

Business & Politics in the Muslim World
News Monitoring
Weekly Report
July 3 to July 9, 2010
Central Asia
Uzma Siraj

Table of Contents

Azerbaijan

Political Front.....3
Geo Strategic Front.....3
Economic /Energy Front.....3
Social Front.....3

Kazakastan

Political Front.....3
Geo Strategic Front.....4
Economic /Energy Front.....4
Social Front.....4

Kyrgyzstan

Political Front.....4
Geo Strategic Front.....4
Economic /Energy Front.....5
Social Front.....5

Tajikistan

Political Front.....5
Geo Strategic Front.....5
Economic /Energy Front.....5
Social Front.....6

Turkmenistan

Political Front.....6
Geo Strategic Front.....6
Economic /Energy Front.....6
Social Front.....6

Uzbekistan

Political Front.....6
Geo Strategic Front.....6
Economic /Energy Front.....6
Social Front.....6

Outline

Azerbaijan

Political Front

Geo Strategic Front

- Clinton Urged To Recognize Armenian 'Genocide,' Karabakh Self-Determination

- Clinton Seeks To Restart Talks Between Azerbaijan, Armenia
- Azerbaijan Says No New Karabakh Peace Proposals

Economic /Energy Front

Social Front

- Jailed Azerbaijani Journalist Addresses Court Ahead Of Verdict

Kazakastan

Political Front

- Interview: Bhavna Dave On Kazakhstan's 'Leader Of The Nation'

Geo Strategic Front

- Russian-Kazakh-Belarusian Customs Union Comes Into Effect

Economic /Energy Front

- Russia to lend Kazakhstan \$700 million for power plant
- Kazakhstan, Russia Sign Energy Deals

Social Front

Kyrgyzstan

Political Front

- Kyrgyzstan Names New Interior Minister
- Kyrgyz Leader Warns Of Risk Of Further Violence
- Osh Protesters Want International Oversight Of Kyrgyz Forces
- Rising Nationalism Threatens Kyrgyzstan

Geo Strategic Front

- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan
- Kyrgyz Official Says OSCE Police Mission Would Be Ineffective
- European Parliament To Discuss Situation In Kyrgyzstan

Economic /Energy Front

- Kyrgyz Politician Says Entry Into New Customs Union Needed
- Kyrgyz Officials Put Cost Of Violence At \$71 Million

Social Front

Tajikistan

Political Front

- Tajik Court Reopens Case Against Jehovah's Witnesses
- Slain Tajik Minister's Sons 'Jailed Over Antigovernment Plot'

Geo Strategic Front

- Is Russia Considering Returning To The Afghan Border?
- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan

Economic /Energy Front

- Tajik Air Flights Delayed Over Fuel-Debt Dispute

Social Front

- Tajik World Heritage Nomination Coming Up For Review

Turkmenistan

Political Front

- UN representatives visit Turkmenistan's Central Electoral Commission

- President of Turkmenistan holds field meeting of Security Council

Geo Strategic Front

- European Training Foundation expands cooperation with Turkmenistan

Economic /Energy Front

- Russian Duma ratifies agreement on Mutual Protection of Investments with Turkmenistan

Social Front

- Turkmenistan to publish "Big Turkmen-Russian dictionary" in two volumes

Uzbekistan

Political Front

Geo Strategic Front

Economic /Energy Front

Social Front

Summery

Azerbaijan

Political Front

Geo Strategic Front

- Clinton Urged To Recognize Armenian 'Genocide,' Karabakh Self-Determination

YEREVAN -- A leading Armenian-American group is urging U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to recognize the 1915 mass killings of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey as genocide and end "pressure" on Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict during her upcoming visit to Yerevan, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports.

- Clinton Seeks To Restart Talks Between Azerbaijan, Armenia

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (left) shakes hands with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev during their meeting in Baku today. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has visited Azerbaijan to seek a restart of peace talks over Nagorno-Karabakh, repair frayed bilateral ties, and press the oil-rich Caucasus nation on human rights.

- Azerbaijan Says No New Karabakh Peace Proposals

Presidents Dmitry Medvedev of Russia (center), Serzh Sarkisian of Armenia (right), and Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan meet in St. Petersburg on June 17.

YEREVAN -- Azerbaijan has denied Armenian claims that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev presented his Armenian and Azerbaijani counterparts with a new international plan last month to resolve the conflict over the breakaway Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports.

Economic /Energy Front

Social Front

- Jailed Azerbaijani Journalist Addresses Court Ahead Of Verdict

Imprisoned newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev delivered a three-hour speech in his last hearing before the judges issue a verdict on his drug case, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service reports.

Kazakhstan

Political Front

- Interview: Bhavna Dave On Kazakhstan's 'Leader Of The Nation'

On July 6, Kazakhstan celebrated two important anniversaries -- 12 years since the capital was moved to Astana, and President Nursultan Nazarbaev's 70th birthday.

In an interview with RFE/RL's Kazakh Service, Bhavna Dave, a reader at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, shared her thoughts about political processes in Kazakhstan and its "Leader of the Nation," Nazarbaev.

Geo Strategic Front

- Russian-Kazakh-Belarusian Customs Union Comes Into Effect

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says a customs union joining Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus has come into effect after the presidents of the three countries signed documents today.

Economic /Energy Front

- Russia to lend Kazakhstan \$700 million for power plant

Russia will lend Kazakhstan \$700 million to build the third unit of the Ekibastuz GRES-2 power plant, according to a loan agreement signed on Monday by the countries' presidents on the sidelines of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) session in Astana, RIA Novosti reported.

- Kazakhstan, Russia Sign Energy Deals

Russia and Kazakhstan have signed agreements on cooperation in civilian nuclear power and hydropower projects in the Kazakh capital, Astana.

State companies Rosatom and Kazatomprom signed an agreement on use of an existing uranium-enrichment facility at Novouralsk in Russia rather than construction of a new facility.

Social Front

Kyrgyzstan

Political Front

- Kyrgyzstan Names New Interior Minister

BISHKEK -- Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva has named Kubat Baibolov as the country's new interior minister, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Otunbaeva issued a decree on July 7 naming former opposition politician Baibolov to replace Bolot Sher, who had been acting interior minister since President Kurmanbek Bakiev was ousted in early April. Sher, who is a deputy leader of the Fatherland (Ata-Meken) party, said he had asked to be relieved of his post.

- Kyrgyz Leader Warns Of Risk Of Further Violence

Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva has warned that the risk of further unrest in the Central Asian country remains. Otunbaeva told Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that "at the moment the situation is relatively calm but there may be other outbursts" of violence.

- Osh Protesters Want International Oversight Of Kyrgyz Forces

OSH, Kyrgyzstan -- Some 200 protesters in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh held a protest calling for the "internationalization" of the Kyrgyz army and law enforcement agencies, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- Rising Nationalism Threatens Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- One thing is clear from the testimony of witnesses of the ethnic violence that killed hundreds and possibly thousands of people in Kyrgyzstan last month: most of the victims were from the ethnic Uzbek minority.

