Party approves China’s State Council members

China’s most fundamental institutions are totalitarian, reflecting and reproducing the party’s monopoly control over every facet of society, including the economy.
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The first written mention of Turkmen carpets was left by the Italian traveler Marco Polo, who made a trip along the Great Silk Road. An excerpt from his notes reads: “The thinnest and most beautiful carpets in the world are woven here, as well as rich fabrics of red and other colors.”

The implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting a gas trading center to the European market was delayed at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting the implementation of the project aiming at redirecting supplies and exporting

PHOTO: Bloomberg / A GENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
India’s commitment to international collaboration, inclusive development, financial and economic stability, and sustainable growth is consistent. According to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, “India is taking this presidency at a time when there is a crisis in the world. The conflicts are going on and economic uncertainty remains on a large scale. The corona pandemic and now the Russia-Ukraine war has had a global impact. Due to this, the need for foodgrains, fertilizer, energy, debt, obstruction in supply chain have arisen. India will work on the principle of “One Earth, One Family, One Future” during its chairmanship. India will ensure that the countries of the world, including our own, are on track to achieve the financial and economic goals that have been set.”

DELIGHTS WALK AT FLAGSTAFF, taking part in the event at the second meeting of the G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies in Bengaluru on February 22, 2023. Foto: Business Central Asia

From the Editor

New Delhi has been vociferous in giving a voice to the aspirations of the Global South, at a time when few global powers have the time nor resources to cater to the most vulnerable, occupied as they are with their own domestic woes.

THE MOST POPULAR PHRASE among the WTO’s members is “We are in this together.” That sounds good. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines the global multilateral system as “the network of organizing relations among groups of states bound together by their common interests, reciprocity, and common values or ideology.” After World War, the Group of Seven, which included the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan, created this definition. This multilateral world order was designed around three sets of institutions: the United Nations (culture, food, security and well-being such as health), the World Trade Organization (trade), and the Bretton Woods twins of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (finance).

Since rebuilding the world economy was a priority, at the time of the world war was happy with unipolar multilateralism, focusing on trade, finance and development. Geopolitics during the Cold War was constrained because the Soviet bloc was militarily strong but economically weak. Paradoxically, the success of the global multilateral system over time gave rise to new forces that now threaten the viability of the above-mentioned theories. China, Russia, India and other players have begun to challenge that world order. With the outbreak of the Ukraine conflict, the dual has become sharper than ever. The real issue is whether we continue with unipolar multilateralism or switch to multilateral multilateralism, for which the rules are yet to be revised. We saw this after the global financial crisis of 2008, when the G7 understood that they must accommodate new powers and formed G20 to include China, Russia, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Argentina, Mexico, South Korea, Australia and the European Union. Incidentally, now all the above-mentioned three pillars are in crisis. The WTO’s role in solving trade disputes has diminished when the US disagrees with decisions against its interests; tariffs are back and sanctions are now a tool of political violence; and multilateral development banks are not enough for what is needed to tackle climate change, the global debt crisis and other global challenges. India’s reluctance to mediate and negotiate, the weaponization of finance, sanctioning of individuals, states and companies, and military conflicts has triggered a seismic shift in the world order. And above all, some countries are finding it difficult to innovate and grow, and in the wake of these, some are taking part in all their investments in the form of public-private partnerships or in the form of their G20 Presidency, India is poised to focus on three issues.

Sustainability

This multilateral world order was formed G20 to include China, Russia, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Argentina, Mexico, South Korea, Australia and the European Union, which is known as a national champion to compete in overseas infrastructure markets, under its own. There is Europe’s Union’s the Global Gateway (a more snappy titled and more muscular version of the EU’s former EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy) and there is US President Joe Biden’s Build Back Better plan, Japan has not remained behind with a slower wages and companies and in India and others, to be known as the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor. The battle for economic power is in the education sector. Since now, the term is simply a “mission impossible” to consolidate most countries to take any negative measures towards Moscow or Beijing. Only certain western states have joined the Club of Europe to hinder the free space of actions acted by Moscow or Beijing. – Ravi Kumar Gupta, NEW DELHI

