1	-1.6
Britain	0.1	-2.6
Norway	5.4	-5.3
Croatia	-1.5	-0.5

Turkey ranked 65th in the world energy use list

14 June 2013

Turkey was ranked 65th in the world list of energy use as it refers to use of primary energy with its 1,551 kilograms of oil equivalent per capita.

Turkey was placed at the bottom of the list among European countries. Anadolu Agency assessed the figures of the World Bank in energy use.

Turkey, which is one of the most 20 developed countries across globe, is foreign-

dependent on oil and natural gas largely.

Energy use refers to use of primary energy before transformation to other end-use fuels, which is equal to indigenous production plus imports and stock changes, minus exports and fuels supplied to ships and aircraft engaged in international transport.

Rich in Geothermal and hydro source, Iceland leads the field with 17,983 kg of oil equivalent per capita among 213 countries.

World's most developed country, the US took the 11th place on the list of energy use with 7,069 kilograms of oil equivalent per capita.

Court arrests four in Turkey twin bombings

15 June 2013

A court in Turkey on 14 June arrested four suspects in May's deadly twin bombings in a southern town near the Syrian border.

Those arrested included the prime suspect and the mastermind of double bomb attacks that killed 52 in Turkey's southern town of Reyhanli. He was caught while trying to cross the border into Syria.

At least 51 people were killed in the twin attacks in Reyhanli town just across Syria's Idlib province. It was the deadliest cross-border spillover since the Syrian uprising began in March, 2011.

Over 1 million jobs created in Turkey last year, economy minister

17 June 2013

Turkish Minister of Economy Zafer Caglayan said that the economy created 1 million 157 thousand jobs in the past year and explained that the number of unemployment increased not because they lost their jobs, but rather more people entered the labor market.

Caglayan evaluated the data of the Turkey Statistical Institute (TurkStat) for the month of March.

Caglayan said that number of the unemployed in the period of February-March-April increased 10.1 percent and added that the number was higher than last year, but lower than February.

Caglayan reminded that the rate of unemployment in March last year was about 9.9 percent and explained, "The number of the unemployed increased not because they lost their jobs, but rather more people entered the labor market."

He underlined that the economy created 86 percent new jobs, and that the number increased compared to last year 1 million 157 thousand and reached 24 million 974 thousand people. The number of unemployed increased compared to last year by 186 thousand and reached 2 million 801 thousand people.

Spying claims of The Guardian worrying, Turkish Foreign Ministry

17 June 2013

Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has stated, the spying claims of the British newspaper, The Guardian, were very worrying and an official statement was expected from British authorities.

The British newspaper, The Guardian, published on 17 June in an article that Britain had spied on Turkish Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek in 2009 as he was in London to attend the G20 Summit.

Turkey's MFA noted in their statement that the claims which were published on the paper's Monday edition were very worrying.

The statement underlined that diplomatic attempts were placed and said, "It is obvious that if these claims published in the article were corrected, first of all, the related-country would face a scandal. It would be clear that the insult of an ally country like that would not be acceptable during the times of reciprocal trust and respect need to be based in international cooperation."

"In regards to the issue, it is expected to receive a satisfying and an official statement from British authorities," MFA added.

Earlier Monday, Turkey's Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek said, "If The Guardian's spying claims are confirmed, and then we will strongly condemn it and do all what is necessary."

The Guardian published that Britain had spied on Turkish Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek in 2009 as he was in London to attend the G20 Summit.

According to the news report of the British newspaper, The Guardian, Finance Minister Simsek was spied by GCHQ, one of the three UK intelligence agencies while he was in capital London to attend the G20 Summit in 2009.

The newspaper referred to the report of GCHQ and said, "On the contrary, the top-secret document about a G20 finance ministers' meeting in London starting on September 2, 2009 makes clear that the wiretappers' 'reporting requirements' were to find out nothing more than Ankara's attitudes to financial regulation and reform."

Furthermore, the British paper added, the 2009 surveillance of the Turkish finance minister, and the possible targeting of up to 15 members of his delegation to London was also placed to make sure "Turkish 'willingness (or not) to co-operate with the rest of the G20 nations'."

"Turkey to reduce imports of natural gas until 2023"

18 June 2013

Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Taner Yildiz said Turkey aimed to reduce imports of natural gas until 2023, adding, "We will produce from the domestic sources instead of importing it."

Attending the handover ceremony of Seyitomer Thermal Plant to a private energy company, Yildiz said they completed the privatization of the electricity distribution

services and there were a lot of work to do.

Yildiz said Turkey was in a serious struggle for reducing natural gas imports and using the domestic resources and added:

"We aim to reduce imports of natural gas until 2023. The average of our annual gas imports is almost \$12 billion. We will produce from the domestic sources instead of importing it."

