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Say it in Kazakh:
At the food bazaar:

Where can I find meat? --- Kaizherde yet satady?

Where are the vegetables? --- Kaizherde zhemister satady?

Where do I find milk and eggs? --- Kaizherde sut zhene zhumyrka satady?

How much is this? --- Bul kansha turady?

That's too expensive! -- Bul ote kymbat!

Thank you very much! --- Ulken rakhmet!

Kazakhstan, Russia Celebrate 50 Years of Baikonur, Launch Ambitious Joint Space Project "Baiterek"

Presidents Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and Vladimir Putin of Russia celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Baikonur Cosmodrome in western Kazakhstan on June 2, opening a new era in space cooperation between the two nations as they laid the cornerstone for the future Kazakhstan-Russian space complex to be known as "Baiterek" and calling for the development of space tourism.

The commemoration involved more than 500 veterans of the Cosmodrome from Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus who recalled the glory days of the facility which launched the first sputnik in 1957 and the first man in space, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961. The construction of Baikonur began in 1954, and the anniversary commemorates that occasion. As part of the celebration, the two presidents visited with workers at the Cosmodrome and visited the original launch pad used to send Gagarin into space.

During the past half century, more than 1,100 space vehicles were launched from Baikonur, and more than 100 intercontinental ballistic missiles were tested. Over the years, Baikonur boasted 52 launch pads. It covers an area of 53 miles north to south and 77 miles east to west.

Since the break up of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has been leasing the Cosmodrome from Kazakhstan for US\$115 million annually. It is convenient in its closeness to the equator compared to other alternatives. Earlier this year, the lease was formally extended until 2050. Since the Columbia space shuttle disaster, Baikonur serves as the only launch pad sending space ships with replacement crews and supplies to the International Space Station in orbit.

The most notable part of the festivities came as Presidents Nazarbayev and Putin signed a joint declaration of space cooperation opening the way for a very different type of bilateral relationship at Baikonur. Cooperation will be centered on building an ecologically safe rocket complex with great potential for the future.



President Nursultan Nazarbayev (center) walks with Russian President Vladimir Putin (L) and Director of Russian Space Agency Anatoly Perminov (R) at the historic site of man's first step into space. Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space was launched from Baikonur Cosmodrome in 1961.

It will be called “Baiterek” (Tree of Life in Kazakh) and will be based on Russia’s Angara complex. Kazakhstan is expected to pick up the bill for building Earth-based infrastructure to service future launches of Baiterek, expected to begin in 2008-09.

To ensure the project runs smoothly, the two nations agreed to appoint Russian Air Force General Talgat Musabayev, an ethnic Kazakh and a renowned Cosmonaut, as the first Director General of Baiterek.

A number of other agreements between the governments of Kazakhstan and Russia were signed during the meeting, regulating the environment at Baikonur, joint scientific and research works and the cooperation of customs services. The presidents have also said they would work on the development of space tourism.

Nazarbayev Says Relations with U.S. “Particularly Important”, Security and Nonproliferation Are Priorities

President Nursultan Nazarbayev said Kazakhstan’s relations with the United States are “particularly important” for his country, and listed cooperation in security and nonproliferation areas as key priorities.

Speaking at an expanded session of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ collegium in Astana on June 7, the President gave an overview of Kazakhstan’s foreign policy. He called Russia and China, the two closest and largest neighbors, and the United States and the European Union top foreign policy priorities for Kazakhstan. He also said Kazakhstan should continue to pursue its initiative on the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and called for continued work on the concept of a proposed Central Asian Union, an idea he first proposed in February.

Speaking of Kazakhstan’s relations with the United States, President Nazarbayev said “the most important result of our active interaction with this global power was turning our relations into a strategic partnership. This is a serious success of our foreign policy.”

He continued: “In the near future, a heightened attention should be given in our cooperation with the United States to such problems as the joint fight against new challenges, nonproliferation, export controls, and cooperation in law enforcement and defense spheres.”

Cooperation in these areas gained new urgency since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the ensuing military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Kazakhstan has provided open overflight rights for U.S. and coalition aircraft in Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2003, Kazakhstan sent its military engineers to Iraq in support for coalition efforts to stabilize that country. They have since destroyed more than three million pieces of ordnance. Since 2003, the two countries have also implemented a five year defense cooperation program which provides for U.S. technical and educational assistance to Kazakhstan’s military. (For more on cooperative efforts see last two stories.)

In the speech, President Nazarbayev called for a greater role for diplomacy in helping ensure sustainable growth of the economy. The President noted putting the Strategy for Industrial and Innovation Development (SIID) into action is the most important element of this work: “We should draw major and well known companies to Kazakhstan with their technologies and management, and through this process enter the world market.” He added Kazakhstan is “prepared to provide any preferences to investors, and the [Kazakh] diplomatic corps should help directly in executing this vital task.”

The Kazakh leader urged greater use of Kazakhstan’s transit potential and stressed the need for his country to join the World Trade Organization (WTO).