Western sanctions against Russia under closely open up the market for India and China, both countries are more than happy to be partners in making companies in Russia. These sanctions have created vast new sectors of industries in Russia, which should never have been seen before. Russia will indeed grow, and will undoubtedly attract immigrants from other countries, especially from those who have joined the G20 to include China, Russia, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Argentina, Mexico, South Korea, Australia and the European Union. Incidentally, now all the above-mentioned three pillars are in crisis. The WTO’s role in solving trade disputes has diminished when the US disagrees with decisions against its interests; tariffs are back and sanctions are now a tool of political violence; and multilateral development banks are not enough for what is needed to tackle climate change, the global debt crisis and other global challenges. India’s reluctance to mediate and negotiate, the weaponization of finance, sanctioning of individuals, states and companies, and military conflicts has triggered a seismic shift in the world order. And above all, some countries are finding it difficult to innovate and grow, and in the wake of these, some are taking part in all their investments in the form of public-private partnerships or in the form of their G20 Presidency, India is poised to focus on three issues.

Sustainability

There are certain stereotypes and prejudices being spread across the world with the image of science. But it is astonishing that young people see their future in science. They realize that without science, it is impossible to take a step forward in any society. Professor, everyone can do science, but one has to take some steps towards their dreams.

Ravi Kumar Gupta, NEW DELHI

Kygystan’s economy exhibits stability and has proven resilient to global challenges. An attempt to give nationalized ownership to the metal is not a fashion in the 21st century. Such an attempt was made in the preceding century, when some countries tried to show off their cultural dominance by adding their names to different cultural assets. But today, doing so is a trigger political spots. Culture has no nationality. – SANJAY KUMAR RASHIET, Patna

Both Russia and China are global players in international politics and economic affairs. If the Americans have an aspiration to contain either of them, the United States needs to forge a global consensus to mobilize an effort to contain such countries. China’s geopolitical position has already made it the most powerful country in the world. Russia lacks the political will to contain China, while the US lacks the economic resources. China has already surpassed the US in terms of economic and military power.

Whether there will be an inflation spiral depends on inflationary expectations. When inflation continues to rise and breaches a certain level, part of the current inflation is converted into inflationary expectations. Under such circumstances, consumers tend to consume less and businesses will find it hard to pass on higher prices. When inflation continues, it will be difficult to maintain growth and the demand of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum. This was followed by the announcement of the US-led Indo-Pacific Business Forum.
The only priority is - no one in the Kyrgyz Republic is allowed to violate strict observance and enforcement of the current legislation. Sadyr Japarov, President of Kyrgyzstan

**HEALTHCARE**

**First Ayurveda based wellbeing hotel built in Azerbaijan**

**SHABRAN WELLBEING RESORT hotel, located in Pirabadli village of Azerbaijan’s Shabran region, is 147 kilometers away from the capital Baku.**

Covering an area of 12.6 ha, the hotel consists of 119 rooms of different categories, 10 Composers’, 10 Writers’ and 10 Artists’ cottages. This is the first resort in Azerbaijan that applies Ayurvedic (ancient Indian medicine) treatment methods. Here, professional Panchalarma (detoxification) specialists offer special original therapy opportunities based on Indian traditions. Covering a large area, the Ayurveda Spa has a beauty salon, 6 treatment rooms, a Finnish sauna, a steam room, a relaxation area and an indoor pool. Here, every condition has been created for practicing fitness and yoga. Healing Panchalarma procedures, Pranayama sessions, yoga and lifestyle training will be carried out at the spa.

The hotel with luxury infrastructure serves as the first Ayurveda center in Azerbaijan. At the Shabran Wellbeing Resort hotel, Rübai, Ahang, Ojak restaurants, Misra Lobby Lounge, Bade Lounge Bar, and Aura Cafe will operate. The hotel also has a billiards room, a cinema room, a PlayStation room, a children’s playroom and a mini-football field. For business meetings, conferences and special events, the hotel offers Bayati and Shiraz conference halls that can perfectly accommodate up to 180 people. To explore Shabran Wellbeing Resort hotel, you can visit www.shabranwellbeing.az

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. When was Miss International beauty contest established?
2. When was International Day for the Eradication of Poverty established?
3. Who was the father of Ksenia Sobchak, a Russian celebrity?
4. Which city is famous mostly for large number of twins?
5. What is the real name of Katy Perry?