Geo Strategic Front

- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz police official says two men detained by Tajik law enforcement officials and returned to Kyrgyzstan are members of terrorist groups, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- Kyrgyz Official Says OSCE Police Mission Would Be Ineffective

BISHKEK -- Acting Kyrgyz Defense Minister Ismail Isakov says the deployment of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) police mission in the southern part of the country would be ineffective, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- European Parliament To Discuss Situation In Kyrgyzstan

Catherine Ashton, the European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, said parliamentarians would consider the recent referendum in Kyrgyzstan that moved the constitution toward a parliamentary, rather than a presidential, system.

Economic /Energy Front

- Kyrgyz Politician Says Entry Into New Customs Union Needed

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz politician says the country's World Trade Organization (WTO) membership would not hinder Kyrgyzstan from joining the Russian- Kazakh-Belarusian customs union, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

- Kyrgyz Officials Put Cost Of Violence At \$71 Million

BISHKEK -- Kyrgyz officials say recent ethnic violence in the south of the country caused some \$71 million worth of damage, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Deputy Emergency Situations Minister Mukambet Kasymaliev told a press conference in Osh on July 9 that the final figure may be higher.

Social Front

Tajikistan

Political Front

- Tajik Court Reopens Case Against Jehovah's Witnesses

KHUYAND, Tajikistan -- A Tajik justice official says a criminal case has been reopened against 17 Jehovah's Witnesses for fomenting religious hatred, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

- Slain Tajik Minister's Sons 'Jailed Over Antigovernment Plot'

DUSHANBE -- Tajikistan's Supreme Court has reportedly sentenced two sons of slain Emergency Situations Minister Mirzo Ziyoev to prison terms of up to 30 years, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

Geo Strategic Front

- Is Russia Considering Returning To The Afghan Border?

Viktor Ivanov, the head of Russia's Federal Drug Control Service, was in Tajikistan at the start of July and made a curious remark.

- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz police official says two men detained by Tajik law enforcement officials and returned to Kyrgyzstan are members of terrorist groups, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Economic /Energy Front

- Tajik Air Flights Delayed Over Fuel-Debt Dispute

DUSHANBE -- Flights by the state airline Tajik Air from Dushanbe to various domestic and Russian destinations were delayed for more than 10 hours on July 8 because the company that provides gas refused to refuel Tajik Air's planes, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports. Dushanbe International Airport spokesman Mahmadyusuf Shodiev told RFE/RL the delay was due to Tajik Air's debt to the fuel provider, and that flights were resumed after talks were held on the problem.

Social Front

- Tajik World Heritage Nomination Coming Up For Review

Tajikistan may soon be celebrating its first inclusion on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List. The Tajik National Park, which encompasses some of the most outstanding natural features of the Pamir Mountain Range, will be considered for inclusion along with 31 other newly nominated sites when the World Heritage Committee meets late this month in Brazil.

Turkmenistan

Political Front

- UN representatives visit Turkmenistan's Central Electoral Commission

Officer for Political and Electoral Affairs of the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat, Ms Elizabeth Moorthy, and Senior adviser on electoral issues at UNDP headquarters, Ms Linda Maguire, held talks at the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda during their visit to Turkmenistan. According to the official report, the sides discussed issues relating to the further development of relations between Turkmenistan and the United Nations in the context of legal reform implemented in the country.

- President of Turkmenistan holds field meeting of Security Council

On July 2, the President of Turkmenistan, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the country, Army General Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov held a field meeting of the State Security Council at his military residence. During the meeting he familiarized himself with the modernization of facilities and equipment of the national army, in particular the specimens of new special machinery.

Geo Strategic Front

- European Training Foundation expands cooperation with Turkmenistan

A delegation of specialists of the European Training Foundation (ETF) arrived in Ashgabat. As part of their stay in the Turkmen capital, representatives of the ETF held talks at the ministries of education, economics and development, finance, and the Institute of Strategic Planning and Economic Development and the State Committee for Statistics of Turkmenistan. During the talks, the sides discussed issues relating to the further expansion of cooperation between Turkmenistan and the ETF in the sphere of education.

Economic /Energy Front

- Russian Duma ratifies agreement on Mutual Protection of Investments with Turkmenistan

The State Duma of the Russian Federation passed the law "On ratification of Agreement between the Government of Russia and the Government of Turkmenistan on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments" at its meeting last Friday. According to Interfax, the document was signed in Moscow on 25 March 2009 "to promote and develop mutually beneficial trade and economic, scientific and technical cooperation by creating an enabling environment for investments."

Social Front

- Turkmenistan to publish "Big Turkmen-Russian dictionary" in two volumes

In 2010, the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan is to publish the two-volume "Dictionary of the Turkmen language", the books "Elaborate vocabulary of the Turkmen language" and "Tasks of literature". At the moment, the Academy is preparing to publish "Big Turkmen-Russian dictionary" in two volumes, the State News Agency of Turkmenistan (TDH) reports.

Detailed Report

Azerbaijan

Political Front

Geo Strategic Front

- Clinton Urged To Recognize Armenian 'Genocide,' Karabakh Self-Determination

YEREVAN -- A leading Armenian-American group is urging U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to recognize the 1915 mass killings of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey as genocide and end "pressure" on Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict during her upcoming visit to Yerevan, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports.

"We view Secretary Clinton's trip to the region as a chance to get things right, a chance to turn around a set of failed policies toward Armenia and the region," Aram Hamparian, the executive director of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), told RFE/RL.

Hamparian singled out U.S. policy on Turkish-Armenian relations and the genocide issue in particular.

"The secretary can really help set things on the right track," he said. "The best way for her to do that is to honor the pledge that she made, that our President Obama made [as presidential candidates], to recognize the Armenian genocide. It would be wonderful if she would do that at the genocide memorial in Yerevan."

Both Clinton and Obama have refrained from using the word "genocide" with regard to the mass killings and deportations of Ottoman Armenians during World War I despite using it during the U.S. presidential campaign of 2008. The Obama administration is also opposed to a draft congressional resolution urging it to "accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide."

Administration officials have said the passage of the resolution would seriously harm Washington's relations with Ankara and the U.S.-backed rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey.

Hamparian claimed, however, that U.S. recognition of the genocide would actually facilitate Turkish-Armenian reconciliation.

"Armenia-Turkey relations will never improve, will never see progress unless the issue of the Armenian genocide is dealt with truthfully and justly," he said.

Hamparian, whose Washington-based group is connected with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun) party, also criticized the administration's policy towards the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which he said favors Azerbaijan.

Clinton should use her trip to end Washington's "nonstop pressure on the Armenian side to accept something that is not democratic," he said, referring to the basic principles of the conflict's resolution favored by the U.S., Russian, and French mediators.

The proposed framework agreement calls for a gradual settlement based on the principles of territorial integrity of states and peoples' right to self-determination. Armenia's government accepts it as "a basis for negotiations."

Dashnaktsutyun and other Armenian opposition groups have repeatedly rejected this peace formula.

"If we were to take the principles that America and the State Department is applying to the Karabakh conflict, if they were applied back in 1776, they would have resulted in America remaining a part of the British Empire," Hamparian said.

- Clinton Seeks To Restart Talks Between Azerbaijan, Armenia

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (left) shakes hands with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev during their meeting in Baku today. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has visited Azerbaijan to seek a restart of peace talks over Nagorno-Karabakh, repair frayed bilateral ties, and press the oil-rich Caucasus nation on human rights.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev told Clinton he is counting on the United States to help solve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, which has pitted his country against neighboring Armenia for more than 15 years. He called the territorial dispute "a major threat" to his country's security.

