

**Report# 135**  
**Business & Politics in the Muslim World**  
**News Monitoring**  
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**Weekly Report**  
**Central Asia**  
**Uzma Siraj**

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- Dagestan interested in developing cooperation with Azerbaijan"

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- Medvedev Heads To Baku Amid Growing Tensions In South Caucasus
- Azerbaijan Claims Five Killed In Clash On Nagorno-Karabakh Border

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- Governors of Osh and Naryn provinces appointed in Kyrgyzstan
- Four political parties submitted documents for registration in parliament elections in Kyrgyzstan

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- Herbert Salber: Kyrgyzstan intends to deploy OSCE Police after parliamentary elections
- Russia urges all OSCE countries to refrain from any pressure on Kyrgyzstan
- EU Special Representative for Central Asia discussed situation in Kyrgyzstan with Russian official
- Kyrgyz, Uzbek Talks On Release Of Kyrgyz Officers Unsuccessful
- Official: Kyrgyzstan Still In Talks Over OSCE Police

#### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Kyrgyzstan Launches New Hydroelectric Power Plant
- In 2011 GDP per capita to make up \$980 in Kyrgyzstan
- Kyrgyzstan's rate of economic growth exceeds average rate for CIS in 2010

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- Suicide Car Bomber Hits Tajik Police Station
- Top Tajik Security Chiefs Dismissed Following Prison Break
- Tajik police suspect IMU of masterminding blast in Khujand

#### **Geo strategic Front**

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- Tajikistan to attend SCO anti-terror drill in Kazakhstan

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- Tajik Parents Punished For Children's Truancy

### **Turkmenistan**

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- Mejlis of Turkmenistan and U.S. Congress to develop cooperation

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Ukrainian delegation holds talks in Ashgabat

### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Pakistani President notes timeliness of construction of TAPI gas pipeline
- Turkmenistan to sign agreement on renewable energy under technical cooperation programme
- Turkmenistan and Afghanistan sign framework agreement on TAPI

### **Social Front**

- Afghanistan regions received humanitarian aid from Turkmenistan
- Another Social-Networking Site Banned In Turkmenistan

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- Kyrgyz-Uzbek Talks Held On Release Of Kyrgyz Border Guards

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- Kremlin source: Russia is not going to defend Armenia against Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and international issues including the current situation in Iran will be discussed during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Baku, a source in Kremlin said.

- Dagestan interested in developing cooperation with Azerbaijan"

Dagestan President Magomedshah Magomedov praised contribution of Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Leader Allahshukur Pashazade to development and strengthening bilateral friendly relations between Azerbaijani and Dagestan peoples, he told media after the meeting with Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Leader Allahshukur Pashazade.

- Nagorno-Karabakh Marks Anniversary, Vows Baku Will Never Claim Control STEPANAKERT, Nagorno-Karabakh -- Authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh today marked the 19th anniversary of the disputed enclave's declaration of independence from

Azerbaijan and pledged Baku will never resume control of their territory, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports.

- Medvedev Heads To Baku Amid Growing Tensions In South Caucasus

Amid a colorful firework display, Azerbaijan raised a massive version of its national flag on September 1 that it claims is the world's largest, at 70 meters by 35 meters long and a whopping 350 kilograms.

- Azerbaijan Claims Five Killed In Clash On Nagorno-Karabakh Border

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry has announced that three Armenian and two Azerbaijani soldiers have been killed in clashes near the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. In a statement issued on September 1, the ministry blamed Yerevan for the incident, saying Armenian troops had crossed the line of control separating northern Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan proper and "tried to attack Azerbaijani forces."

### **Economic/Energy Front**

### **Social Front**

#### **Kazakhstan**

#### **Political Front**

- Kazakh Opposition Parties Want Referendum On Impeaching President

ALMATY, Kazakhstan -- Kazakhstan's Algha (Forward) and Communist parties have discussed their joint efforts to hold a national referendum on impeaching President Nursultan Nazarbaev, RFE/RL's Kazakh Service reports.

#### **Geo strategic Front**

- U.S. will unveil names of its representatives at OSCE summit in Astana after its agenda is ready – ambassador

Almaty. August 27. Interfax-Kazakhstan – The U.S. will announce the names of its delegates to the OSCE summit Astana after the agenda of the summit is officially approved. The U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan Richard Hoagland told a Friday press conference in Almaty that they would be waiting till the agenda was ready and would announce later who would be in the U.S. delegation at the summit.

- NATO wants to see Kazakh peacekeepers in Afghanistan

Ili Military Ground (The Almaty Region). August 27. Interfax-Kazakhstan NATO is keen on Kazbrig s (Kazakhstan's peacekeeping unit) participation in operations in Afghanistan.

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### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Kazakhstan to double export duty in 2010

(SRI) - Kazakhstan plans to double its crude oil export duty to \$40 per tonne starting in January, wire services reported on Monday citing government sources

### **Social Front**

- Kazakh Rights Defender Jailed

A prominent human rights defender who has drawn attention to problems in Kazakhstan's prisons has been found guilty of hooliganism and sentenced to 10 days in jail, RFE/RL's Kazakh Service reports.

### **Kyrgyzstan**

#### **Political Front**

- Suspect In Kyrgyz Policeman's Killing Arrested In Kazakhstan

BISHKEK -- A man suspected of involvement in the killing of a Kyrgyz police colonel in southern Kyrgyzstan in June has been arrested in Kazakhstan, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- Governors of Osh and Naryn provinces appointed in Kyrgyzstan

Governors of Osh and Naryn provinces have been appointed in Kyrgyzstan.

Relevant personnel decrees were signed by President of transition period Roza Otunbayeva today, on September 3, 2010.

- Four political parties submitted documents for registration in parliament elections in Kyrgyzstan

As of today, four political parties submitted documents for registration in parliament elections in Kyrgyzstan. The statement was voiced by the chairman of the Central Election Commission on Election and Referendum Akylbek Sariyev.

#### **Geo strategic Front**

- Herbert Salber: Kyrgyzstan intends to deploy OSCE Police after parliamentary elections

“Kyrgyzstan intends to deploy police officers of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in its territory after the parliamentary elections,” Ambassador Herbert Salber, director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, said today during a briefing in Vienna (Austria) on radio Azattyk.

- Russia urges all OSCE countries to refrain from any pressure on Kyrgyzstan

Russia urges all OSCE countries to refrain from any pressure on Kyrgyzstan, in particular in the promotion of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This was stated by the permanent representative to the OSCE Anvar Azimov at the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization

- EU Special Representative for Central Asia discussed situation in Kyrgyzstan with Russian official

The European Union's Special Representative for Central Asia Pierre Morel discussed with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Grigory Karasin situation in Kyrgyzstan. This was reported by foreign news sources with reference to the Department of Press and Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

- Kyrgyz, Uzbek Talks On Release Of Kyrgyz Officers Unsuccessful

BATKEN, Kyrgyzstan -- Talks between Kyrgyz and Uzbek border officials on the possible release of two Kyrgyz border guard officers have ended without success, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- Official: Kyrgyzstan Still In Talks Over OSCE Police

Some protests against the OSCE mission have been based on fears of internationally enforced separatism.

#### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Kyrgyzstan Launches New Hydroelectric Power Plant

Kyrgyzstan has launched a \$200 million hydroelectric power plant, its first since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

- In 2011 GDP per capita to make up \$980 in Kyrgyzstan

In 2011 GDP per capita will make up \$980 in Kyrgyzstan, or 45.7 thousand soms. Such data were given in a medium-term forecast of socio-economic development of the republic for 2010-2013, prepared by the Ministry of Economic Regulation of Kyrgyzstan. As noted, in 2013 GDP per each citizen of Kyrgyzstan will make up \$1,281.

- Kyrgyzstan's rate of economic growth exceeds average rate for CIS in 2010

The rate of economic development of Kyrgyzstan is higher than the average among CIS. This was reported by the Interstate Statistic Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the first six months of 2010.

