Central Asia news update



June 2017

Economics

Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Uzbekistan. They <u>discussed</u> enhancing relations in the fields of tourism and the economy.

Kazakhstan's state pensions fund lost hundreds of millions in an Azerbaijani <u>investment</u> causing outrage among Kazakh citizens.

Foreign Ministers from Japan and Central Asian countries <u>convened</u> in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. They signed a joint statement to expand trade and investment.

Kyrgyzstan's Manas International Airport and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development signed several loan and grant agreements to <u>modernize</u> airport facilities.

Kazakhstan's national oil transportation company KazTransOil plans to <u>increase</u> its oil transportation through Azerbaijan.

At a business forum in Ashgabat participants from Turkmenistan and Belarus discussed <u>expanding</u> cooperation across transportation, agriculture and food and textile manufacturing.

Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov announced that Turkmenistan will expand partnerships in the energy sector with various countries from Europe and Asia.

Uzbek President Mirziyaev <u>renamed</u> Tashkent International airport after Uzbekistan's first president, Islam Karimov.

A meeting of OPEC and non-OPEC oil exporters will be held in Vienna. Representatives from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are <u>scheduled</u> to attend to discuss increasing oil prices on the world market.

Uzbekistan is set to develop <u>several</u> gas and oil projects worth a total cost of USD\$30.4 billion by 2021.

Politics

In Kazakhstan, a <u>controversial</u> citizenship bill was granted preliminary approval by Kazakh lawmakers. If the bill is passed, authorities will be able to strip "terrorists" of their citizenship.

Jehovah's Witness Teimur Akhmedov was <u>sentenced</u> to five years in prison by a court in Kazakhstan.

Under the cover of fighting radicalism, the Kazakh parliament will <u>deliberate</u> a ban on certain clothing associated with devout Muslims. Beards could also be targeted.

Labor union <u>leader</u> Amin Eleusinov was sentenced to two years in prison by a Kazakh court after being convicted of embezzlement.

Due to security concerns, authorities in Tajikistan cancelled the Immortal Regiment march which celebrates the anniversary of the World War II victory over Nazi Germany.







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Tajikistan's Foreign Minister <u>defended</u> the Roghun hydro-energy project against growing criticism from Uzbekistan and international human rights agencies. Tajikistan hopes the project will generate a stable energy supply.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev met with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Riyadh to discuss enhancing bilateral cooperation.

Turkmenistan's prosecutor-general, alongside 10 employees of the prosecutor's office, have been <u>dismissed</u> over corruption charges.

In southern Tajikistan two seperate attacks were carried out <u>against</u> law enforcement officials. The attackers remain unknown, however there is speculation that they were politically motivated.

Kyrgyzstan Prime Minister Sooronbai Jeenbekov was nominated for presidency by the ruling Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan.

Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan complained that their initiatives to <u>support</u> the country's development have been impeded by bureaucracy.

The 49th session of the Ad Hoc Working Group for development of a convention on the Caspian Sea's legal status will be held in June in Turkmenistan. Foreign Ministers of the coastal countries will <u>discuss</u> enhancing regional security and cooperation.

At the 'Afghan Women: Messengers of Peace' conference Afghan President Ashraf Ghani expressed his <u>support</u> for enhancing women's access to education in the war-torn country.

Uzbek President Mirziyoyev <u>attended</u> the Arab Islamic American Summit in Riyadh.

Prominent human rights lawyer Fayzinisso Vohidova was banned from leaving the country by Tajik border guards on the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border.

Security

At least 24 people were killed in southern Kyrgyzstan after a landslide <u>swept</u> through a village. Authorities held a national day of mourning for the victims.

Kazakh journalist and activist Ramazan Yesergepov was stabbed and hospitalized. The attack occurred shortly before he <u>planned</u> to meet European officials to discuss media freedoms.

U.S. National Intelligence Director Dan Coats stated that the security situation in Afghanistan will <u>deteriorate</u> over the next 18 months.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar leader of Hezb-e Islami declared that his group would not hand over their weapons as agreed under a negotiated peace deal.

Gunmen in police uniforms <u>attacked</u> a bank in the southeastern province of Paktia, Afghanistan. Two police officers were killed and 39 people injured.

A series of attacks <u>carried</u> out by the Taliban in the Afghan province of Kandahar have left at least 15 soldiers dead and several others wounded.

The Afghan military <u>regained</u> control of a district in the northern Kunduz province. The district was captured by the Taliban earlier this month, forcing thousands of civilians to flee the region.

The Afghan air force <u>targeted</u> Islamic State militants in the country's eastern province of Nangarhar. At least 34 Islamic State fighters were killed.

A suicide attack on a <u>convoy</u> of NATO armoured personnel vehicles killed at least 8 civilians in Kabul. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack.

The main Chaman border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan was <u>reopened</u> by Pakistan authorities. The border was closed earlier this month after deadly clashes resulted in the death of 15 people.

