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In this issue:

Security Chief Says International Terrorists Trying to Set Up Training Centers in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan Will Join Transparency Initiative in October

Pentagon Aims to Bolster Security in Caspian Sea Region

“American University in Kazakhstan” Will Offer Western Education in Almaty

People of Different Faiths Join Together for Peace March

First Multistory Parking Opens in Almaty

Say it in Kazakh:

Bread --- nan, meat --- et [yet], beef --- siyr eti, lamb --- koi eti, chicken --- tauyk eti, pork --- shoshka eti, Apple --- alma, pear --- almurt, peach --- shabdaly, watermelon --- karbyz, melon --- kauyn

Security Chief Says International Terrorists Trying to Set Up Training Centers in Kazakhstan

Lt. Gen. Nartai Dutbayev, Chairman of the National Security Committee of Kazakhstan (KNB), said international terrorist organizations are trying to set up training centers in Kazakhstan.

Speaking at *Caspian Anti-Terror 2005*, a command and staff exercise in Aktau on August 17, Gen. Dutbayev said, “Members of international terrorist organizations seek to establish terrorist training centers in Kazakhstan and hide from criminal prosecution for earlier crimes.”

In his speech, as reported by the Kazinform news agency, Gen. Dutbayev provided additional details on the work of his Committee in the fight against terrorism. “Last year, KNB officials liquidated a highly secretive terrorist organization,” the General said. It had ties to Al Qaeda and “was seeking to establish terrorist training bases in the southern regions of Kazakhstan.”

“The investigation revealed some members of this group had direct links to terrorist acts in Uzbekistan in the spring and summer of last year,” the KNB chief explained. Some members of the group were citizens of Kazakhstan, and are currently being tried in a local court.

Gen. Dutbayev said “during the past four years, Kazakhstan’s special services sent more than 20 members of terrorist organizations and illegal bandit groups to foreign partners.” Last year more than 300 kilograms of explosives and 94 firearms were also confiscated.

Kazakhstan is taking active steps to fight terrorism both domestically and internationally. The country is party to all 12 UN conventions on fighting terrorism, and is providing support for global anti-terrorism operations.

The Supreme Court of Kazakhstan has named 11 international organizations as terrorists, banning their presence in Kazakhstan. These include Al Qaeda, the Islamic Party of Eastern Turkestan, Kurdish People’s Congress, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Muslim Brotherhood, Asbat-al-Ansar, the Taliban, and Zhamaat of Mojaheddin of Central Asia.

Earlier this year, amendments were made into legislation allowing the court of Astana to ban extremist organizations. It has since banned another organization, Hizb-ut-Tahrir.

Kazakhstan Will Join Transparency Initiative in October

Kazakhstan will formally join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in October of this year as the country moves toward greater openness in oil and gas contracts.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced Kazakhstan's decision to join the initiative in a June 2005 speech during an international business conference in Almaty. The initiative was first proposed by British Prime Minister Tony Blair at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in September 2002. Its aim is to increase transparency of payments by companies to governments and government-linked entities, as well as transparency of revenues of those host country governments.

Vladimir Shkolnik, Kazakhstan's Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, announced this news during a meeting with an Azerbaijani official in Astana on August 11.

Thirteen mining companies and 48 oil and gas companies working in Kazakhstan are to join the initiative. In early October, they will sign a memorandum between the national commission appointed to oversee the Initiative, private companies and nongovernmental organizations.

"Membership in the Initiative is voluntary, and companies will decide for themselves if they want to sign the Memorandum and disclose financial reports required by it," Minister Shkolnik said.

A country needs to meet six conditions for the successful implementation of the Initiative. These include publishing data on all revenues a government receives from extractive industries, conducting continuous and independent audit of payments, and revenues from such enterprises, as well as ensuring the participation of all state and private companies working in the country.

“American University in Kazakhstan” Will Offer Western Education in Almaty

Starting this fall, students of Almaty's Kazakh National Technical University (KNTU) named after Kanysh Satpaev will be able to get Western-style quality education in Almaty without having to go abroad thanks to a new international education program known as the “American University in Kazakhstan.”

Bisembai Iskakov, First Deputy Rector of KNTU, announced the news of the program in Almaty on August 12.