### **Social Front**

- New School Year Brings Anxiety In South Kyrgyzstan

Almaz, a 13-year-old boy in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh, couldn't wait to see his classmates. His parents, however, were among many in the area who aren't sure their child would be there when schools reopened on September 1.

### **Tajikistan**

#### **Political Front**

- Suicide Car Bomber Hits Tajik Police Station

KHUIJAND, Tajikistan -- Officials in Tajikistan say two suicide bombers in an explosives-packed car slammed into a police station in the northern city of Khujand, killing two police officers and wounding some 25 others.

- Top Tajik Security Chiefs Dismissed Following Prison Break

Tajikistan's top security chief has been dismissed along with his three deputies, days after 25 inmates broke out of a security agency prison in Dushanbe.

- Tajik police suspect IMU of masterminding blast in Khujand

DUSHANBE, October 3, 2010, Asia-Plus -- According to the preliminary data, today's blast in Khujand has been committed by supporters of those suspected of having killed Homidjon Karimov, former bazaar director in Isfara district.

#### **Geo strategic Front**

- President Rahmon receiving visiting NATO's special envoy today

DUSHANBE, August 31, 2010, Asia-Plus -- President Emomali Rahmon is receiving visiting NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, Mr. Robert Simmons, today afternoon.

- Tajikistan to attend SCO anti-terror drill in Kazakhstan

DUSHANBE, August 30, Asia-Plus 2010, Asia-Plus -- A special company-strong subunit of Tajikistan's Ministry of Defense (MoD) that is part of mobile subunits of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) will represent Tajikistan in a multinational anti-terror drill that will take place in Kazakhstan from September 9 to 25 under of the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Asia-Plus has learned from the source at a MoD.

#### **Economic/Energy Front**

### **Social Front**

- Tajik Parents Punished For Children's Truancy

QURGHONTEPPA, Tajikistan -- A court in the town of Qurghonteppa in southern Tajikistan has for the first time passed sentence on parents whose children failed for months to attend school, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

## **Turkmenistan**

### **Political Front**

- Mejlis of Turkmenistan and U.S. Congress to develop cooperation

The U.S. congressman and member of the foreign affairs committee, Brent Woolfork discussed issues of further strengthening the Turkmen-American inter-parliamentary relations with the Majlis members. He arrived in Ashgabat on a working visit.

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Ukrainian delegation holds talks in Ashgabat

The Ukrainian delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Maiko paid a working visit to Ashgabat. The delegation held several meetings with the government of Turkmenistan, as well as the administration of Ashgabat, where they discussed issues of Turkmen-Ukrainian cooperation in transport and communications and urban planning.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Pakistani President notes timeliness of construction of TAPI gas pipeline

"The initiative of the Turkmen side on construction of the transcontinental TAPI gas pipeline is timely and relevant, and it was warmly welcomed by the people and the leadership of Pakistan," President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari said during a telephone conversation with President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

- Turkmenistan to sign agreement on renewable energy under technical cooperation programme

Turkmenistan will sign a financial agreement under the regional programme "Efficient Energy Programme for Central Asia: Renewable Energy Sources - Programme of Energy Efficiency (RES-EE)" as part of the technical cooperation programme with the European Commission.

- Turkmenistan and Afghanistan sign framework agreement on TAPI

Representatives of the Governments of Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan signed a framework agreement on the construction of the Turkmenistan - Afghanistan - Pakistan - India (TAPI) gas pipeline during the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghani commission for trade and economic cooperation in Kabul, August 30.

### **Social Front**

- Afghanistan regions received humanitarian aid from Turkmenistan

The Afghan city of Turgundi was the first to receive humanitarian aid from Turkmenistan, who sent a motor caravan with 1 thousand tons of flour to the neighboring country. The humanitarian cargo was met by the leaders of the administration of Herat province, representatives of the public, including the Turkmen community, living compactly in border areas of Afghanistan.

- Another Social-Networking Site Banned In Turkmenistan

There's an interesting post on [neweurasia.net](http://neweurasia.net) by Annasoltan about Turkmenistan banning a popular social-networking site, [agent.mail.ru](http://agent.mail.ru).

## **Uzbekistan**

## **Political Front**

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Kyrgyz-Uzbek Talks Held On Release Of Kyrgyz Border Guards

BATKEN, Kyrgyzstan -- Kyrgyz and Uzbek officials are holding talks on the possible release of two senior Kyrgyz border guards being held in Uzbekistan, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

## **Social Front**

## **Detailed Report**

### **Azerbaijan**

## **Political Front**

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Kremlin source: Russia is not going to defend Armenia against Azerbaijan

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and international issues including the current situation in Iran will be discussed during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Baku, a source in Kremlin said.

The source added that Russia and Azerbaijan enjoy "traditionally warm and trusting relations and the sides discuss the most pressing issues." Nagorno-Karabakh is a complicated issue, he said. "The advantage is that the conflict is in a damped state."

Asked whether the issue related to the Russian military base in Gyumri will be discussed, the source said the Russian side is not going to raise this issue.

"We do not offer to raise this issue unless they (the Azerbaijani side) will do so," a source noted.

The source also said that the base is not the main issue. The main issue is Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement. Commenting on Azerbaijan's attitude towards the document extending Russian military base's stay in Gyumri and the provision that besides defending Russia's interests, it will also provide Armenia's security, the Kremlin source said this document "deals with protection of borders."

"We are not saying that we will protect them (Armenia) against Azerbaijanis," the interlocutor said. The source also said the Russian-Azerbaijani talks in Baku will also focus on military-technical cooperation, but did not specify the subject.

- Dagestan interested in developing cooperation with Azerbaijan"

Dagestan President Magomedislam Magomedov praised contribution of Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Leader Allahshukur Pashazade to development and strengthening bilateral friendly relations between Azerbaijani and Dagestan peoples, he told media after the meeting with Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Leader Allahshukur Pashazade.

The visit of Dagestan President Magomedislam Magomedov and Ingushetia President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov takes place as part of official visit of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to Azerbaijan, who will arrive to Baku today.

Today, Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Leader Allahshukur Pashazade received the presidents of the North Caucasian republics. The Presidents of two North Caucasus

republics praised the role of spiritual leader in strengthening friendly relations among the Caucasus peoples.

Russian President's visit to Azerbaijan marks another event in development of relations between Russia and Azerbaijan, Magomedov said. He said that today the two countries are intensifying mutually beneficial cultural, economic, spiritual relationship.

"We have long-standing, centuries-old friendly relations," Magomedov said.

He also mentioned the existing joint projects between Azerbaijan and Dagestan, which are under consideration.

During his visit to Baku Magomedov held talks with Azerbaijani Minister of Economic Development. The priority projects cover agriculture, tourism and hydroelectric energy sector, Dagestan president told media.

- Nagorno-Karabakh Marks Anniversary, Vows Baku Will Never Claim Control  
STEPANAKERT, Nagorno-Karabakh -- Authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh today marked the 19th anniversary of the disputed enclave's declaration of independence from Azerbaijan and pledged Baku will never resume control of their territory, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports. Bako Sahakian, the president of the Armenian-majority republic, described independence as the enclave's "supreme aim." Speaking to reporters in the capital, Stepanakert, Sahakian condemned threats by Baku to abandon the ongoing peace process and resolve the issue by force.

"If it continues like this, both Armenia and Karabakh -- despite the fact that both support and advocate a peaceful resolution of the problem -- will still have to take appropriate steps," Sahakian said.

Azerbaijan and Armenia fought a six-year war over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is located within Azerbaijani territory. A cease-fire in 1994 brought an end to the fighting, but the enclave remains a point of contention between the two sides. Flare-ups of violence have become increasingly frequent.

Sahakian's remarks came one day after Azerbaijan accused Armenian forces of staging an armed ambush on Azerbaijani soldiers guarding the line of control separating northern Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan proper. Baku said three Armenian and two Azerbaijani soldiers were killed in the fighting.

Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian today ruled out any peace accord that would restore Azerbaijani control over Nagorno-Karabakh.

In a written statement issued in Yerevan marking the anniversary of the enclave's independence, Sarkisian said that "peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue can have only one outcome -- international recognition of Artsakh's independence," a reference to the Armenian name for Karabakh.

The highest-ranking Armenian official attending today's commemorations in Stepanakert was Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian.

Yerevan itself does not formally recognize Nagorno-Karabakh, saying such a step would interfere with long-running international efforts to mediate a peaceful resolution between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Sarkisian and Sahakian both warned Azerbaijan against pushing a controversial resolution upholding its sovereignty over Karabakh through the United Nations.

The draft resolution, which the General Assembly is expected to discuss next week, upholds the right of Azerbaijanis "expelled" from Karabakh and the Armenian-controlled territories surrounding it to return to their homes.

It also urges the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), whose Minsk Group has overseen the protracted peace talks, to send a fact-finding mission to the conflict zone.

Sahakian dismissed the resolution as a fresh attempt by Baku to derail the peace process: "In recent years they [Azerbaijan] have made repeated and various statements that the work of the Minsk Group is not justified and they've tried to shift the issue to another international body, especially the United Nations," Sahakian said.

The statements came as Russian President Dmitry Medvedev arrived in Azerbaijan for a two-day visit in which the Nagorno-Karabakh issue is expected to be high on the agenda.

- Medvedev Heads To Baku Amid Growing Tensions In South Caucasus

Amid a colorful firework display, Azerbaijan raised a massive version of its national flag on September 1 that it claims is the world's largest, at 70 meters by 35 meters long and a whopping 350 kilograms.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, presiding over the unveiling of the \$32 million National Flag Square in Baku, said he could foresee the day when the country's blue, red, and green flag would fly freely over all Azerbaijani territory -- including the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. "Our flag is our pride and our soul," Aliyev told the crowd. "It will fly over Karabakh, Khankendi, and Shusha. And we all should work hard to bring this day closer and we are doing it. Long live Azerbaijan!" It is in this atmosphere that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev travels today to what is arguably the most powerful of the three South Caucasus countries. His two-day visit to oil-rich Azerbaijan won't be all smiles and handshakes. While Medvedev's trip formally revolves around a border agreement and water-sharing projects, knottier issues like energy strategy and perceived Russian favoritism in the region are also expected to be on the table.

Originally due in late September, the meeting was bumped forward by the Kremlin, now coming just ahead of a scheduled trip by Aliyev to the United States for the UN General Assembly and meetings with U.S. officials. "Medvedev's visit is somewhat preventive, to keep Azerbaijan from having closer geopolitical relations with the West," Rasim Musabekov, a Baku-based political analyst, tells RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service. "Russia will try to persuade Azerbaijan with promises or solving some problems. But I believe Azerbaijan will never fall under Russia's sole influence."

#### Open Sore

One of the problems Baku may be looking to Moscow to address is Azerbaijan's chronic dispute with neighboring Armenia. The two sides remain locked in a historical standoff over Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian-majority enclave located within Azerbaijani borders.

Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a brutal six-year war over the territory that ended only with a cease-fire in 1994. But Nagorno-Karabakh's final status remains unresolved, and the situation in and around the enclave remains volatile.

A day ahead of Medvedev's arrival, Azerbaijan announced a skirmish on the enclave's heavily guarded border had left three Armenian and two Azerbaijani soldiers dead. A similar clash took place in June, just days after Medvedev hosted peace talks between Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart, Serzh Sarkisian, in St. Petersburg.

Few observers in the conspiracy-prone region see the timing of the attacks as a mere coincidence. (In addition to Medvedev's visit, today also marks Nagorno-Karabakh

independence day, with a number of top Armenian politicians traveling to the enclave's capital, Stepanakert, for celebrations.)

Vafa Guluzadeh, a former presidential adviser on Azerbaijani foreign policy, says he believes Russia's Defense Ministry may have helped orchestrate the fighting in order to weaken Azerbaijani resolve during Medvedev's visit.

"They're orchestrating all the fighting on the cease-fire line. Maybe [the latest clash], coming just before Medvedev's visit to Azerbaijan, is a way of putting political or military pressure on the Azerbaijani side to be more flexible. Maybe it's a hint. [Russia] wants to say, 'We're able to continue our aggression. We're able to continue our occupation of Azerbaijani territory.'" Guluzadeh says. "They are the masters of all the warlords in the Armenian Army. That's why everything that's happening on the cease-fire line is the responsibility of the Russian Federation and its leadership."

#### Russia's Role

Russia has a long-standing regional allegiance with Armenia, and Medvedev's trip to Baku comes just two weeks after he and Sarkisian signed a deal extending Moscow's military presence in Armenia and pledging to ensure Armenian security.

That deal raised hackles in Azerbaijan, which has periodically threatened to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh impasse by force. Officials in Baku suggested with the treaty, Moscow was handing an unfair advantage to Armenia in a dispute where the Kremlin has sought to portray itself as a fair broker.

Russia has dismissed the notion that the renewed lease in any way changes the equation on Nagorno-Karabakh. (It also denies reports it is selling a powerful anti-aircraft system to Azerbaijan.)

In fact, Moscow isn't holding all the cards as Aliyev and Medvedev gather for talks. Russia's lease on Azerbaijan's Qabala radar station, which covers all of Iran and most of the Middle East, is set to expire in 2012.

Elkhan Shahinoglu, the head of the Atlas Research Center, a Baku-based think tank, says it shouldn't be assumed the lease will be renewed.

"The Russian president signing the military agreement with Armenia changed the situation in the region," Shahinoglu says. "For example, we should think twice before extending the lease on the Qabala radar station -- should we do it after this anti-Azerbaijani pact or not?"

#### Hydrocarbon Clout

Azerbaijan's vast oil and gas reserves also give it considerable leverage in its dealings with Russia. Moscow is eager to cement its monopoly of supply lines to the West, and has sought to thwart European-backed projects like Nabucco, which is designed to circumvent Russian territory and rely on non-Russian suppliers -- including Azerbaijan.

Medvedev, during a trip to Baku last year, signed a deal that gave the Russian energy giant Gazprom first rights to Azerbaijani gas, and the Kremlin says an additional protocol to the deal will be signed during the Russian leader's current visit.

Shahinoglu concedes that Azerbaijan has been willing to play into the Kremlin's hands on certain energy and political matters. Baku -- unlike another South Caucasus neighbor, Georgia -- has never given Moscow cause for alarm by expressing serious interest in Western integration.

But at the same time, Azerbaijan's oil wealth gives it a degree of independence that neither Georgia nor Armenia can match. To date, Baku has maintained a skillful balance between Russia, its traditional ally Turkey, and newer allies in the West.

But Shahinoglu says Azerbaijan has too frequently given Moscow what it wanted -- something that should change if Russia continues to favor Armenia in its relations with the South Caucasus.

"Azerbaijan hasn't favored the Nabucco project because of Russia. Azerbaijan has never openly expressed its NATO aspirations because of Russia. Officials have always said the country is not striving for EU or NATO membership," Shahinoglu says. "I think this policy needs to be changed. Because if Russia openly supports Armenia militarily and politically, we need to reconsider our options."

written by Daisy Sindelar based on RFE/RL and agency reports.

- Azerbaijan Claims Five Killed In Clash On Nagorno-Karabakh Border

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry has announced that three Armenian and two Azerbaijani soldiers have been killed in clashes near the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. In a statement issued on September 1, the ministry blamed Yerevan for the incident, saying Armenian troops had crossed the line of control separating northern Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan proper and "tried to attack Azerbaijani forces."

Karabakh authorities, in turn, blamed the attack on Azerbaijani "special forces." Armenian media reported that only one Armenian soldier had been wounded in the assault.