Pointing out that there were many coal mine reserves in Turkey, Yildiz emphasized that they would continue the energy investments to the coal reserves in towns of Konya's Karapinar, Afyonkarahisar's Dinar and Eskisehir's Alpu in Turkey.

Turkey ranks second among OECD to reduce unemployment rate

18 June 2013

Turkey has ranked second in reducing unemployment rate the most among OECD countries since 2010.

Turkey has reduced unemployment rate the most with 2.5 percent among OECD countries between 2010 and 2012, according to the data compiled by Anadolu Agency.

Hence, unemployment rate reduced from 10.7 percent in 2010 to 8.8 percent in 2011 to 8.2 percent in 2012.

Turkey also outperformed USA and Germany in reducing unemployment.

Estonia ranked first in reducing unemployment rate 5.8 percent while unemployment rates increased the most in Greece due to public debt with 11.7 percent since 2010.

Unemployment rate increased 1.3 percent in the Euro area and 0.8 percent in the European Union in the same term.

Unemployment rates for OECD states for 2010, 2011 and 2012 are as below;

Countries	2010	2011	2012	Difference
Australia	5,2	5,1	5,2	0
Austria	4,4	4,1	4,4	0
Belgium	8,3	7,2	7,6	0,7
Canada	8,0	7,5	7,2	0,8
Chile	8,2	7,1	6,4	1,8
Czech Republic	7,3	6,7	7,0	0,3
Denmark	7,5	7,6	7,5	0
Estonia	16,9	12,6	10,1	5,8

Finland	8,4	7,8	7,7	0,7	
France	9,7	9,6	10,3	-0,6	
Germany	7,1	6,0	5,5	1,6	
Greece	12,6	17,7	24,3	-11,7	
Hungary	11,2	11,0	10,9	0,3	
Iceland	7,6	7,1	6,0	1,6	
Ireland	13,9	14,7	14,7	0,8	
Israel	6,6	5,6	6,9	-0,3	
Italy	8,4	8,4	10,7	-2,3	
Japan	5,1	4,6	4,4	0,7	
Korea	3,7	3,4	3,2	0,5	
Luxembourg	4,6	4,8	5,1	-0,5	
Mexico	5,4	5,2	5,0	0,4	
Netherlands	4,5	4,5	5,3	-0,8	
New Zealand	6,5	6,5	6,9	-0,4	
Norway	3,6	3,3	3,2	0,4	
Poland	9,7	9,7	10,1	-0,4	
Portugal	11,0	12,9	15,9	-4,9	
Slovak Republic		14,5	13,6	14,0	0,5
Slovenia	7,3	8,2	8,9	-1,6	
Spain	20,1	21,6	25,1	-5,0	
Sweden	8,6	7,8	8,0	0,6	
Switzerland	4,5	4,0	4,2	0,3	
Turkey	10,7	8,8	8,2	2,5	
United Kingdom	7,8	8,0	7,9	-0,1	
United States	9,6		9,0	8,1	1,5
Euro Area		10,1	10,1	11,4	-1,3
European Union	9,7	9,7	10,5	-0,8	
G-7		8,2	7,7	7,4	0,8

OECD Total 8,3 8,0 8,0 0,3

Turkish PM Erdoğan meets Hamas leader Meshal and Gaza PM Haniyeh

19 June 2013

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on 19 June came together with Hamas leader Khaled Meshal and Prime Minister of the Gaza administration Ismail Haniyeh in Ankara, in a meeting that lasted over two-and-a-half hours. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu also attended the meeting.

Israel's Jerusalem policies were expected to top the agenda of the meeting, according to Hamas' International Relations official Usame Hamdan. Hamdan also said the construction of Israeli settlements and Israel's "imposition policies" aimed at the Palestinian economy would also be discussed during the meeting. Another topic to be discussed was the gap still existing between the two main Palestinian representatives, Hamas and Fatah, he added.

"Turkey's role in the Middle East and the world is crucial," Hamdan told Anatolia news agency.

Erdoğan's upcoming visit to Gaza was also expected to be discussed with the visiting Palestinian officials. The Turkish prime minister had repeatedly expressed his intention to go to Gaza in May, but had to postpone it for his critical visit to Washington DC on May 16.

There is still no fixed date for his planned visit to Gaza, with Turkish officials expressing their intention to realize the visit after reconciliation is achieved between Hamas and Fatah.

Although talks between the two groups have recently intensified, no breakthrough for a unity government is looming.

Turkey warns Germany not to play politics over EU talks

20 June 2013

Turkey warned German Chancellor Angela Merkel not to play politics with its European Union ambitions, and said failure to open a new chapter in accession talks next week would be a major setback in Ankara's relations with the bloc.