The program will bring to KNTU professors from 82 universities, all part of the American Education Consortium, to teach in English three classes: oil and gas business, information technologies and the environment. The consortium includes American Universities in Richmond-upon-Thames (London), in Northern Virginia, Prague and on Cyprus. Kazakh students will be able to continue their education at these other campuses after two or three years in Almaty.

The classes will be taught in Kazakh and Russian during the first few years as English is gradually introduced.

Students will have to pay US\$2,700 a year for the program, a lot by Kazakhstan's standards but small change compared to education in the West. Discounted fees will be offered for promising students with good grades, sporting achievements and other qualifying factors.

The new program becomes available as Kazakhstan is making great strides in improving its education system to the highest standards while giving many its bright youth the best education the world has to offer. Earlier this year, President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the expansion of the Bolashak presidential scholarships to 3,000 students a year enabling them to get their bachelors and masters degrees as well as Ph.D.'s in the West. Before the expansion there were about a hundred Bolashakers a year.

People of Different Faiths Join Together for Peace March

Dozens Muslims, followers of Krishna and Christians from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan took the first steps on a peace march that will bring them through the southern regions of Kazakhstan carrying the message of commitment to inter-religious and interethnic dialog.

The marchers will cover 738 kilometers (460 miles) from Shymkent to Almaty on foot in just about a month. Ruslan Abdulin, the organizer of the march, hopes it will “become another step toward continuing the constructive dialog among religions and ethnic groups.”

The group has people of varying ages, including a 76-year-old World War II veteran, Seitkazy Salgaraev. He is no stranger to long distance walking for a cause, and has already made the hajj twice to Turkestan, the hometown of the Hodja Akhmed Yassauï mausoleum, a sacred place for Muslims.

First Multistory Parking Opens in Almaty

The first multistory parking lot opened in downtown Almaty, Kazakhstan's former capital of 1.5 million people, with local officials extolling the potential of such facilities to help solve the city's ever growing traffic problems.

Almaty, located in the picturesque foothills of the Tien Shan mountains, has been experiencing problems with traffic, including traffic jams and a lack of parking space, due to a drastic surge in car ownership in the 13 years since independence. Almaty, a cosmopolitan city with tree lined streets and boulevards, is rightly believed to be the wealthiest city in Kazakhstan and all of Central Asia. Among the strongest evidence of this are the huge numbers of German, Japanese, U.S. and Russian-built cars clogging the city's streets. Kazakhstan's Government is seeking development of Almaty as a financial center for the region.

The new parking lot has space for 479 cars and boasts an eight lane car wash.

Imangali Tasmagambetov, the Akim (Mayor) of Almaty and a former Prime Minister, visited the parking lot and said Almaty needed as many as a thousand such lots in the near future. He said his office is planning to launch 100 new parking facilities before the summer of next year, 25 are already under construction.

The new parking fees won't be cheap by Almaty standards, 50 tenge for the first hour, 200 tenge after that, and 300 tenge for overnight parking (US\$1=135 tenge), but they won't be hideously expensive and should offer a convenient way for drivers to take care of their cars when they are on Almaty's busy roads.

Among the problems faced by the construction companies are a shortage of land and the high price of metal and concrete needed for new lots. The construction cost of the first one was US\$170 per square meter, or just under 16 dollars per square foot.

Things to Watch:

- Celebrations continue for the 160th anniversary of the sage [Abai Kunanbai](#), the Kazakh philosopher and poet, revered by Kazakhs for his teachings.
- Senate election in Kazakhstan with 16 open seats will take place on August 19. The Senators have six year terms. The Senate has 39 members, of which 32 are elected from each of the 14 regions and the cities of Astana and Almaty, while the President appoints seven senators. The elections for the 16 seats are held on a rotating basis every three years. There are 36 candidates running. Fifty-two observers, including four from the U.S.-based International Foundation for Election Systems, will monitor the election.
- President Nursultan Nazarbayev will field questions from the people live on national TV channels on August 24 at 8.00 p.m. Astana time. The president's press office is accepting questions in advance at akorda@online.kz. The previous live show with the President took place in May 2004, when 12,098 questions were received. In two hours of live Q&A, the President answered 43.
- Kazakhstan is getting ready to celebrate the 10th anniversary of its Constitution which was adopted in a nationwide referendum in 1995, on August 30.

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