RFE/RL's Armenian Service quoted Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian as saying Azerbaijani accounts of the incident were false. "Azerbaijan has again shown its face [by launching the attack], but when we responded, they fled and suffered losses in the process," he said. The clash is the latest outbreak of violence between Azerbaijani and Armenian troops in the long-standing dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian-majority enclave located inside Azerbaijani territory.

Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a six-year war over the territory that ended with an uneasy cease-fire in 1994. But its final status has never been resolved and frequent skirmishes are reported between Armenian and Azerbaijani troops. The reported clash comes just ahead of a scheduled visit to Azerbaijan by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on September 2-3.

An agreement on demarcating the Russian-Azerbaijani border is expected to be at the center of Medvedev's trip. But the Russian president is also likely to discuss Nagorno-Karabakh, an issue where Moscow has sought increasing influence as a mediator. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart, Serzh Sarkisian, met for bilateral talks on Nagorno-Karabakh hosted by Medvedev in June in the Russian city of St. Petersburg.

A day later, five soldiers -- four Armenian and one Azerbaijani -- were killed in a skirmish near the Karabakh border. Aliyev later declared the Azerbaijani soldier, Mubariz Ibrahimov, a "national hero." Cesur Sumerinli, the chief editor of the Azerbaijani military-analysis website mil.az, told RFE/RL that tension between Azerbaijan and Armenia has been increasing since the leaders of the two countries met in St. Petersburg in June.

"This latest violation could be connected to Medvedev's forthcoming visit. But it could also have nothing to do with it," Sumerinli said. "Generally, however, the cease-fire is

being violated more and more frequently. It could result in the resumption of local [military] operations in the near future."

Medvedev's trip to Baku comes two weeks after the Russian leader visited Yerevan, where he and Sarkisian signed a deal committing Moscow to guaranteeing Armenian security on its territory. Armenian officials welcomed the deal as a pledge of Russian support should tensions over Nagorno-Karabakh escalate into full-fledged war.

Aliyev has used Azerbaijan's massive energy wealth to steadily build up his country's military and has frequently threatened to resolve the territorial conflict by force.

It is unclear, however, whether the Yerevan deal would obligate Russia to intervene in an armed conflict involving Nagorno-Karabakh, which is located outside Armenia and within Azerbaijan's borders.

Casting further doubts on the Kremlin's loyalties in the region are rumors that Moscow recently sold anti-aircraft missiles to Azerbaijan. Russian officials have dismissed the reports, saying Moscow does not sell arms to unstable regions.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

### **Social Front**

#### **Kazakhstan**

#### **Political Front**

- **Kazakh Opposition Parties Want Referendum On Impeaching President**

ALMATY, Kazakhstan -- Kazakhstan's Algha (Forward) and Communist parties have discussed their joint efforts to hold a national referendum on impeaching President Nursultan Nazarbaev, RFE/RL's Kazakh Service reports.

Algha leader Vladimir Kozlov and Qadyr Qoshqarov, chairman of the Kazakh Communist Party's Almaty city committee, said on September 2 that the two parties plan to gather on September 25 to discuss how to organize the referendum. Kozlov said the idea of holding such a referendum came after the Kazakh Constitution was amended earlier this year to designate Nazarbaev the "leader of the nation." He said Nazarbaev, 70, should step down because of his age and because he is responsible for the bad situation faced by millions of pensioners.

Kozlov added that according to the new constitutional amendments, any offense against Nazarbaev, any move or deed deemed to damage his personal honor and dignity, as well as any attempt to impede his activities, was considered a crime. Taking that into account, Kozlov said that on July 28 he sent a query to the Prosecutor-General's Office and the president's office asking them if the rally planned for September 25 qualifies as an offense against Nazarbaev's honor or dignity. Kozlov said he had not received a response. The Prosecutor-General's Office insists it mailed a reply to Kozlov's query on August 3.

Kozlov said the Prosecutor-General's Office found itself in a difficult situation because if it officially issues a document confirming that such a gathering is not an insult to the Kazakhstan's leader, then the Communist Party and Algha will have a written mandate protecting them from any possible lawsuits after publicly discussing Nazarbaev's impeachment. But Kozlov said if the Prosecutor-General's Office officially issued a letter saying that such a gathering could be considered an insult to the president's honor, then the office would tacitly concede that the constitution was "raped" when it was amended to designate Nazarbaev "untouchable."

Ualikhan Qalizhan, a member of the pro-presidential Nur-Otan party, told RFE/RL that since Algha is unregistered it cannot position itself as a political party or "discuss or comment" on the idea of holding a referendum on impeaching Nazarbaev.

Alikhan Baimenov, the leader of the pro-government Ak-Zhol (Bright Path) party, told RFE/RL that "real" political parties should engage in concrete programs supported by the majority of the population.

Bolat Abilov, co-chairman of the opposition Azat (Free) Social Democratic Party, told RFE/RL that in the current political circumstances it is impossible to hold such a referendum. He noted that his party's attempts to hold referendums on other issues were blocked by the authorities.

### **Geo strategic Front**

- U.S. will unveil names of its representatives at OSCE summit in Astana after its agenda is ready – ambassador

Almaty. August 27. Interfax-Kazakhstan – The U.S. will announce the names of its delegates to the OSCE summit Astana after the agenda of the summit is officially approved. The U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan Richard Hoagland told a Friday press conference in Almaty that they would be waiting till the agency was ready and would announce later who would be in the U.S. delegation at the summit.

As reported, the OSCE summit is going to be held in Astana on December 1-2.

- NATO wants to see Kazakh peacekeepers in Afghanistan

Ili Military Ground (The Almaty Region). August 27. Interfax-Kazakhstan NATO is keen on Kazbrig's (Kazakhstan's peacekeeping unit) participation in operations in Afghanistan.

Kazbrig troops have already demonstrated their readiness to serve alongside the Americans in Iraq, and soon there will be new challenges and opportunities to contribute to NATO's operations in Afghanistan. Your contribution will bring stability to the region and the whole world, said NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Causasus and Central Asia Robert Simmons at the closing ceremony of the Steppe Eagle-2010 peacekeeping drills at the Ili Military Ground (the Almaty region) on Friday.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Kazakhstan to double export duty in 2010

(SRI) - Kazakhstan plans to double its crude oil export duty to \$40 per tonne starting in January, wire services reported on Monday citing government sources.

The government is reportedly scheduled to discuss the tax at its regular meeting on Tuesday. The tax could raise up to KZT421 billion (\$2.9 billion) for Kazakhstan in 2010, a government source told Bloomberg.

Kazakhstan has reintroduced an export duty on crude oil and petroleum products this month, extending it to Western-led consortia developing the Tengiz and Karachaganak oil and gas fields. The export duty, which had been abolished during the global financial crisis, is currently set at \$20 per ton of crude oil, \$99.71 per ton of light oil products, and \$66.47 per ton of dark oil products.

Some analysts dubbed the move as resource nationalism, comparing the efforts by Russia and other resource-rich nations to become more assertive with foreign investors at a time of a high oil price cycle.

Karachaganak Petroleum Operating, developing the Karachaganak gas condensate field, and Tengizchevroil, the operator of the Tengiz oil field, believe that they should not be liable for Kazakhstan's planned export duty, as their contracts guarantee tax stability.

### **Social Front**

- **Kazakh Rights Defender Jailed**

A prominent human rights defender who has drawn attention to problems in Kazakhstan's prisons has been found guilty of hooliganism and sentenced to 10 days in jail, RFE/RL's Kazakh Service reports.

Vadim Kuramshin was sentenced on August 29 by a court in Kokshetau in northern Kazakhstan for verbally insulting a man identified as Denis Sitsko.