"We want to find a resolution as soon as possible," he said, ahead of closed-door talks with Clinton at his Baku residence overlooking the Caspian Sea.

Later, during a joint press conference with her Azerbaijani counterpart, Elmar Mammadyarov, Clinton said Washington is ready to help the two sides reach a peace deal and that the issue is a "high priority."

"We see peace as a possibility...and a prerequisite," she said.

The enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh is populated mainly by ethnic Armenians, who broke off from Azerbaijani rule after a war in the 1990s that killed some 30,000 people. Its independence is not recognized by any country. Azerbaijan has said it is ready to reclaim Nagorno-Karabakh by force if necessary. More than 15 years of international mediation have failed to produce a final peace deal.

Last month, four ethnic Armenian troops and an Azerbaijani soldier were killed in an exchange of fire close to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Clinton's visit to Azerbaijan, her first as secretary of state, sought to repair ties with Baku, which has accused Washington of siding with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh and threatened to "reconsider" its relations with the United States.

A U.S.-backed push for a rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey, Azerbaijan's historic ally, has also strained ties between Washington and Baku.

Azerbaijan serves as a strategic supply route for U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, as well as an important energy hub.

Clinton's visit came just a week after U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited Baku to personally deliver a letter to Aliyev from Barack Obama, in which the U.S. president said he was confident Washington and Baku would overcome what he said were "serious issues in our relationship."

Clinton meets with youth groups in Baku.

But Clinton also used her visit to chide Azerbaijan over its poor record on human rights and media freedom.

Addressing a gathering of youth groups and civil society representatives in Baku, she said, "While considerable progress has been made here, you know better than I there is work to be done. There are still a lot of challenges. For example, President Obama and I have both received many letters about the two young bloggers who are imprisoned."

The bloggers -- Emin Milli and Adnan Hajizada -- were detained in July 2009 after a scuffle in a Baku restaurant. In November, a court sentenced Milli to 2 1/2 years in prison and Hadjizada to two years in prison on charges of hooliganism and minor bodily harm.

Rights groups say the charges against them are in retaliation for posting a video on the Internet that mocked government policies.

The U.S. secretary of state was in Azerbaijan on the third stop of a five-nation tour of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. She is now in Armenia, where she is also expected to raise the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh. Clinton was met at the airport in Yerevan by Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian and was due to have talks with President Serzh Sarkisian.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Nalbandian, Clinton called on Turkey to move forward on stalled efforts to normalize ties with Armenia and on opening the two countries' shared border.

- Azerbaijan Says No New Karabakh Peace Proposals

Presidents Dmitry Medvedev of Russia (center), Serzh Sarkisian of Armenia (right), and Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan meet in St. Petersburg on June 17.

YEREVAN -- Azerbaijan has denied Armenian claims that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev presented his Armenian and Azerbaijani counterparts with a new international plan last month to resolve the conflict over the breakaway Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh, RFE/RL's Armenian Service reports.

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian referred to what was discussed with Medvedev in St. Petersburg as "a new version of the Madrid Principles" of a Karabakh settlement at a news conference in Yerevan with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on July 4.

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry dismissed these statements late on July 5.

"Even though Russia plays a large role in this process and the Russian president has taken part in several meetings [between Presidents Ilham Aliyev and Serzh Sarkisian], proposals are drawn up only by the [OSCE's Minsk Group] co-chairs," Azerbaijani media quoted ministry spokesman Elkhan Polukhov as saying.

"Updated Madrid proposals exist only in the form of a document, and they were submitted to both parties last year," he said. "Only various approaches [to these proposals] were discussed in St. Petersburg."

Polukhov added that "the statement by Nalbandian is only aimed at distracting the Armenian and international publics from the essence of the issue."

Armenian President Sarkisian had likewise spoken of "the latest version" of the proposed framework accord as he met with the visiting French, Russian, and U.S. co-chairs of the Minsk Group on July 3. A statement by his office said the document was "presented in the course of the St. Petersburg negotiations between the presidents of Armenia, Russia, and Azerbaijan."

According to senior figures in the ruling Republican Party, Sarkisian reacted positively to the new peace proposals although his Azerbaijani counterpart Aliyev apparently did not. They claim that Aliyev cut short his visit to Russia as a result.

The next day the Armenian side reported the worst fighting between Karabakh-Armenian and Azerbaijani forces in the disputed region in more than two years, with five soldiers being killed.

Baku has repeatedly claimed to have largely accepted a modified "Madrid document" that was drafted by the three mediating powers last fall.

Armenian reaction to that document has been more ambiguous, with officials in Yerevan saying only that the document's original version -- which was unveiled in the Spanish capital in 2007 -- remains "a basis for negotiations."

Economic /Energy Front

Social Front

- Jailed Azerbaijani Journalist Addresses Court Ahead Of Verdict

Imprisoned newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev delivered a three-hour speech in his last hearing before the judges issue a verdict on his drug case, RFE/RL's Azerbaijani Service reports.

Fatullayev said in his final address to the judges in the Baku court on July 2 that the government is refusing to let him out of prison despite calls from the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, which in April ruled that he should be released by Azerbaijani officials and paid 25,000 euros (\$33,000) for moral damages.

Fatullayev, who was jailed for 8 1/2 years in 2007 for terrorism, inciting interethnic hatred, and tax evasion, is facing an additional three years for allegedly "storing drugs" in prison.

In late December 2009, prison guards at the labor camp where Fatullayev is serving his prison term claimed they found 0.22 grams of heroin in his pockets and shoes. Fatullayev said the trace amount of drugs were planted by camp guards.

Fatullayev also told the court on July 2 that he had received warnings from top officials to stop his journalism activity before he got arrested.

"One of the top officials told me that my newspaper irritates the head of state because the newspaper is not only critical but also popular," he said.

Fatullayev said he knows that the government will not release him because it knows he would continue working as a journalist.

"It will not be difficult for me to find donors and start the work," he told the court, "and I would produce an even more popular newspaper than I used to."

Before his arrest, Fatullayev had been the editor in chief of the newspaper "Realny Azerbaijan."

Fatullayev urged the lead judge, Ismayil Khalilov, not to follow political orders. He referred to the case of Russian judge Ekaterina Guseva, who lost her post for refusing to follow orders from government officials. Fatullayev urged Khalilov to follow her example and build a unique case for an independent judiciary in Azerbaijan.

The verdict of the court will be made on July 6.

Kazakastan

Political Front

- Interview: Bhavna Dave On Kazakhstan's 'Leader Of The Nation'

On July 6, Kazakhstan celebrated two important anniversaries -- 12 years since the capital was moved to Astana, and President Nursultan Nazarbaev's 70th birthday.

In an interview with RFE/RL's Kazakh Service, Bhavna Dave, a reader at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, shared her thoughts about political processes in Kazakhstan and its "Leader of the Nation," Nazarbaev.