**Answers of the February 2023 quiz**

1. Robert Thurman, an Indologist and the first American to be tonsured a Buddhist monk personally by the Dalai Lama. Since Buddhist monasticism is not lifelong, Thurman resigned, became a professor at Columbia University. The actual name of Uma Thurman was Uma Karuna (restower of Bliss).
2. Sailor Moon, the famous Japanese anime character created in the 1990s, is a sweet schoolgirl and also champion of justice who leads a group of comrades – the Sailor Soldiers – to save the universe from evil forces.
3. The Golden Triangle is situated at area where the borders of three countries converge: Thailand, Laos and Burma. There used to be opium poppy plantations in this region, which is why it is informally called the Opium Triangle.
4. Acupuncture was introduced in West Bengal in 1959 by BR Basu, one of five Indian doctors who served in China during WWII; thus, West Bengal became the first Indian state to recognize the treatment. In 2019, the Indian government recognized acupuncture as an “independent system of healthcare.”
5. From 1429 until 1879, Siam was the name of Thailand under the Ryukyu Kingdom which rose to prominence as a hub for maritime trade between China, Japan and Southeast Asia.

**Policies and Politics**

**Romani community in Türkiye**

President of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdoğan often hails his ties to the Romani community, with which he spent his childhood in the Kâşmpaşa neighborhood of Istanbul where a large part of the Romani community lived. He was also the first to apologize to the community in 2010 for the Turkish state’s past policies depriving community of their rights.

**COOPERATION**

**Dushanbe to host State of Central Asia**

**The 4th consultative meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia was held in June 2022 in Cholpon-Ata in Kyrgyzstan. At the meeting, the participants discussed issues of regional cooperation, as well as trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian partnership between the countries. The first consultative meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia was held in Astana, Kazakhstan in March 2018, the second - in November 2019 in the capital of Uzbekistan, Tashkent. But a single symbol was approved at the 3rd meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia, which took place in August 2021 in Turkmenistan in the Awa-za National Tourist Zone.**

**The EBRD forecasts that Kyrgyzstan’s GDP will grow by 7% in 2023, and accelerate to 7.2% in 2024. The economies of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan will show less growth in the next two years. The economies of Mongolia and Tajikistan, on the contrary, will bypass the Kyrgyzstan in terms of growth rate. The economies of Central Asia are showing strong resilience to the geopolitical adversities caused by Ukraine conflict, EBRD reported.**

**Stability**

**EBRD updates forecast growth for Central Asia**

**The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has updated its forecast for the growth of the in 2023-2024. The Economist has reviewed the EBRD’s data and findings. Thus, the EBRD expects output in Central Asia to grow by 4.9% in 2023. This slight upward revision from September reflects higher oil and gas prices for commodity exporters, higher labor, capital and remittance inflows, and growth in intermediary trade. Output growth is expected to pick up to 5.4% in 2024, driven by planned infrastructure investment, high commodity prices and the relocation of highly skilled professionals and entire businesses from Russia to Central Asia.**

**Rate of growth**

The EBRD provides the data for Central Asia.
The study also found that China has already displayed great potential for global leadership in several key areas, including supercomputers, space exploration, artificial intelligence, quantum computing and high-speed rail.” Its innovation capabilities now threaten the global market share of firms from the United States and allied nations in most high-value-added, advanced industries that are important to US prosperity and security,” Atkinson added. 中文
Recall that this railway line in the south of Tajikistan, which should be connected to the railway lines of Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, is planned to be built since 2013. The length of the proposed railway line on the territory of Tajikistan will be 50 kilometers; it is expected that the laying of the section will create conditions for connecting the railways of Central Asia and East Asia. At present, South Korean specialists are engaged in the preliminary work necessary to prepare a feasibility study for the Tajik section of the route.

The award was presented to the Chairman of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on July 13, 2012.

The activities of trade and logistics hubs will be aimed at ensuring industrial cooperation in the field of warehousing, storage, processing, production of new goods, and their further sale with integration into international commodity distribution systems. “They will also provide services of short-term storage, logistics, rent of trading places, pre-sale preparation, consolidation and redistribution of goods by wholesale lots, loading and unloading, development of transcontinental cargo transportation. It is assumed that the cross-border hubs will cover the export potential of enterprises in the regions of Kazakhstan,” the ministry explained.

According to Kazakhstani officials, the development of infrastructure complexes in the border areas will create conditions for the implementation of industrial cooperation, which will reduce the cost of supply chain, reduce the cost of the product for the end consumer and increase the speed of delivery.