Viktor Novikov, a leading member of the unregistered Algha (Forward) Party's branch in Kokshetau, told RFE/RL that the prosecutor first tried to charge Kuramshin with beating Sitsko but failed to provide any evidence to substantiate that charge. Kuramshin was, however, found guilty of insulting Sitsko. According to Novikov, Kuramshin was taken to a jail in Kokshetau immediately after the verdict was pronounced. On August 28, Kuramshin called RFE/RL and said that an unknown man had attacked him at a bus station in the city. He said he feared for his safety and freedom.

A prominent Kazakh rights activist and former prisoner, Kuramshin has for several months focused on the human rights situation in Kazakhstan's prisons. His colleagues say his sentencing is politically motivated.

In the last several weeks, numerous prisoners at several Kazakh prisons have self-mutilated themselves to protest poor conditions and alleged beatings and other abuse by prison guards. Kuramshin has served as a liaison between the inmates, their relatives, and the media.

### **Kyrgyzstan**

#### **Political Front**

- **Suspect In Kyrgyz Policeman's Killing Arrested In Kazakhstan**

BISHKEK -- A man suspected of involvement in the killing of a Kyrgyz police colonel in southern Kyrgyzstan in June has been arrested in Kazakhstan, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Kyrgyz Interior Ministry spokesman Bakyt Seyitov said today that the operation and arrest of the suspect was conducted with the assistance of Kazakh security forces in the suburbs of Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city. The man is accused of involvement in the killing of Adylbek Sultanov, the chief of the Kara-Suu district police department, and his driver in the ethnic Uzbek village of Nariman, Osh Oblast, during deadly clashes between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in mid-June.

Five suspects in the killings were previously arrested. An investigation is being conducted.

- **Governors of Osh and Naryn provinces appointed in Kyrgyzstan**

Governors of Osh and Naryn provinces have been appointed in Kyrgyzstan.

Relevant personnel decrees were signed by President of transition period Roza Otunbayeva today, on September 3, 2010.

Sooronbai Jeenbekov has been appointed as a head of the state administration – a governor of Osh province. Turdubek Mambetov has been appointed as a governor of Naryn province.

- Four political parties submitted documents for registration in parliament elections in Kyrgyzstan

As of today, four political parties submitted documents for registration in parliament elections in Kyrgyzstan. The statement was voiced by the chairman of the Central Election Commission on Election and Referendum Akylbek Sariev.

He said that 30th of August is a closing date for registration of political parties that are going to take part in the parliament elections. “Up to 10th September we will adopt a decision what political parties will take part in the elections. According to the Election Code, the preliminary list of parties should contain at most 70 per cent of representatives of the same sex. Political organizations should take into account ethnic proportionality, which accounts for 17 per cent, also the list should include representatives of the youth, said Akylbek Sariev.

He stated that there would not be restrictions to the number of political organizations in the ballot. “Who wants to go to the end – will be included in a voting paper. If 30 parties will be registered, so there will be 30 participants. However, it is voters to decide how many parties will seat in the parliament,” said Akylbek Sariev.

The CEC Chairman added that until 2 September the Central Election Commission will announce precise number of parties to participate in the electoral race. He noticed that the candidates from the parties, who has opened criminal case, can not get a mandate until the case is closed. “Meanwhile, they are not prohibited to participate in the election campaign. In addition, many of them stay outside the republic and are unlikely to return back before the elections. A campaign will be held by their party colleagues,” Akylbek Sariev concluded.

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Herbert Salber: Kyrgyzstan intends to deploy OSCE Police after parliamentary elections

“Kyrgyzstan intends to deploy police officers of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in its territory after the parliamentary elections,” Ambassador Herbert Salber, director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre, said today during a briefing in Vienna (Austria) on radio Azattyk.

According to him, representatives of Kyrgyzstan today called time to discuss contentious issues and the deployment of the OSCE Police Advisory Group - after the parliamentary elections scheduled for October 10.

“I am confident that we can resolve the remaining details. We must discuss all aspects to find out what we can do to accelerate the deployment of the OSCE police,” Herbert Salber said.

He also announced his intention to visit Bishkek and to hold another round of talks with the Kyrgyz authorities.

- Russia urges all OSCE countries to refrain from any pressure on Kyrgyzstan

Russia urges all OSCE countries to refrain from any pressure on Kyrgyzstan, in particular in the promotion of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This was stated by the permanent representative to the OSCE Anvar Azimov at the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Organization.

“We believe that the OSCE as a whole and the countries - participants individually should act solely in the interest of the people of Kyrgyzstan, and not from anyone's ambitions,” said Anvar Azimov.

According to him, Kyrgyzstan stands the day before the parliamentary elections. “In challenging political situation it is important to exercise maximum balanced and cautious approach to avoid the discredit of the healthy political forces of the country, who for the sake of preventing a possible collapse of the state could have assumed responsibility to seek assistance from the international community,” said Russian permanent representative. Now we call to act on the principle “do no harm”.

Russia believes, he emphasized, that self-active actions of the leadership of Kyrgyzstan aimed on internal political and economic stability as well as commitment of the Kyrgyz people to the democratic values, “should prevail over external assistance”.

- EU Special Representative for Central Asia discussed situation in Kyrgyzstan with Russian official

The European Union's Special Representative for Central Asia Pierre Morel discussed with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Grigory Karasin situation in Kyrgyzstan. This was reported by foreign news sources with reference to the Department of Press and Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

Diplomats, as noted, discussed the situation in the Kyrgyz Republic in a telephone conversation, on the initiative of Pierre Morel.

The parties discussed the situation in Kyrgyzstan in general and the plans of international organizations to stabilize the situation in the country in particular. Also, the sides discussed problems that have arisen in connection with the deployment of the OSCE Police Advisory Group and the International Independent Commission on investigation of June events.

- Kyrgyz, Uzbek Talks On Release Of Kyrgyz Officers Unsuccessful

BATKEN, Kyrgyzstan -- Talks between Kyrgyz and Uzbek border officials on the possible release of two Kyrgyz border guard officers have ended without success, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

The two Kyrgyz colonels were detained by Uzbek border guards on August 31 near the southern Kyrgyz village of Pulgon in the Kadamjay district, which borders Uzbekistan.

Telephone discussions on their possible release ended unsuccessfully on September 1.

Nurlan Kerimkanov, a commander at Kyrgyzstan's southern Aydarken checkpoint on the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border, told RFE/RL that Kyrgyz border guard service head Zakir Tilenov also held a special meeting today in Batken with Kyrgyz border guard officials to discuss the situation.

Tashtemir Eshaliev, chief of the Batken region's Defense and Security Department, told RFE/RL the two officers were detained when they went to a checkpoint to resolve problems that arose after Uzbekistan closed all of its border crossings with Kyrgyzstan for three days in connection with Uzbekistan's Independence Day celebrations on September 1.

Kerimkanov told RFE/RL that the two officers were taken to a jail in the Uzbek city of Ferghana.

Uzbek authorities in a statement said the two were detained after illegally crossing the border while being drunk and disorderly. Kerimkanov told RFE/RL that statement is false.

- **Official: Kyrgyzstan Still In Talks Over OSCE Police**

Some protests against the OSCE mission have been based on fears of internationally enforced separatism.

**BISHKEK** -- A government spokesman says Kyrgyzstan is still in talks about the deployment of an international police mission agreed in the wake of deadly ethnic clashes earlier this year.

Kyrgyzstan and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) agreed on the deployment of a 52-member unarmed "police advisory group" following the June clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks that left hundreds dead and made thousands homeless.

But presidential spokesman Avlanbek Jumabaev told RFE/RL that a memorandum on the deployment would be signed "only when the nation's interests are fully taken into account." "The memorandum should have been signed by the end of August. However, consultative talks have not finished yet," Jumabaev said.

"Most importantly, Kyrgyzstan has not been satisfied with the draft [memorandum] prepared by the OSCE's secretariat," he added. There have been several protests in recent weeks over the deployment of the OSCE mission.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

- **Kyrgyzstan Launches New Hydroelectric Power Plant**

Kyrgyzstan has launched a \$200 million hydroelectric power plant, its first since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva attended a ceremony marking the launch of the Karambata-2 project's first unit. The Karambata-2 project, partly funded by Russia, will allow Kyrgyzstan to generate more electricity but could divert water from its neighbors. Uzbekistan, in particular, relies on rivers that originate or pass through Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to irrigate its cotton fields and farmland.