Many EU capitals want to take the long-awaited step on Turkey's path towards the EU next week, arguing Europe should capitalize on Ankara's rising influence in the Middle East.

But Germany has criticized Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan's heavy handed response to weeks of anti-government protests and appears to be refusing to agree to open a new negotiation area, potentially the first such step in three years.

Mersin Mediterranean Games "preparation for 2020 Olympics"

21 June 2013

The 17th Mediterranean Games officially began with an opening ceremony on 20 June in the southern province of Mersin.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the Games were a means of preparation for 2020 Olympics, which Turkey is bidding to host.

"In fact, Turkey is making a rehearsal in Mersin," Erdogan said at the opening ceremony held at the 25,000-capacity Mersin Stadium. "As we are hosting the biggest sports organization in the Mediterranean region, we are actually preparing for 2020 Istanbul Olympics."

Erdogan said he believed Mersin would perform well at hosting the event, where athletes from 24 Mediterranean countries will compete.

"Mersin will host the Mediterranean Games in the most beautiful way, and will convey sports' universal message of peace, solidarity and friendship to the whole world," he said.

Prime Minister Erdogan thanked relevant authorities for readying the facilities and opening ceremony in a period of eighteen months, a relatively short span of time given the hosting city is typically determined six years in advance.

"The 17th Mediterranean Games were to be hosted by Greece, but due to various reasons, this could not be realized," he said. "Turkey was made an offer to host, and we accepted with pleasure."

Erdogan said he hoped the event would help bring Mediterranean nations closer.

4,379 new companies established in Turkey in May

21 June 2013

4,379 new companies were established in Turkey in May and in the same month 1,065 companies went out of business, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) said in a report published on 21 June.

According to TOBB, the number of newly established companies in May in Turkey went up 38.53 percent when compared to the same month of the previous year.

In April, 4,487 new companies were established in Turkey.

Turkish Foreign Ministry to continue to "be in solidarity with Lebanon"

25 June 2013

Turkish Foreign Ministry said that Turkey felt sorrow and was concerned about the recent clashes in Lebanon.

"Turkey will keep being in solidarity with the people and the government of Lebanon in a time where the conflicts in Syria have been felt more regionally" said a statement

issued by the Foreign Ministry on 24 June.

Urging for common sense, the statement said Turkey would maintain the support for Lebanon.

Sides started clashing late night of 23 June in city of Sidon.

Clashes kicked off after a member of Salafist group, Assir Isam al-Arifi, was arrested by the army upon possession of unregistered firearm in Abra region of the Sidon city.

At least 17 people died and 65 others were wounded during attacks.

Davutoglu on EU: "Chapter opened, obstacles removed"

25 June 2013

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said European Union General Affairs Council decided to open Chapter 22 which regulates regional policies in Turkey's EU accession talks.

Davutoglu made a press statement in the Turkish capital, Ankara regarding the negotiation process with the EU on opening of talks on "Regional Policy.

" EU General Affairs Council decided to open Chapter 22 in Turkey's EU accession talks. Any delay would be out of question. I do not see any obstacles for the opening of Chapter 22. I want to see positive results," said Davutoglu. "This decision clearly says Chapter 22 has been opened.[...] What is more important is that the decision has been made and it has been confirmed the chapter was opened. Joint works will continue for not only this chapter but also others to be opened as we agreed."

Davutoglu said reviewing the decision was out of question adding only procedural meetings would be decided later.

"I hope we will not go through such crisis again. Turkey- EU train will move to reach its target in the quickest way," said Davutoglu. " The obstacle which would prevent Turkey- EU relations was removed in this way.

EU is a strategic target for Turkey, said Davutoglu hoping the EU would assess Turkey's membership with the same strategic perspective.

Davutoglu also said he had talked to his Dutch counterpart Frans Timmermans over the phone and Timmermans expressed support for the opening of the chapter.

Davutoglu said they wanted Chapter 23 and 24 to be opened immediately adding these chapters were important in terms of human rights and freedoms.

UN team in Turkey to probe Syria chemical weapons use

27 June 2013

UN-appointed chemical weapons inspectors, blocked from entering Syria, are in Turkey to gather information about possible use of the munitions in the country's civil war, officials said.

Members of the team assembled by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had been on standby in Cyprus since April, unable to enter Syria even as claims of chemical weapons attacks there were reported by Western governments.

Turkey delivers mobile hospitals to Azerbaijan

28 June 2013

A Turkish manufacturer delivered two mobile hospital units to Azerbaijan's Ministry of Defense.

Hospitals are to serve during disasters and other emergency situations with intense care, trauma and surgery units.

