

October 2016

Economics:

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi issued a joint statement with the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in New Delhi, [pledging](#) US\$1 billion in economic aid to Afghanistan.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) [extended](#) a loan worth \$3 million in local currency to a leading bank in Kyrgyzstan as part of the Kyrgyz Sustainable Energy Financing Facility.

Kazakhstan [expects](#) to boost oil production from 74 to 79.5 million tons in 2017. Oil production is expected to reach 86.5 million tons by 2021.

Turkmenistan announced that it had [commenced](#) construction of a gas compressor station in Mary Province that form part of the East-West pipeline expected to export gas to western countries.

The Uzbek and Turkmen intergovernmental commission on trade [met](#) in Tashkent to discuss bilateral economic cooperation.

Kazakhstan [urged](#) Azerbaijan's state oil company SOCAR to consider joining the Eurasia Project, which will undertake a number of geological and geophysical studies in the Caspian basin.

Politics:

The Kyrgyz president Almazbek Atambaev [opened](#) a memorial for victims of Tsarist Russia's brutal suppression of the 1916 Kyrgyz rebellion.

The head of the Kazakh Journalists' Union Seitqazy Mataev was [hospitalised](#) with high blood pressure. It was the third time that Mataev has sought medical attention since his trial for alleged fraud and tax evasion began in August.

Tajikistan [rejected](#) the UN Human Rights Committee's calls for the release of political prisoners, protections for media freedom and a moratorium on torture.

Senior US diplomat Daniel Rosenblum [made](#) his country's first official visit to Uzbekistan since the death of President Islam Karimov. He reported that Uzbek authorities had expressed a strong desire for stability in the US-Uzbekistan relationship.

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbaev [visited](#) Uzbekistan to pay his respects to Islam Karimov. Nazarbaev and the Russian president Vladimir Putin did not attend Karimov's funeral as it coincided with the G20 summit in China. Putin visited Karimov's grave [within days](#) of the summit's conclusion.

Kazakhstan's former Finance Minister Baqytzhan Saghyntaev was [promoted](#) to the prime ministership following President Nazarbayev's decision to reshuffle the country's cabinet. President Nazarbaev's eldest daughter Darigha Nazarbaeva was [appointed](#) as chairperson of the Senate International Affairs, Defence, and Security Committee in the reshuffle.

The trial of the chief executive of one of Kazakhstan's largest breweries, Tokhtar Toleshov, [began](#) behind closed doors on September 14. Toleshov faces charges of pursuing extremist activities, weapons possession and plotting to overthrow the government.

The Uzbek Council of Religious Scholars [renamed](#) one of Tashkent's oldest mosques after the late President Islam Karimov.

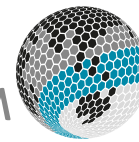
Kyrgyz Supreme Court officials [announced](#) that the retrial of ethnic Uzbek activist Azimjon Askarov has been scheduled for October 4. Askarov has been serving a life sentence since 2011 following a conviction for inciting ethnic hatred during the country's bloody 2010 ethnic clashes.

The Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammedov [signed](#) constitutional amendments that will potentially enable him to rule the country for life, regardless of age.

Pakistan and Afghanistan [agreed](#) to reopen the Chaman border, which was closed for two weeks after Afghan protesters burned the Pakistani flag near the border.

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Security:

The Kyrgyz State Committee for National Security [announced](#) on September 6 that a member of an international terrorist group was killed following a shoot-out.

The Chinese Embassy in Bishkek [stopped](#) issuing visas to Kyrgyz nationals following a suicide car bombing that targeted the embassy compound on August 30. Three Kyrgyz employees were wounded during the incident.

A Kazakh national was [detained](#) by Kyrgyz authorities on allegations of being a member of an international terrorist group.

A court in the Kazakh city of Aqtobe [imprisoned](#) a man accused of encouraging two others to undertake terrorist attacks in Russia.

Tajikistan is reportedly [investigating](#) threats made by the fugitive former Tajik police commander, Gulmurod Halimov, who announced in May 2015 that he had joined ISIS. The US had previously [offered](#) a US\$3 million reward for information.

Uzbekistan [released](#) four Kyrgyz nationals detained last month as part of a border dispute, reducing bilateral tensions.

Kazakhstan's National Security Committee (KNB) claim to have foiled an attack [said](#) that an Islamist cell arrested in Almaty was planning to hijack an aircraft and carry out "a 9/11-like" attack.

Two suicide bombers [detonated](#) themselves near the Afghan Defence ministry in Kabul, killing 24 people including senior defence officials. 90 others were injured.

An US airstrike in Uruzgan province in southern Afghanistan is [reported](#) to have killed at least eight Afghan police officers.

Afghan soldiers with [suspected](#) Taliban links killed 13 fellow soldiers in their sleep.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) [undertook](#) joint military exercises for the first time in Kyrgyzstan.

Interpol [added](#) the leader of Tajikistan's banned opposition Islamic Renaissance Party Muhiddin Kabiri to its wanted list following a request from the Tajik government. Kabiri is accused of terrorist activities and fraud.

Tajik authorities [released](#) Zurafo Rahmoni, the only jailed senior female official of the banned Islamic Renaissance Party, from prison following a mass amnesty.

Uzbekistan's first post-independence president Islam Karimov dies, age 78

Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov was [announced](#) to have died at age 78 on September 2, following a week of intense speculation about his health. The president had not been heard from since his daughter Lola Karimova posted on Instagram on August 27 that her father had suffered from a stroke. Karimov, who took power two years before Uzbekistan became independent in 1991, had ruled the country with an iron fist for 27-years. He was regularly criticised for his human rights record, particularly after the deadly 2005 Andijan massacre.

It is thought that confirmation of Karimov's death was postponed until officials could organise a succession plan. Karimov's daughter Gulnara Karimova had [once](#) been expected to take the post, but had recently fallen out with her father. Karimova has been under house arrest for the past two years.

Karimov was [buried](#) at the Shah-i-Zinda cemetery in his home city of Samarkand on September 3 in a ceremony led by Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Mirziyoyev is now widely [expected](#) to become Uzbekistan's next president. He was [appointed](#) interim president by a joint session of parliament on September 8 and will hold the post until the presidential election scheduled for December.