RFE/RL: In the best-selling Indian novel "The White Tiger" by Aravind Adiga, the main character of the story several times curses his own country -- "the biggest parliamentary democracy in the Third World, which has no quality drinking water, rural infrastructure, and Olympic medals," and sarcastically notes that China has all of these things despite the lack of democracy. One might assume that such a philosophy, "First economy, then politics," has been the strategy of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev since his election in 1991. In other words, first drinking water, infrastructure and Olympic medals, then transparent elections and a multiparty system. How has this approach worked for Kazakhstan? Bhavna Dave: In many ways Kazakhstan is following the Chinese path. Kazakhstan has prioritized what it considers as provision of infrastructure, material goods, and other economic educational opportunities for people, and Kazakhstan somehow sees the demands for democratic participation and a multiple-party system as inimical to these services and goods, that is where I see contradiction. Because in a fundamental sense, if you keep supplying things that you think that ordinary people need, but if you don't allow them to define what their needs are, then in effect you create a patriarchal kind of system, which doesn't respect individuality.

I would not say Kazakhstan has failed. Kazakhstan has succeeded in so many ways. But my argument is that Kazakhstan can succeed further and achieve sustainable success if it were to see democracy, elections, and political participation not as a threat, not as something that needs to be controlled, but something that needs to be promoted.

Government cannot promote democracy. Democracy has to be allowed to develop on its own, and for that government has to step back and allow the people to define what they want. Government has to allow institutions to develop and acquire autonomous meaning.

RFE/RL: In 2006 you invited Jacob Rigi, an anthropologist and expert on contemporary Russia and Kazakhstan, to give a single lecture at the SOAS. The definition he used to characterize the situation in both countries: the systematized socioeconomic chaos. Does such a definition still fit Kazakhstan? In your view what are the main symptoms of that "systematized chaos?"

Dave: The situation has changed very significantly since that time. He was basically referring to conditions prevalent in Kazakhstan in the 1990s, the breakdown of the Soviet socialist welfare-state model, uncertainty about what kind of institutions will take place. In that sense the framework that he provided no longer fits the present context. And one

can say that Kazakhstan has been through the transition and Kazakhstan has entered the new phase.

I would support the very basic notion that the Kazakhstani government has adhered to, which says that Kazakhstan is a stable country and stability has been maintained quite consciously and promoted quite actively by the government. If you compare Kazakhstan with the neighboring Central Asian states then Kazakhstan indeed enjoys considerable stability.

I think if this kind of "systematic socioeconomic chaos" was threatening to Kazakhstan's development in the 1990s, then today there is a danger that this excessive emphasis on stability can result in some kind of stagnation. And this kind of notion of stability has been used by the government to maintain the present political framework, institutions and elite in power. This could come in the way of renewal and innovation, what Kazakhstan needs -- to regenerate its cadre and allow new institutions to come into being.

RFE/RL: In the mid-1990s some Western scholars tended to call the post-Soviet regimes in Russia and Central Asia "enlightened autocracies" or "the rule of the kolkhoz elite." ("Kolkhoz" is a Soviet-era term for collective farm.) In your opinion what has changed since then? How distinctive has the Nazarbaev regime been in comparison to others?

Dave: If one compares the role of Kazakhstan's leader Nazarbaev with the role of other Central Asian leaders, there are many striking achievements Nazarbaev can claim. It is to the credit of the president of Kazakhstan that he has continued to adapt to new challenges and he has continued to learn from, if not his mistakes, but from his experiences and made appropriate modifications in his policy and political rhetoric.

So, I would not really agree with this kind of description of "kolkhoz elite." At least in the case of Kazakhstan, [the government] shows that what is valuable in the Soviet experience has been used rather creatively and innovatively to integrate other new kinds of aspects in its policy. So there has been tremendous innovation of this kind of leadership, which in the case of Kazakhstan has had a considerable degree of success.

To add further about the question of leadership, I want to refer to the present resolution passed by the Kazakh parliament conferring the title of "Leader of the Nation" upon Nazarbaev. This is a very interesting phenomenon, and people have been asking me to explain what this means and what the implications are.

This process at one level reminds some of Soviet-era practices -- it creates the impression that everything was preplanned. At the same time, as far as I look at these processes, I think there are a number of things going on making it hard to explain this decision just in terms of one dimension.

There is an aspect in this decision which is a genuine effort to define the status of the president and also to acknowledge the contribution that he has made in the development of Kazakhstan and forming its economy. To do this on the eve of his 70th birthday -- according to Kazakh tradition the completion of 70 years in life is something that deserves to be acknowledged. There is respect for the people who are "aqsaqal," senior. So the leader of the nation is also a tribute to the president.

There are other prospects which suggest that the title of leader of the nation, and ensuring amendments which also provide complete immunity to the president and members of his family, and various clauses which allow President Nazarbaev to play a very vital role in choosing his successor. All these moves also suggest an attempt to fully secure his position before he can pass on the power to the next generation.

Geo Strategic Front

- Russian-Kazakh-Belarusian Customs Union Comes Into Effect

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says a customs union joining Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus has come into effect after the presidents of the three countries signed documents today.

Medvedev made the announcement at a summit of the Eurasian Economic Community (Eurasec) in Kazakhstan's capital, Astana.

Eurasec unites Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. The leaders of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan said their countries were also considering joining the customs union.

Eurasec leaders are scheduled to consider the formation of a Eurasec court to replace the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Customs Court and approve a budget for 2011.

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbaev announced that the next Eurasec summit will be held in Moscow in late December.

Nazarbaev noted in his opening speech that the group is marking its 10th anniversary.

Medvedev is also scheduled to meet with new Kyrgyz leader Roza Otunbaeva to discuss the recent violence and referendum in Kyrgyzstan.

Economic /Energy Front

- Russia to lend Kazakhstan \$700 million for power plant

Russia will lend Kazakhstan \$700 million to build the third unit of the Ekibastuz GRES-2 power plant, according to a loan agreement signed on Monday by the countries' presidents on the sidelines of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) session in Astana, RIA Novosti reported.

The two existing units of the Ekibastuz GRES-2 power plant were built in the late 1980s-early 1990s. The third unit will increase the plant's installed capacity by 50 percent.

Construction of the plant's third unit began in 1990 but was subsequently frozen.

Ekibastuz GRES-2 is equally owned by Inter RAO UES and by the Kazakh government.

- Kazakhstan, Russia Sign Energy Deals

Russia and Kazakhstan have signed agreements on cooperation in civilian nuclear power and hydropower projects in the Kazakh capital, Astana.

State companies Rosatom and Kazatomprom signed an agreement on use of an existing uranium-enrichment facility at Novouralsk in Russia rather than construction of a new facility.

Rosatom chief Sergei Kiriyenko said that since the two partners would not co-finance building a new enrichment facility, Rosatom would make shares of its Novouralsk facility available to Kazatomprom.

The two nuclear companies also signed a memorandum on forming a joint company to market and sell uranium.

Another agreement between the two countries calls for constructing a third unit at the Ekibastuz hydropower station in Kazakhstan.

Social Front

Kyrgyzstan

Political Front

- **Kyrgyzstan Names New Interior Minister**

BISHKEK -- Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva has named Kubat Baibolov as the country's new interior minister, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Otunbaeva issued a decree on July 7 naming former opposition politician Baibolov to replace Bolot Sher, who had been acting interior minister since President Kurmanbek Bakiev was ousted in early April. Sher, who is a deputy leader of the Fatherland (Ata-Meken) party, said he had asked to be relieved of his post.

He repeated that he will participate in the parliamentary elections scheduled for October. Otunbaeva has said that any government ministers planning to stand in the elections must resign from the cabinet.