Speaking to the Anadolu Agency, an official from the manufacturer company said they have previously delivered 4 mobile hospitals to Darfur region of Sudan, Mali, and Ivory Coast.

"We won the bid among other international companies and delivered two mobile hospitals in less than 10 months," the official said.

Convenient for the climate of Azerbaijan, the hospitals include 44 beds, 8 of which are for intense care, as well as all the other units needed in a hospital, even a pharmacy and a morgue.

The hospitals can be set up and start functioning in 3 hours only without the need for a crane and fork lift.

"The mobile hospitals are fitted with inflatable tents and can be set up in 3 hours with a group of 12-13 people," the company official said, adding they expected to produce more functional, economical, and technological hospitals for potential buyers overseas.

Investment in Turkish military industry to decuple

28 June 2013

Turkey intends to increase investment in the sector of defense production tenfold, deputy head of the Association of Aeronautics and Astronautics of Turkey Aziz Meydan said.

Turkey is also developing a plan for increasing the defense production exports five times in the coming years.

According to Meydan, in April 2013 the exports of defense products from Turkey grew by 12.6 percent compared to the same month in 2012.

"The first place among importers of Turkish defense products belongs to the United States. Products at the cost of \$ 42.8 million have been exported to this country since the beginning of the year," Meydan said.

In recent years, the Turkish defense industry has focused on the development and manufacture of its own products. Turkey managed to achieve a 54-percent level of self-sufficiency in the defense industry.

Turkmens ask Ankara's help for self-defense

28 June 2013

Iraqi Turkmens have shared their demands and expectations to set up own armed forces with Ankara, Erşat Hürmüzlü, President Abdullah Gül's Middle East advisor, has said, reminding that Turkmens should find ways to protect themselves if the central government is unable to do so.

Hürmüzlü voiced his concerns over the killing of senior Iraqi Turkmen officials, noting that security, which should be maintained by the state to all its citizens, did not exist in the country. "If the Iraqi central government is unable to protect Turkmens, if the Iraqi army and law enforcement officers can't defend Turkmen citizens, as a matter of course Turkmens should find ways to protect themselves," he said.

Deputy Head of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, Ali Hasim Muhtaroglu, was killed in a suicide bombing in the city of Tuz Khurmatu on June 25. Top Turkish officials have condemned the attacks, with President Gül sending a letter of condolence to Iraqi Turkmen Front head Arshad al-Salihi and Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu having a phone conversation with the family of Muhtaroglu.

A declaration released following a bimonthly meeting of the National Security Council (MGK) also particularly expressed "deep sadness" over the killing.

"As we have seen, a planned study was carried out in the Turkmeneli region to wipe out the Turkmen presence and identity," Hürmüzlü said, referring to the violence and terror incidents that have been ongoing for over a month. "They are doing this to force Turkmens to leave, and to stir sectarian clashes," he added.

Iraq is weathering its deadliest outburst of violence since 2008, with more than 2,000 people killed since the start of April.

The advisor said Iraqi Turkmens had shared their demands and expectations with Turkish authorities over the establishment of armed forces, adding that Turkish officials were closely monitoring developments on the issue. "We suggest Turkmens proceed on the issue through legal means. However, the situation is out of control, there is no security of life in Turkmeneli regions," he said, while underlining their prior demands from Turkey.

"We ask Turkey to protect the citizenship rights, introduction of constitutional rights, which they couldn't use, as soon as possible. Turkmens want to sustain their lives, as Iraq's third fundamental element, in a unitary and united Iraq," he said.

Turkey among 10 countries with highest number of foreign missions in world, Turkish FM says

29 June 2013

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said Turkey ranked among the top 10 countries with the highest number of foreign missions in the world.

Addressing the newly appointed consul generals at the foreign ministry, Davutoglu stated that 51 new ambassadors and 22 consul generals were appointed by a latest

decree.

Davutoglu said, "It is a privilege to represent Turkey, a country with a rooted state tradition."

Davutoglu advised the diplomats to work confidently, and said, "on no account you should give concessions while defending our citizens and representing the Turkish Republic at any platform."

Davutoglu said new consulate-generals were opened in Aktau in Kazakhstan, Hyderabad in India, Miami in the United States, and in Amsterdam in the Netherlands, adding that the number of Turkish consulate-generals surged to 78.

He added, overall number of foreign missions reached to 218 with Cambodia, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Brunei.

Davutoglu advised particularly the consul generals that will serve in Europe to be careful of xenophobia, and said, "we will form a front against xenophobia. Today xenophobia is the biggest threat for us."

Davutoglu also said that number of Turkish business owners in the world rose to 80,000 in 2013 from 25.000 in 1987.