Uzbekistan has opposed plans for large hydroelectric projects in both countries.

- **In 2011 GDP per capita to make up \$980 in Kyrgyzstan**

In 2011 GDP per capita will make up \$980 in Kyrgyzstan, or 45.7 thousand soms. Such data were given in a medium-term forecast of socio-economic development of the republic for 2010-2013, prepared by the Ministry of Economic Regulation of Kyrgyzstan. As noted, in 2013 GDP per each citizen of Kyrgyzstan will make up \$1,281. At the same time, poverty level in 2011 is forecasted at 29 percent, and unemployment – at 8.5 percent. Analysts forecast that the same year money incomes of the population will make up on average 169.796 billion soms.

According to the forecast, average monthly salary in the republic in 2011 will make up 8,120 soms at the cost of living at 4,290 soms.

Note of 24.kg news agency: These data have been formed by the Ministry of Economic Regulation of Kyrgyzstan following the results of the first half of 2010.

- **Kyrgyzstan's rate of economic growth exceeds average rate for CIS in 2010**

The rate of economic development of Kyrgyzstan is higher than the average among CIS. This was reported by the Interstate Statistic Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States for the first six months of 2010.

Kyrgyzstan has 5 per cent of economic growth that is higher than those in Russia (2.9 per cent), Azerbaijan (3.7), Moldova (4.7) and Ukraine (4.9). However, they are lower than those of neighbors in the region. In Kazakhstan, for comparison, GDP grew by 8.3 percent, in Uzbekistan - by 8 per cent, in Tajikistan - by 7.4, in Turkmenistan – by 6.1.

The average GDP for the countries of the Commonwealth has increased by 3.5 per cent over the same period in 2009.

### **Social Front**

- **New School Year Brings Anxiety In South Kyrgyzstan**

Almaz, a 13-year-old boy in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh, couldn't wait to see his classmates. His parents, however, were among many in the area who aren't sure their child would be there when schools reopened on September 1.

"They say we should wait a month and see if other students go," Almaz says. "I miss my classmates. We used to play together."

The new school year is supposed to bring anxiety and trepidation for young students. But with wounds still raw from ethnic violence in June that killed hundreds and displaced hundreds of thousands, whole families' emotions are running high.

"I have 21 friends -- both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz," Almaz says. "I call my friends asking if they are planning to go to school. They say that they don't know."

Some have left for Russia, he says. One is in Kyzyl-Kiya, in nearby Batken Province, and will study there. Another "will stay in a village" for his schooling.

"All students are quite afraid of going to school now," Almaz adds.

Osh, like the rest of the south, is calm on the surface. There have been no recent interethnic clashes or shoot-outs like those seen in Osh and Jalal-Abad provinces in June. But the ethnic strife is still fresh in the minds of residents of southern Kyrgyzstan, where violence left nearly 400 people dead and forced 400,000 -- mainly ethnic Uzbeks -- to flee their homes.

Pictures drawn by ethnic Uzbek children in Osh in July There is still a lack of trust among ethnic communities. Reports of arbitrary arrests and kidnappings following the unrest were seen as undermining reconciliation. The situation has led many families to move elsewhere in Kyrgyzstan, or to other countries such as Russia.

The mayor of Osh, Melis Myrzakhmatov, has made no secret of his differences with Bishkek. He argued that the first day of school should have been delayed until security had improved.

Myrzakhmatov recently called for the government to provide 500 or so additional police officers to boost security at Osh's schools. The mayor warned that without such a move, the country risked a tragedy similar to the 2004 crisis in Russia, in which more than 1,000 people were taken hostage on the first day of school in Beslan, North Ossetia, and more than 300 died in the course of three days.

### **Security Measures**

Education Ministry officials have announced that in some Osh districts, schools will be provided with round-the-clock security protection.

In Jalal-Abad Province, Deputy Governor Kadyrbek Jakypov has announced similar 24-hour measures and said that special alarms have been installed in local schools. Everywhere in southern Kyrgyzstan, special security teams are being set up to protect students and school buildings, and the Education Ministry has called on parents to cooperate in establishing "security corridors" for students going to and from school. Education authorities in the south insisted that all necessary measures were in place. An official "Welcome to School!" campaign is aimed at ensuring uninterrupted education for children and restoring public confidence in the government's ability to provide security.

A new busing system has also been set up in southern provinces to get students to school and back. Authorities are calling on parents to personally escort their children to and from the buses -- at least in the first two weeks of September -- until it becomes routine for students. Abduvali Baltabaev, the head of education in Osh Province, said recently that security is a top priority for authorities.

"Our schools are ready," he says. "We are trying to address the question of security, asking for the allocation of three to four policemen for every school and two policemen for every kindergarten."

"Besides, we are requesting 35 buses for 10 routes that would carry children to schools," he vowed in late August. "This issue will be resolved by September 1." At universities in southern Kyrgyzstan, the academic year has already been postponed until mid-October, with students asked to join special security teams to protect schoolchildren.

Osh authorities say all but one of the city's 57 schools were completely renovated over the summer.

But Hamza Uzbek school -- one of two in the province that were burned to the ground -- remains closed, and its some 500 students are expected to attend other nearby schools. About 1,000 pupils will be in makeshift tent classrooms, officials say.

The city's education system is a linguistic amalgam. There are 14 Kyrgyz-language, 22 Uzbek-language, and nine Russian-language schools. The other 12 are "mixed" schools, including Kyrgyz and Uzbek students, among others. Authorities have invited parents, especially from mixed schools, to join the security teams.

International organizations like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have been assisting Kyrgyzstan in its effort to rebuild its education system in southern regions.

#### Broader Fears

Osh education authorities said they expected a majority of the province's more than 226,000 students to turn up at schools on September 1.

Many parents, however, remained undecided. Mamlakat Patidonova, like many in Osh, is struggling to rebuild upon returning to the city and is at pains to make ends meet. She says she and many fellow ethnic Uzbeks would not send their children back to school even if they were confident in the security situation.

"I won't send my children to school, and the main reason for that is financial," Patidinova says. "Our house was burned down. We are not in a position to buy clothes and other supplies for children."

The situation has led to long-term fears.

Gulnoza Karimova, an Uzbek mother, echoes the sentiments of many parents from her Osh neighborhood. She says she fears the lack of money and security will postpone her children's education, and they will never catch up.

## **Tajikistan**

### **Political Front**

- **Suicide Car Bomber Hits Tajik Police Station**

KHUYAND, Tajikistan -- Officials in Tajikistan say two suicide bombers in an explosives-packed car slammed into a police station in the northern city of Khujand, killing two police officers and wounding some 25 others.

It would appear to be the first suicide bombing in the Central Asian country.

Reports said the toll could rise as investigators continued to search the rubble of the building for the bodies of missing officers.

Interior Ministry officials blamed the attack on elements with ties to the banned Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), whose leadership purportedly has links to Al-Qaeda.

Interior Ministry spokesman Muhammadjon Nazriev told RFE/RL's Tajik Service that the vehicle was driven at high speed "into the gated compound of the Sughd regional police organized-crime division -- as the gate was closing after two police cars entered the complex -- and the car exploded."

He said a senior police lieutenant died in hospital as a result of injuries from the blast, and another police officer who tried to stop the car was likely to be the other victim.

Nazriev said the powerful explosion partially destroyed the police compound and that it also damaged several surrounding buildings, including a nearby hospital. RFE/RL correspondents in Khujand said the area was cordoned off and that law enforcement agencies were not allowing reporters near the compound.

They said police officers briefly detained local reporters who were taking photos, and confiscated their photo and video equipment.