Sher's arrest by police in the northwestern town of Talas on April 6 -- the day before Bakiev was forced from office -- caused an outcry and led to further unrest in Talas and spurred on the Bishkek protests against Bakiev.

Baibolov, a former parliament deputy, lived in self-exile in the United States from 2008-10.

Before his appointment as interior minister, Baibolov was the first deputy chairman of the Kyrgyz State Committee for national security and was appointed

by Otunbaeva as commandant of the Jalal-Abad region after the ethnic clashes that took place there in mid-June.

- **Kyrgyz Leader Warns Of Risk Of Further Violence**

Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva has warned that the risk of further unrest in the Central Asian country remains. Otunbaeva told Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that "at the moment the situation is relatively calm but there may be other outbursts" of violence.

Medvedev said Otunbaeva could count of Moscow's support.

At least 294 people were killed last month in clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan, the worst ethnic violence in the region since the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

Otunbaeva and Medvedev met on the sidelines of a regional economic summit in the Kazakh capital, Astana.

- **Osh Protesters Want International Oversight Of Kyrgyz Forces**

OSH, Kyrgyzstan -- Some 200 protesters in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh held a protest calling for the "internationalization" of the Kyrgyz army and law enforcement agencies, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

The demonstration was held in front of the Osh city administration building on July 2. Protesters want international oversight of the army and police forces.

They also called for an objective investigation into the ethnic violence in southern Kyrgyzstan and for an intensified search of the people still reported missing.

Protesters met with Osh Deputy Mayor Alymjan Baygazakov, who promised to pass on the demands to the Osh mayor.

Political analysts say the ethnic Uzbek community in the Osh region lacks confidence in the Kyrgyz Army due to its largely monoethnic composition. Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbaeva has also cited this problem among Kyrgyz security forces and said the army and police must include more ethnic minorities.

About 15 percent of Kyrgyzstan's population is made up of ethnic Uzbeks.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has discussed the idea of sending an international police force to Osh to help restore confidence in the security forces.

More than 50 people went missing during the ethnic violence in the Osh region. Others are also still missing in Jalal-Abad.

At least 300 people were killed and hundreds of thousands of people, mainly ethnic Uzbeks, fled their homes during the days after the fighting started on June 10.

- Rising Nationalism Threatens Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- One thing is clear from the testimony of witnesses of the ethnic violence that killed hundreds and possibly thousands of people in Kyrgyzstan last month: most of the victims were from the ethnic Uzbek minority.

More than a thousand of their burned and looted houses stand ruined in the epicenter of the violence, the city of Osh, amid mostly unscathed Kyrgyz buildings. It was also mainly Uzbeks who fled -- hundreds of thousands of them, across the border to refugee camps in Uzbekistan -- after they were attacked by Kyrgyz mobs, and many say Kyrgyz police and military units.

But Almazbek Atambaev doesn't want people to talk about that. In his sprawling office in parliament, the interim government's dapper deputy prime minister -- a top candidate to lead the country as a possible future prime minister -- criticizes Western journalists for reporting about the overwhelming number of Uzbek deaths.

"We won't allow divisions in our society," he replies when asked to clarify the figures.

Atambaev says opponents of the interim government's drive to "build the first democracy in Central Asia" provoked Kyrgyz and Uzbeks to kill each other. "The attempt to forestall the establishment of that kind of state explains all the hysteria, and a riot that was organized and paid for," he says. "It's not even close to ethnic cleansing."

Kyrgyzstan's Only Hope

There's no shortage of conspiracy theories about what prompted ethnic tensions in southern Kyrgyzstan to explode with such violence last month. But the government says apportioning blame to one or another group will prompt only further violence. Critics say that's because the government is tacitly backing a wave of nationalism and that a credible independent investigation is the country's only hope of moving beyond the violence toward a viable democracy.

Former President Kurmanbek Bakiev in Minsk last month

The government came to power in April, after street protests ousted President Kurmanbek Bakiev. He fled to his stronghold in the south before taking refuge in Belarus. Last week, Kyrgyzstan's security agency claimed Bakiev's relatives colluded with the Taliban and other Islamist movements to provoke the violence they hoped would destabilize the new government.

But some believe the government's silence over who started killing whom first reflects more than simply the desire of a weak leadership to avoid rocking the boat. Critics say the country's leaders are covering up their own complicity in the killings and that that's posing a serious threat not only of more violence but to the country's very existence.

Jildiz Jildosheva propounds the most common of the conspiracy theories washing over the capital, Bishkek. The vice president of the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Friendship Society says Uzbeks -- who own many businesses and hold significant influence in the south -- were incited to violence by unknown professional mercenaries wearing black T-shirts.

"Local Uzbeks say they were armed in advance and told to take to the streets when a signal was given," Jildosheva says. "They were led to a university dormitory, where many Kyrgyz girls were brutally raped and killed."

'That's All Fantasy'

The overwhelming opinion is that Kyrgyz began killing Uzbeks in revenge only after they attempted to seize power and that it's fueling a growing enmity between the two ethnic groups. But a handful of people disagree.

Opposition leader Omurbek Suvanaliev, head of the Ata-Jurt party, is a former interior minister who last month temporarily volunteered to be acting police chief in the Osh region, worst hit by the recent violence. He says the killings broke out spontaneously after a casino fight between Kyrgyz and Uzbek youths, saying there's no evidence of mercenaries or rapes of Kyrgyz women that attackers say prompted them to take revenge. Omurbek Suvanaliev: "The interim government is acting utterly irresponsibly."

"There's all sorts of talk about Muslim extremists and mercenaries. That's all fantasy," Suvanaliev says. "The interim government is acting utterly irresponsibly."

Suvalaliev says the government invented a "third force" it says prompted the violence to hide its own responsibility. He points to events shortly after Bakiev fled to the south in April. The following month, Bakiev supporters stormed a local administration building in the city of Jalal-Abad, near Osh. Threatened with a regional revolt and unable to rely on the local authorities, the government appealed for help from an Uzbek minority in the south. Kadyrzhan Batyrov, an Uzbek university director, organized members of his Rodina (Motherland) party to take up arms against Bakiev's supporters. Aziza Abdyrasulova, director of the Kylum Shamy (Torch of the Century) human rights group, says Batyrov then called on his supporters to burn the houses belonging to Bakiev's family. "I went to the office of [Deputy Prime Minister Omurbek] Tekebaev and begged him to force them to stop. I was crying and pleading, but when Tekebaev picked up the phone all he did was request them to stop," she says. "The interim government was exploiting the ethnic tensions, and it had no right."

The government later opened a criminal case against Batyrov, who fled the region and remains in hiding. Many Kyrgyz now accuse him of organizing last month's violence.

'They Pulled Themselves Back'

Abdyrasulova says the May events exacerbated long-standing tensions. But she and other critics have been unwilling to condemn a hard-pressed government with few choices in a region it now barely controls. Many in this relatively free and open society see the current leadership as the best hope for Kyrgyzstan to emerge from the kind of strict authoritarianism that has enveloped its Central Asian neighbors.

Larry Memmott, deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek, believes there's a chance the government can succeed, saying general revulsion over last month's violence gives hope the country will pull together.

Destroyed houses in a residential area of the city of Osh on June 18

"In many other countries where this kind of violence occurs, it hasn't limited itself to two or three days, whereas in Kyrgyzstan it did," Memmott says. "They went over the brink, I think you would have to say, into a terrible violent period, but they themselves pulled back, and I think that's a positive sign."