“Kazakhstan’s key foreign policy principles remain unchanged and are based on a proactive approach, balance, pragmatism, dialogue and multilateral cooperation,” the President concluded.

Foreign Ministers Plan Shanghai Group July Summit, Call for Pakistan to Be Admitted as Observer

Foreign ministers from the six member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

met in Astana on June 4 to prepare for the SCO summit set to take place in Astana early next month.

The foreign ministers of China, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Tajikistan, as well as deputy foreign ministers from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan agreed on a number of important policy decisions. These include a proposal to admit Pakistan as an observer to the group and to sign an agreement covering assistance in emergency situations. Another proposal to be considered at the summit by the presidents will be a draft agreement on organizing and holding joint anti-terrorist activities.

Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kassymzhomart Tokaev, speaking after the meeting, said "we can state the Shanghai Cooperation Organization gains momentum and moves toward solving the task before it, which is that of ensuring regional security and developing trade and economic cooperation." He added issues discussed at the meeting included the situation in Central Asia as well as reform of the United Nations.

First Kazakh Woman Graduates from West Point

Elena Milyuk, a 24 year old cadet from Almaty, entered the history books at the end of May, becoming the first woman from Kazakhstan to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

In a June 8 interview with *Argumenty i Fakty Kazakhstan*, a weekly newspaper, Milyuk recounted how challenges of studying at the Point known for its toughness turned a young and unassuming girl of five-feet-four weighing only 100 pounds into a confident and tough officer.

She said: "My studies at West Point have given me a huge life experience. My worldview has changed. I gained military endurance, a sense of discipline and leadership qualities." Milyuk was a third year math student at the Kazakh National University in Almaty when she decided to try attending West Point under a joint Kazakhstan-U.S. program.

Milyuk, who upon graduation rose to the rank of Lieutenant in Kazakhstan's army, thanked her country's Defense Ministry "for all the help they provided," saying she was eager to serve wherever needed.

Col. Assylbek Mendygaliyev, Kazakhstan's defense attaché in Washington said an interesting military service awaits Elena Milyuk when she comes home.

Lt. Milyuk was the first woman from Kazakhstan to graduate from West Point, but not the first Kazakh cadet. Last year, Daniyar Uteulin became the first Kazakh graduate from the Point. Another cadet, Diaz Asanov, has two more years to go before graduation. Earlier this year, two more cadets from Kazakhstan were admitted to the Academy.

Their studies are part of the U.S. Defense Department's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program which seeks to promote stronger ties through training of foreign officers in the United States.

Kazakhstan was the first in the former Soviet Union to sign a five year defense cooperation program with the U.S. in 2003. The program provides for a greater number of trainees and supply of some military equipment, including Hummer vehicles. The program's goals are in line with the more active role Kazakhstan seeks in international peacekeeping operations.



Lt. Elena Milyuk and Gen. Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, pose together at her graduation from West Point.

At the graduation ceremony, Gen. Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, congratulated Elena Milyuk on her graduation, a sign of importance of continuing such cooperation in military education.

Kanat Saudabayev, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United States, received the new officer at the Embassy in Washington, wishing her "a good start in the armed forces of an independent Kazakhstan." He told Lt. Milyuk "your studies [in the U.S.] are a demonstration that Kazakhstan is a confident and dynamically developing nation where all have the opportunity to reach high. Kazakhstan's future is in the hands of such young and strong people as you."

Kazakh Army Engineers Destroy Huge Weapons Cache in Iraq

Kazakh army engineers in Iraq have destroyed a huge weapons cache next to coalition base camp Delta close to the city of El Kut.

The cache included 334 large caliber artillery shells, 340 fuses, about 50 grenades, 10 mortar shells, and more than 2,300 rounds of small arms ammunition.

The announcement was made by the Defense Ministry of Ukraine. The 27 army engineers from Kazakhstan have served with the Ukrainian contingent since their deployment in 2003. They destroyed more than three million pieces of ordnance overall.

Things to Watch:

- The city of Astana celebrates seven years since its inauguration as Kazakhstan's new capital on June 10. Festivities are expected to include shows across the city, street markets and the giant fireworks display. The occasion has already been marked by President Nazarbayev's appearance at the opening of a new five star hotel, The President Hotel. More than 30 mayors from cities in Kazakhstan and abroad are expected to lead delegations to the celebration.
- A major international business conference, "Kazakhstan Draws a New Wave of Investment: Strategies for Diversification and Sustainable Growth", will take place in Almaty on June 14-16. The conference is co-organized by the Government of Kazakhstan, the Asia Society and the Eurasian Media Forum. It will feature presentations by President Nazarbayev, Foreign Minister Kassymzhomart Tokaev, Energy Minister Vladimir Shkolnik, Asia Society Chairman Amb. Richard Holbrooke, Prof. Frederic Starr, Chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University, as well as George Soros, Founder and Chairman of the Open Society Institute. Information about the conference is available [here](#).

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