### **Islamic Movement Blamed**

The IMU found sanctuary in Tajikistan during the country's 1992-97 civil war as its leaders had close ties with the country's former Islamic opposition fighters. In recent years, Tajik officials have blamed the IMU for a number of attacks in the country. They say the banned group was involved in the killings of several police officers in the northern town of Isfara in 2008 and 2009. Authorities have also held the IMU responsible for the 2006 attack on Kairokum detention center, when attackers killed the head of the prison and set free two suspected members of the Islamic group being held there.

Today's incident comes two weeks after some 25 prisoners, including some with ties to the IMU, staged a dramatic jailbreak in Dushanbe. A special commission led by Security Council chief Amirqul Azimov has been set up to investigate the Khujand attack, and Azimov himself has been sent to Khujand to oversee the probe.

Khujand is the second-largest city in Tajikistan and the administrative center of Sughd province. The city is located some 350 kilometers north of the capital, Dushanbe.

written by Farangis Najibullah in Prague, based on reporting by RFE/RL's Tajik Service correspondents Kamar Ahror and Ma'sum Muhammad Rajab from Khujand and additional wire reporting.

- **Top Tajik Security Chiefs Dismissed Following Prison Break**

Tajikistan's top security chief has been dismissed along with his three deputies, days after 25 inmates broke out of a security agency prison in Dushanbe.

Khairiddin Abdurahimov, head of the State Committee for National Security, the successor agency to the KGB, was replaced by former career diplomat Saymumin Yatimov.

Abdurahimov had led the country's security services since 1999. Yatimov has served as Tajikistan's ambassador to the European Union in Brussels. He had previously worked as deputy intelligence minister for five years.

The dismissals came in a decree by President Emomali Rahmon. The move is widely seen as linked to the August 22 prison break by high-profile convicts serving long jail sentences on serious charges such as plotting to overthrow the government, terrorism, and drug trafficking.

The men killed five prison guards before escaping along with the guards' weapons.

Most of them remain at large, but authorities said today they had recaptured one escapee, during an operation by law enforcement forces in the village of Chutqaisha, near Dushanbe.

Ibrohim Nasriddinov He is Ibrohim Nasriddinov, who was extradited to Tajikistan three years ago from the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay. Interior Ministry spokesman Muhammadjon Nazriev told RFE/RL that Nasriddinov was captured with a "pistol and a grenade." According to Nazriev, some 200 law enforcement troops dispatched to Chutqaisha were searching all houses in the village, as the authorities believe one more escapee is hiding there.

Ziyoev Connection

Other fugitives include relatives of Mirzo Ziyoev a slain former Islamic opposition commander, who eventually joined the government to become emergency situations minister. The former warlord with ties to the banned Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan was killed in mysterious circumstances last year in the former stronghold of opposition fighters in the eastern Tavildara region.

Following Ziyoev's death, some of his family members, including his two sons, uncle, and brother, were arrested and sentenced to long prison terms. Like many other escaped prisoners, Ziyoev's relatives were arrested in Tavildara.

According to the official list of escaped prisoners, Ziyoev's uncle and brother were among the fugitives.

The State Committee for National Security came under fire after the prison break, which took place just meters away from President Rahmon's house in downtown Dushanbe.

Justice Ministry prisons division spokeswoman Parvina Alizoda told RFE/RL this week that many questions about the escape remained unanswered, including why only three guards were on duty that night to supervise 90 prisoners.

Alizoda also noted other apparent lapses of security. On the night of the prison break, she said, the guards had performed the Taroveh Ramadan night prayer together in a prison corridor -- and Nasriddinov had access to cell keys and did not sleep with the other inmates.

The State Committee of National Security prison is located within Prison No. 1, which is under the jurisdiction of the Justice Ministry.

Security officials have not commented on the situation surrounding the prison break, saying disclosing details would hamper the ongoing search operation.

- Tajik police suspect IMU of masterminding blast in Khujand

DUSHANBE, October 3, 2010, Asia-Plus -- According to the preliminary data, today's blast in Khujand has been committed by supporters of those suspected of having killed Homidjon Karimov, former bazaar director in Isfara district.

An official statement released by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) says the blast occurred at around 8:00 am, when two cars of the Sughd regional body empowered to combat organized crime were entering the body's territory after the investigatory experiment. "Suddenly, a sedan Volga entered the territory at high speed and ran into one of the cars and blew up," the statement said.

According to Tajik law enforcement authorities, the terrorist act was aimed at impeding investigation into murder of Homidjon Karimov, who was closely connected with criminal circles.

Five persons have been arrested on suspicion of having been involved in killing of Homidjon Karimov and their supporters tried to arrange a crush-out for them or to impede the investigation, the statement said, noting that persons involved in the blast probably have contacts with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

We will recall that former bazaar director Homidjon Karimov was shot to death on August 30. According to unofficial sources, Homidjon Karimov, who was serving the remainder of his sentence in the open-prison settlement, visited his uncle in the Surkh Jamoat on August 30 for iftor (the evening meal when Muslims break their fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan).

When Karimov was leaving his uncle's house, a car came up to the house and unidentified gunmen shot Karimov to death from assault rifle Kalashnikov and Makarov pistol. Isfara law enforcement authorities say Homidboy Karimov was member of one of criminal groupings that brutally beaten a local resident in May 2006. Five confederates of Karimov were sentenced to prison terms of between 9 and 13 years that time, while Karimov himself managed to flee. He was later detained and sentenced to nine years in prison.

### **Geo strategic Front**

- President Rahmon receiving visiting NATO's special envoy today

DUSHANBE, August 31, 2010, Asia-Plus -- President Emomali Rahmon is receiving visiting NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, Mr. Robert Simmons, today afternoon.

According to presidential press service, the sides are expected to discuss issues related to providing regional security and the situation in the Central Asian region and Afghanistan. The source added that it could not be ruled out that the sides would also discuss cooperation between Tajikistan and the North Atlantic Alliance in combating terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking.

- Tajikistan to attend SCO anti-terror drill in Kazakhstan

DUSHANBE, August 30, Asia-Plus 2010, Asia-Plus -- A special company-strong subunit of Tajikistan's Ministry of Defense (MoD) that is part of mobile subunits of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) will represent Tajikistan in a multinational anti-terror drill that will take place in Kazakhstan from September 9 to 25 under of the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Asia-Plus has learned from the source at a MoD.

The SCO command-and-staff drill, dubbed Peace Mission 2010, aims to demonstrate SCO member nations' determination and capacity to combat terrorism and extremism, showcase their mutual trust and cooperation, and the shared wish to protect regional peace and stability, the source said.

According to him, Tajik Defense Minister Sherali Khairulloyev is also expected to attend the drill that will involve more than 5,000 troops from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.

In the meantime, China's Xinhua reported on August 26 that the drill will be the seventh of its kind. The chiefs of staff of the armed forces of the participating countries will announce the launch of the drill in Almaty in Kazakhstan, and defense ministers from the SCO member countries will observe the military exercises.

The drill was staged in accordance with the Charter of the SCO and the SCO's fundamental purpose to maintain and strengthen regional peace, security and stability, Wang Haiyun, senior advisor of the China Institute for International Strategic Studies, told Xinhua Thursday. It was also planned in consideration of an increasingly complicated security situation in the regions around the SCO members, Wang said.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization groups China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

### **Social Front**

- Tajik Parents Punished For Children's Truancy

QURGHONTEPPA, Tajikistan -- A court in the town of Qurghonteppa in southern Tajikistan has for the first time passed sentence on parents whose children failed for months to attend school, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

Judge Rustam Nazarov told RFE/RL that the court imposed fines on August 31 of 3,500 somonis (\$800) on the parents of four children who missed school from September 2009 until April 2010.

Nazarov said that the constitution obliges parents to enable their children to attend school and that all children between the ages of seven and 16 must do so.