But Memmott and others who worry that competing myths about what sparked last month's killings are threatening possible further violence say any optimism for a stable future relies on a credible independent investigation.

Asked whether she would guarantee such a probe, caretaker President Roza Otunbaeva said the government was putting together a commission that will include Uzbeks.

"Kyrgyzstan wants to compile its own report, but the commission will include international experts," she said. "We understand it has to be credible and trustworthy both here and among the international community."

Mounting Nationalism

But there are serious doubts the Uzbek minority and the international community will see a government commission as truly independent. Meanwhile, there are signs nationalism on both sides is growing. Critics say the government's refusal to address the causes of the violence is encouraging Kyrgyz nationalism. It's been helped by the Kyrgyz media, which has blamed the violence on Uzbeks, citing the need to "balance" the Western press. And there are indications of increasing nationalism among Uzbeks. In Uzbekistan, one of the country's biggest pop stars recently recorded a song blaming Kyrgyz for last month's killing spree, with a video set to gory images of the violence. Although Uzbek President Islam Karimov has publicly backed the Kyrgyz government's version of a "third force," few believe a major pop star could release a controversial song without his authoritarian regime's tacit consent.

If the tensions keep escalating, experts believe, ethnic violence could spill across borders into other parts of Central Asia.

As Otunbaeva selects a new caretaker government that will rule until parliamentary elections tentatively scheduled for October, her allies are splintering, fighting each other and forming their own political parties.

Analyst Mars Sariev says amid such politics, it's hard to conceive the new government will be able to begin addressing the country's ethnic split. "There will be a permanent crisis in the south," he says, "that could flare up anytime."

Geo Strategic Front

- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz police official says two men detained by Tajik law enforcement officials and returned to Kyrgyzstan are members of terrorist groups, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Kenesh Abdyrakhmanov, head of the Interior Ministry office in Kyrgyzstan's southwestern Batken region, told RFE/RL on July 8 that the men, who were detained in Tajikistan without any documents, told Tajik security forces they were Kyrgyz labor migrants returning home from Russia.

But Abdyrakhmanov said that after they were handed over to Kyrgyz authorities an investigation indicated they were members of extremist organizations and wanted by police in both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

One of the men was identified as Abduvakhid Aliev, 30, a resident of Uzbekistan's Andijon region and an alleged member of the Union of Islamic Jihad terrorist group.

Aliev is wanted by Uzbekistan for his alleged participation in the deadly Andijon protests in 2005. Abdyrakhmanov said Aliev is thought to have attended training at a militant camp in Pakistan in 2007-08.

But Aliev told RFE/RL that the charges against him are baseless and he denied participating in the Andijon events. He added that he was hiding in Tajikistan in an effort to escape punishment for his role in a robbery in Uzbekistan.

The second man, Kyrgyz resident Atabek Toychiev, was placed on Kyrgyzstan's "wanted list" last year for his alleged participation in terrorist activities.

Human rights groups say hundreds of people were killed when Uzbek security forces fired on a crowd of demonstrators in Andijon in May 2005. The Uzbek government says 187 died and blamed Islamic militants for instigating the violence.

- **Kyrgyz Official Says OSCE Police Mission Would Be Ineffective**

BISHKEK -- Acting Kyrgyz Defense Minister Ismail Isakov says the deployment of an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) police mission in the southern part of the country would be ineffective, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

General Isakov told RFE/RL on July 6 that he cannot imagine how a foreign police force would serve its peacekeeping mission and train Kyrgyz police without knowing the local languages and traditions.

He added that "it would be much better instead if Kyrgyzstan received assistance with technical equipment and infrastructure reconstruction."

A number of international human rights organizations, including rights advocacy group Human Rights Watch, have called for the urgent deployment of an OSCE police mission to Osh and Jalal-Abad.

Clashes between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in those southern cities in mid-June led to the deaths of at least 300 people and caused hundreds of thousands to flee their homes.

Both Kyrgyz government officials in Bishkek and rights organizations have said the monoethnic composition of Kyrgyzstan's security services exacerbates the job of restoring order in the former conflict zones.

Ethnic Uzbeks make up some 15 percent of Kyrgyzstan's population, but they are seldom found among the country's police or military forces.

- **European Parliament To Discuss Situation In Kyrgyzstan**

Catherine Ashton, the European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, said parliamentarians would consider the recent referendum in Kyrgyzstan that moved the constitution toward a parliamentary, rather than a presidential, system of government.

The European Parliament is due to include a discussion of the situation in Kyrgyzstan on its agenda when it meets later today.

Catherine Ashton, the European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, said parliamentarians would consider the recent referendum in Kyrgyzstan that moved the constitution toward a parliamentary, rather than a presidential, system of government.

Ashton called on Kyrgyz authorities to ensure the planned October 10 elections to parliament are carried out in full accordance with EU standards.

Economic /Energy Front

- **Kyrgyz Politician Says Entry Into New Customs Union Needed**

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz politician says the country's World Trade Organization (WTO) membership would not hinder Kyrgyzstan from joining the Russian- Kazakh-Belarusian customs union, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Esengul Omuraliev, a former deputy prime minister, told RFE/RL on July 6 that membership in the WTO and the newly established customs union of Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus are mutually complementary processes.

Omuraliev was a minister under first Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev and was in charge of Kyrgyzstan's negotiations to join the WTO, which it did in 1998.

Omuraliev said that given the fact that some 70 percent of Kyrgyzstan's trade turnover is with Kazakhstan and Russia, the country's entry into the new customs union those countries have formed is "absolutely necessary."

He added that Kyrgyzstan's potential membership in the Russian-Kazakh-Belarusian customs union -- which was formed on July 5 -- would not hinder the country's access to low-cost Chinese goods.

Omuraliev said that according to the country's standing commitments to the WTO, the average tariff on imports should be 9.1 percent, but in Kyrgyzstan's case it is 5.7 percent and in the recently formed customs union the rate averages 10.4 percent.

- **Kyrgyz Officials Put Cost Of Violence At \$71 Million**

BISHKEK -- Kyrgyz officials say recent ethnic violence in the south of the country caused some \$71 million worth of damage, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Deputy Emergency Situations Minister Mukambet Kasymaliev told a press conference in Osh on July 9 that the final figure may be higher.

Government officials say some 2,500 homes, more than 100 commercial buildings, and 10 government buildings were either destroyed or suffered serious damage during the violent clashes between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz that took place in the Osh and Jalal-Abad regions from June 10-14.

At least 309 people were killed and hundreds of thousands fled their homes during the clashes.

The Finance Ministry estimates that the first stage of reconstruction will require about \$500 million, and it asked for that amount in aid during a meeting in Bishkek on July 8 between Kyrgyz officials and representatives of international development banks.

Almazbek Atambaev, first deputy prime minister in the interim government, said during the meeting that it's important that people who lost their homes be provided with modern housing, new infrastructure, and modern communications. He said a large effort also needs to be made to restore mutual trust between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks.

Atambaev added that "if we adopt a superficial approach and start to mechanically restore burnt-out buildings in the south, the situation may repeat itself."

He met with an international delegation sent to assess the economic situation in Kyrgyzstan that included representatives of the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The delegation will stay in Kyrgyzstan until July 15, the government said.

A joint report on the economic situation in the country and the financial needs for reconstruction will be presented at an international donors conference for Kyrgyzstan scheduled for July 27 in Bishkek.

Social Front

Tajikistan

Political Front

- **Tajik Court Reopens Case Against Jehovah's Witnesses**

KHUJAND, Tajikistan -- A Tajik justice official says a criminal case has been reopened against 17 Jehovah's Witnesses for fomenting religious hatred, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

Jamhur Jiyanov, an aide to the prosecutor in the northern Sughd Province, told RFE/RL on July 7 that investigators from the State Security Committee had launched a preliminary investigation under Article 189 of the Criminal Code on "promoting religious or ethnic hatred."

If found guilty, the suspects could face prison terms of between five and 12 years.

Zafar Rahimov, a member of the Christian group, told RFE/RL that neither he nor any of his fellow Jehovah's Witnesses had so far been detained.

However, he said they had received letters from a local court notifying them that a criminal case against them has been reopened.

The 17 were detained last year during a gathering at the home of a Jehovah's Witness and they were subsequently accused of illegal activities.

They explained they had only gathered in order to read religious books and had done nothing against the state.

Early this year, the state prosecutor's office ruled that the sect's activities in Sughd were not criminal and it suspended the case.

Jehovah's Witnesses were legally registered in Tajikistan in 1994. But the Culture Ministry banned the religious group's activities in October 2007 because the group's literature attacks other religions, since its members actively proselytize and have prayer meetings in their homes rather than in designated buildings.

The ministry also accused Jehovah's Witnesses of antistate propaganda because of their efforts to discourage young men from performing military service.

The religious group filed an appeal with the Tajik Supreme Court on the government's ban on the sect's activities in Tajikistan.

- **Slain Tajik Minister's Sons 'Jailed Over Antigovernment Plot'**

DUSHANBE -- Tajikistan's Supreme Court has reportedly sentenced two sons of slain Emergency Situations Minister Mirzo Ziyoev to prison terms of up to 30 years, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports.

The two men faced charges of establishing unlawful armed groups, illegal possession of arms and ammunition, and plotting to overthrow the government and change the constitutional order.

The elder son, Sayed Akhmad Ziyoev, was sentenced to 30 years in prison and the younger son, Muhammad Reza, to 28 years.

Several other relatives and supporters of Ziyoev were also sentenced to jail.

Mirzo Ziyoev in 2006

Residents of Ziyoev's home district of Tavildara told RFE/RL on July 5 about the closed-door trial. The exact day of the court session is unknown, as officials refused requests for information.

Mirzo Ziyoev was the top military commander of the United Tajik Opposition during the country's 1992-97 civil war. He was subsequently named emergency situations minister.

Tajik officials said he was killed in an ambush by his own supporters during an antidrug operation in Tavildara in July 2009. His supporters deny any responsibility for his death.

Some 50 militants were detained during a crackdown in Tavildara that took place between May and December 2009, including 11 who had either Russian or Uzbek citizenship. What has happened to them remains unclear.

After Ziyoev's death the government accused him and his supporters of drug trafficking and supporting the banned Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.

Geo Strategic Front

- Is Russia Considering Returning To The Afghan Border?

Viktor Ivanov, the head of Russia's Federal Drug Control Service, was in Tajikistan at the start of July and made a curious remark.

Ivanov said Russian border guards could return to duty in Tajikistan keeping a watch on the Central Asian country's border with Afghanistan. It was a function the Russian border guards performed from 1991 until 2006, when they completely handed over the task to their Tajik counterparts.

Ivanov said Russia was not holding talks with Tajikistan on sending the Russian troops back but added, "if the countries have goodwill it is possible." Ivanov made his comments just after meeting with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon.

It is no secret Russia, as well as other countries, are concerned about increasing drug trafficking from Afghanistan through Tajikistan and onward toward Russia and Europe or China and Asia.

Many in Russia and some of the Central Asian states were displeased to see the last of the Russian border guards leave the Tajik-Afghan border and feared the Tajik border guards were not up to the task.

Results since have been mixed. Seizures of narcotics are up, but many feel that simply reflects the fact that ever more narcotics are crossing the border and that the percentage of drugs intercepted remains only some 5 to 10 percent of the total.

Russia may have another reason for wanting to help Tajikistan keep watch on its southern frontier. Kyrgyzstan, to the north of Tajikistan, has been experiencing severe difficulties - - the ouster of a president and violence between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks.

With instability both to the south and north, Tajikistan's border guards are stretched thin, a situation that gives the "bad guys" -- drug traffickers, Islamic militants, and others -- easier access and freedom of movement in the southeastern Central Asian region.

Ivanov said the question was: are Russia and Tajikistan "ready to take this action"? Since Ivanov appears to have been the one talking about it, we can assume Russia at least is ready.

- Tajikistan Hands Over Two Terrorist Suspects To Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK -- A Kyrgyz police official says two men detained by Tajik law enforcement officials and returned to Kyrgyzstan are members of terrorist groups, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reports.

Kenesh Abdyrakhmanov, head of the Interior Ministry office in Kyrgyzstan's southwestern Batken region, told RFE/RL on July 8 that the men, who were detained in Tajikistan without any documents, told Tajik security forces they were Kyrgyz labor migrants returning home from Russia.

But Abdyrakhmanov said that after they were handed over to Kyrgyz authorities an investigation indicated they were members of extremist organizations and wanted by police in both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

One of the men was identified as Abduvakhid Aliev, 30, a resident of Uzbekistan's Andijon region and an alleged member of the Union of Islamic Jihad terrorist group.

Aliev is wanted by Uzbekistan for his alleged participation in the deadly Andijon protests in 2005. Abdyrakhmanov said Aliev is thought to have attended training at a militant camp in Pakistan in 2007-08.

But Aliev told RFE/RL that the charges against him are baseless and he denied participating in the Andijon events. He added that he was hiding in Tajikistan in an effort to escape punishment for his role in a robbery in Uzbekistan.

The second man, Kyrgyz resident Atabek Toychiev, was placed on Kyrgyzstan's "wanted list" last year for his alleged participation in terrorist activities.

Human rights groups say hundreds of people were killed when Uzbek security forces fired on a crowd of demonstrators in Andijon in May 2005. The Uzbek government says 187 died and blamed Islamic militants for instigating the violence.

Economic /Energy Front

- Tajik Air Flights Delayed Over Fuel-Debt Dispute

DUSHANBE -- Flights by the state airline Tajik Air from Dushanbe to various domestic and Russian destinations were delayed for more than 10 hours on July 8 because the company that provides gas refused to refuel Tajik Air's planes, RFE/RL's Tajik Service reports. Dushanbe International Airport spokesman Mahmadyusuf Shodiev told RFE/RL the delay was due to Tajik Air's debt to the fuel provider, and that flights were resumed after talks were held on the problem.

But Tajik Air spokeswoman Lola Kenjaeva said the refusal to refuel was a deliberate attempt to hurt the image of Tajik Air by competing companies that were, until recently, part of Tajik Air.

Kenjaeva confirmed that Tajik Air has a fuel debt, but she said Tajik Air and the fuel provider had agreed on a timetable for the repayment, and Tajik Air had made all payments on time.