One of the fathers who was fined told RFE/RL that he cannot understand why he is being punished for being unemployed and not in a position to buy his child clothes and shoes. He said if he had money he would buy those things and send his child to school.

Local prosecutor's office representative Mahmadsaid Nasimov said that most claims by parents that poverty prevents them from sending their children to school are baseless.

He added that as soon as an investigation was started into absenteeism, many parents immediately sent their children back to school.

Ismon Juraev, the chief inspector at the Qurghonteppa administration education department, said that during the last school year they discovered 44 children who missed school. Following joint intervention by the education department and the prosecutor's office, the number fell to six or seven.

Juraev said that this year, the provincial administration together with international humanitarian organizations and local businessmen launched a special charity project for children from poor families. They are provided with school uniforms and other necessities.

## **Turkmenistan**

### **Political Front**

- Mejlis of Turkmenistan and U.S. Congress to develop cooperation

The U.S. congressman and member of the foreign affairs committee, Brent Woolfork discussed issues of further strengthening the Turkmen-American inter-parliamentary relations with the Majlis members. He arrived in Ashgabat on a working visit.

As the Turkmenistan.ru correspondent reports of, the U.S. congressman also held talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources of Turkmenistan.

Today, as part of the visit, Woolfork' will also familiarize himself with the activities of the learning Internet center at the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan , and will visit the main National Museum of the country.

### **Geo strategic Front**

- Ukrainian delegation holds talks in Ashgabat

The Ukrainian delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Maiko paid a working visit to Ashgabat. The delegation held several meetings with the government of Turkmenistan, as well as the administration of Ashgabat, where they discussed issues of Turkmen-Ukrainian cooperation in transport and communications and urban planning.

As the Turkmenistan.ru correspondent reports from Ashgabat quoting the press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, the delegation of Ukraine also held talks at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan. "During the talks, both sides expressed mutual interest in further intensifying the interstate dialogue, based on long-term, mutually beneficial and equitable basis," the MFA said.

### **Economic/Energy Front**

- Pakistani President notes timeliness of construction of TAPI gas pipeline

"The initiative of the Turkmen side on construction of the transcontinental TAPI gas pipeline is timely and relevant, and it was warmly welcomed by the people and the leadership of Pakistan," President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari said during a telephone conversation with President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

As the Turkmenistan.ru correspondent reports from Ashgabat quoting the press service of the head of state, during the conversation Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov proposed to hold a meeting of relevant ministers in September, and then raise the issue of construction of the gas pipeline at a high level meeting of heads of four states in December this year in Ashgabat to make a relevant decision on this issue.

The President of Pakistan said that he would surely send a minister responsible for realization of the pipeline project to attend the meeting in Ashgabat in September, and that he would be "happy to attend the high-level meeting of heads of states - TAPI project participants in December," the press-service said.

Asif Ali Zardari also expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the President and people of Turkmenistan for providing humanitarian assistance in connection with the natural disaster in Pakistan.

- Turkmenistan to sign agreement on renewable energy under technical cooperation programme

Turkmenistan will sign a financial agreement under the regional programme "Efficient Energy Programme for Central Asia: Renewable Energy Sources - Programme of Energy Efficiency (RES-EE)" as part of the technical cooperation programme with the European Commission.

In accordance with the decree signed by the President of Turkmenistan, an agreement will be signed by the National Coordinator of the EU on the international technical assistance from the Government of Turkmenistan, Minister of Finance of Turkmenistan Annamuhammet Gochye

- Turkmenistan and Afghanistan sign framework agreement on TAPI

Representatives of the Governments of Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan signed a framework agreement on the construction of the Turkmenistan - Afghanistan - Pakistan - India (TAPI) gas pipeline during the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghani commission for trade and economic cooperation in Kabul, August 30.

As the Turkmenistan.ru correspondent reports from Ashgabat with reference to the official report, the document was signed by Minister of Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources of Turkmenistan Bayramgeldy Nedirow and Minister for Mines and Mining of Afghanistan Vahidulla Shahrani.

Members of the Intergovernmental Turkmen-Afghan commission on the Afghan side, headed by Economics Minister Abdul Hadi Argandival, expressed strong interest in building their country's cooperation with Turkmenistan, who is "providing unprecedented assistance for the socio-economic revival of Afghanistan," the report says.

### **Social Front**

- Afghanistan regions received humanitarian aid from Turkmenistan

The Afghan city of Turgundi was the first to receive humanitarian aid from Turkmenistan, who sent a motor caravan with 1 thousand tons of flour to the neighboring country. The humanitarian cargo was met by the leaders of the administration of Herat province, representatives of the public, including the Turkmen community, living compactly in border areas of Afghanistan.

The second transport convoy with humanitarian cargo arrived in the city of Mazar-i-Sharif of Balkh province. The delegation of Turkmenistan was welcomed by Afghan officials at the gates of the city. Representatives of Afghan provinces of Gunduz and Baghlan also arrived in Mazar-i-Sharif to receive their portion of humanitarian cargo.

It is expected that the humanitarian aid will reach Samangan province today. A grand welcome will be accorded to the envoys of Turkmenistan in the administrative center of the province.

- Another Social-Networking Site Banned In Turkmenistan

There's an interesting post on neweurasia.net by Annasoltan about Turkmenistan banning a popular social-networking site, agent.mail.ru.

There's uproar among the youth in Turkmenistan today after the government decided to ban the popular social networking site, agent.mail.ru. Currently, it's inaccessible via both TM Cell and MTS (about whom I've reported before.) The website had eventually experienced a small surge in Turkmen users, especially young men and women who used it to get to know each other.

It's an open secret that one of the main purposes of agent.mail.ru is dating. The site certainly facilitates meeting potential partners: just type in the city, gender, and age in the

search engine, and within only a few seconds, voila! Lovely, smiling faces appear. You can even find young women in bikini shots or Odalisque poses - some as young as 16! Another big advantage is the availability of chat rooms, which are easy even for the less techno-savvy to use, and is cheaper in the long run than mobile phones.

Under President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, Turkmenistan has become the land of gestures. A statue is dismantled. The circus is allowed back in town. Internet for everyone, as long as you can afford the high prices and are in one of the few places that offers it. But substantively, Berdymukhammedov has not really differentiated himself from his more colorful predecessor, Turkmenbashi.

Perhaps the worrying part is here

While the ban has been deplored by its users, it's also been hailed by some older Turkmens (and non-users) as a welcome move. They have legitimate fears about the spread of child pornography and internet addiction. These are real problems, and exactly because the internet does not regulate itself, it's reasonable that government must therefore do the regulation. They also see something else - a threat to traditions.

We're going to see this more and more. Repressive governments using arguments about tradition (culture X isn't compatible with the Internet) or populist crusades against pornography, to justify their Internet crackdowns.

According to Annasoltan's post, while it doesn't look like this ban was overtly because of political reasons, it is following a pattern: Facebook and YouTube have already been banned in Turkmenistan. Even though the site might have just been used for dating, it was a public space the government didn't control -- and they don't like that. Although at least Annasoltan does say that already young Turkmens are turning to other social-networking sites.

### **Uzbekistan Political Front**

#### **Geo strategic Front**

- Kyrgyz-Uzbek Talks Held On Release Of Kyrgyz Border Guards

BATKEN, Kyrgyzstan -- Kyrgyz and Uzbek officials are holding talks on the possible release of two senior Kyrgyz border guards being held in Uzbekistan, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

The two Kyrgyz colonels were detained on August 31 by Uzbek border guards near the southern Kyrgyz village of Pulgon in the Kadamjai district, which borders Uzbekistan.

Batken Oblast administration defense and security department chief Tashtemir Eshaliev told RFE/RL the two officers were detained when they went to a checkpoint to resolve problems that had arisen after Uzbekistan closed its border crossings with Kyrgyzstan.

The border crossings were closed for three days in connection with Uzbekistan's Independence Day celebrations on September 1.

#### **Economic/Energy Front**

#### **Social Front**

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