Kenjaeva added that the French military officers who have a transit air base in the Dushanbe airport offered to provide fuel for the Tajik Air planes, but the airport's main fuel provider did not allow them to do so.

The Tajik Air planes were eventually refueled only after the intervention of the head of the fuel company.

Until 2008, Tajik Air had an absolute monopoly on all aspects of air transport in Tajikistan. It owned all planes, airports, and airport and flight services, and was reluctant to allow competition, whether from domestic or foreign companies.

The eventual demonopolization of Tajik Air began at the suggestion of international finance organizations, and Tajik Air was finally split up into separate companies.

In February 2008, the first Tajik private air company, Somonair, received its license and soon became a rival to Tajik Air.

Some analysts have suggested that Somonair and its supporters at the highest level of the Tajik government are the main players behind Tajik Air's problems.

Somonair, according to unconfirmed reports, is partially owned by a financial group headed by Tajik President Emomali Rahmon's brother-in-law, Hasan

Asadullozoda.

Social Front

- **Tajik World Heritage Nomination Coming Up For Review**

Tajikistan may soon be celebrating its first inclusion on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List. The Tajik National Park, which encompasses some of the most outstanding natural features of the Pamir Mountain Range, will be considered for inclusion along with 31 other newly nominated sites when the World Heritage Committee meets late this month in Brazil. With UNESCO's support, Tajikistan's State Department on Natural Protected Areas officially submitted the nomination in January 2009. A spot on the World Heritage List would recognize the park as a site of "universal value," and make it eligible for UNESCO assistance and funding for preservation.

At more than 12,000 square kilometers in size, the park takes up almost a 10th of the area of Tajikistan. According to the Natural Heritage Protection Fund, it is the largest protected area in Central Asia. It includes Somoni Peak, formally known as Stalin Peak and then Communism Peak, which at nearly 7,500 meters is the highest mountain in the former USSR. Other unique features include Fedchenko Glacier, one of the largest mountain valley glaciers on earth; Sarez Lake, one of the world's highest lakes; and more than 100 endemic and endangered plants and animals, including the snow leopard.

Currently, 890 sites are on the World Heritage List, ranging from the Great Wall of China to Egypt's Pyramids of Giza to Victoria Falls on the Zimbabwe-Zambia border. Tajikistan is the only Central Asian country not represented. Other nominees to be considered this year include the Augustowski Canal in Poland and Belarus, the Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex in Iran, and the Marshall Islands' Bikini Atoll, famous for its use as a nuclear weapons testing site in the 1940s and 1950s.

Turkmenistan

Political Front

- **UN representatives visit Turkmenistan's Central Electoral Commission**

Officer for Political and Electoral Affairs of the Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat, Ms Elizabeth Moorthy, and Senior adviser on electoral issues at UNDP headquarters, Ms Linda Maguire, held talks at the Central Commission for Elections and Referenda during their visit to Turkmenistan. According to the official report, the sides discussed issues relating to the further development of relations between Turkmenistan and the United Nations in the context of legal reform implemented in the country.

During their visit to Ashgabat, the guests also held talks at the Mejlis of Turkmenistan and the National Institute of Democracy and Human Rights under the President of Turkmenistan, where they discussed prospects for further cooperation in the sphere of legislation.

- **President of Turkmenistan holds field meeting of Security Council**

On July 2, the President of Turkmenistan, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the country, Army General Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov held a field meeting of the State Security Council at his military residence. During the meeting he familiarized himself with the modernization of facilities and equipment of the national army, in particular the specimens of new special machinery.

The meeting discussed the performance of military and law enforcement agencies in the first half of the year, as well as a number of issues on the further improvement of their work. Following the meeting, the President of Turkmenistan invited members of the

Security Council to examine the ability of troops to operate new modernized equipment that was acquired for the national army.

The Security Council looked at the take off and landing of the unmanned aerial vehicle and transport aircraft AN-74, which is capable of landing on the sand and water surface. They also viewed the helicopters purchased for the military and law enforcement agencies, as well as specimens of field uniform.

Geo Strategic Front

- European Training Foundation expands cooperation with Turkmenistan

A delegation of specialists of the European Training Foundation (ETF) arrived in Ashgabat. As part of their stay in the Turkmen capital, representatives of the ETF held talks at the ministries of education, economics and development, finance, and the Institute of Strategic Planning and Economic Development and the State Committee for Statistics of Turkmenistan. During the talks, the sides discussed issues relating to the further expansion of cooperation between Turkmenistan and the ETF in the sphere of education.

As the State News Agency of Turkmenistan (TDH) reports, the delegation will also participate in the upcoming joint seminar in Ashgabat on development of cooperation in vocational education.

Economic /Energy Front

- Russian Duma ratifies agreement on Mutual Protection of Investments with Turkmenistan

The State Duma of the Russian Federation passed the law "On ratification of Agreement between the Government of Russia and the Government of Turkmenistan on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments" at its meeting last Friday. According to Interfax, the document was signed in Moscow on 25 March 2009 "to promote and develop mutually beneficial trade and economic, scientific and technical cooperation by creating an enabling environment for investments."

According to the document, the sides will create favorable conditions, fair and equitable treatment of investments and income of investors, including free transfer of funds meant as investments, after all taxes have been paid as provided by the law. The regime should be no less favorable than the regime envisaged for investments and income of investors in the country of their origin or a third country, subject to which one of them an investor finds more favorable. However, the parties retain the right to use and introduce an exemption from the regime in accordance with a national legislation, if such an exemption is not discriminatory.

In the conclusion of the Duma Committee on CIS Affairs and Relations with Compatriots said that the agreement creates a contractual and legal basis for the effective work of investors that meets the needs of long-term economic development of the constructive cooperation between Russia and Turkmenistan. Its provisions reflect the mutual interest of the parties to attract investments in order to enhance the joint innovation and production activities and the implementation of joint programs and projects, the Committee believes.

Social Front

- Turkmenistan to publish "Big Turkmen-Russian dictionary" in two volumes

In 2010, the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan is to publish the two-volume "Dictionary of the Turkmen language", the books "Elaborate vocabulary of the Turkmen

language" and "Tasks of literature". At the moment, the Academy is preparing to publish "Big Turkmen-Russian dictionary" in two volumes, the State News Agency of Turkmenistan (TDH) reports.

According to the agency, Turkmenistan has also prepared for publication scientific monographs "Turkmen people and the peoples of the world" and "Battle riders (knights) of Asia" by O. Gundogdyev; "Merv in the era of the Great Seljuk Turkmens", "History and Culture of Merv in XII-XIV centuries" by T. Hodzhaniyazov; and "Turkmenistan and Turkmens in the XIV-XVII centuries", "Sultan Sanjar and his Empire", "History of Turkmenistan", "Old Nisa in the World Heritage List of UNESCO", "Khorezm and Urgench: new notes (in Turkmen and Russian languages" by O. Ekaev.

Uzbekistan

Political Front

Geo Strategic Front

Economic /Energy Front

Social Front

Sources

<http://www.rferl.org/>

<http://www.today.az>

<http://www.reuters.com/>

<http://kazinform.kz/eng/>

<http://www.interfax.kz>

<http://www.bloomberg.com/>

<http://silkroadintelligencer.com/>

<http://eng.24.kg/>

<http://www.asiaplus.tj/en/>

<http://www.turkmenistan.ru/>

<http://enews.ferghana.ru>