Following the preliminary results of 2022, the country’s foreign trade turnover increased by 32.1 percent to $134.6 billion. The exports grew by 39.9 percent to reach $84.4 billion, with imports reaching $50 billion. The positive trade balance reached $34.4 billion, which is higher than the manufacturing industry maintained favorable growth rates (1.6 percent). The positive trend is also seen in the production of food, oil, chemical products, beverages, pharmaceuticals, and light manufacturing.
**CONNECTIVITY**

**New route from India to Kazakhstan launched**

A new service has been launched to develop the eastern branch of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC); KTZ Express, a multimodal subsidiary of the Kazakhstan Railways, will transport goods from India to Kazakhstan via Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The estimated travel time for this cargo is about 20 days. First, the goods will travel by sea from the port of Mundra to Almaty via Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The service is a part of the development plan of the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway corridor and a part of the INSTC eastern branch connecting Mumbai with Moscow. Many players participating in INSTC insist on the development of the eastern branch of the corridor. For example, in December 2022, Russian Railways established a 20 percent discount for operators who decided to transport goods on the eastern side of INSTC. The discount is granted only to containers transported through Russian-Kazakh border crossings, as well as through the Bolshak-Serkhetyak border crossing between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. The eastern branch of INSTC refers to the network connecting Russia with the countries of the Caspian Basin, the Persian Gulf, Central, South and Southeast Asia.

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**Economy and Development**

**Economy and Development**

**TRADING**

**Ten years of WTO membership of Tajikistan**

On March 2, 2013, Tajikistan became the 153rd member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) - the second (after Kyrgyzstan) in the region of Central Asia. The country in the process of multilateral negotiations accepted and introduce changes in more than 100 regulatory-legal documents for the adaptation of its economy to the new conditions of competition in the world arena. At present, the government of Tajikistan notes many positive moments from joining this organization in all possible sectors and industries of the economy. The main advantages relative to the strengthening and expansion of export potential, diversification of foreign trade, and simplification of export procedures. According to official statistics, during these 10 years the number of trade partner-countries of Tajikistan increased from 302 to 150. The volume of exports increased from $1.4 billion in 2012 to $2.1 billion in 2022, and the volume of foreign trade turnover, in general, from $5.1 billion to $7.3 billion. The country’s trade balance (the difference between exports and imports) has not changed much during this period: the share of exports in the structure of foreign trade in 2012 was 27.4%, and in 2022 - 28.8%. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Economic Development claims that after the accession of Tajikistan to the WTO, the country’s export volume increased by 2 times; the list of exported goods by 1.8 times, the production of industrial products by 2.1 times, and agricultural production by 1.3 times. In addition, a “single window” was introduced for the simplification of export, import and transit procedures; the “Trade Portal of Tajikistan” was created; and a number of important reforms in the field of trade were implemented.

It is also noted that, participating in global trade initiatives, Tajikistan has achieved 7% medium-term economic growth and 10% medium-term business growth.

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**Progress**

**Challenges through Dialogue: Towards Cooperation, Prosperity and Progress.**

Commenting on the launch of the Astana International Forum, President Tokayev noted, “Today, across the globe we face historic challenges, the likes of which we have not encountered for decades or longer. These challenges are putting unprecedented pressure on the international community, creating new dividing lines and challenging the principles of globalization and multilateralism. The Astana International Forum was created to respond to these challenges, prioritizing cooperation as a core tenet of a functioning international system. Kazakhstan has a long history of advancing constructive international relations, serving as a bridge between East and West - and while this policy has been firmly tested in 2022, it has proven resilient. Through the Astana International Forum, we hope to build new bridges and strengthen ties, as we come together to overcome the collective challenges we face, charting a new way forward - diplomatically, economically and politically.”

The Astana International Forum grew out of the success of the Astana Economic Forum. It was conceptualized to address four key global issues: foreign policy, security and sustainability, energy and climate, and economy and finance. These pillars are at the heart of the Forum’s mission of “Tackling Challenges through Dialogue: Towards Cooperation, Prosperity and Progress.”

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- Warm to Cool Light
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In your opinion, how will political reforms influence the process of building New and Fair Kazakhstan?

In October 2022, our capital hosted the sixth summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, an organisation that we launched 30 years ago to enhance cooperation towards peace, security and stability in Asia. During the same month, Astana held the meeting of Heads of State of Central Asia and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel. Symbolically, it took place on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries, on June 2, 2022, the official opening ceremony of the bust to the great Kazakh poet and thinker Abai Kunanbayuly took place in New Delhi, timed to coincide with the Anniversary of diplomatic relations between our countries.

As part of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the countries, on June 2, 2022, the official opening ceremony of the bust to the great Kazakh poet and thinker Abai Kunanbayuly took place in New Delhi, timed to coincide with the Anniversary of diplomatic relations between our countries.

In response to the opening of the monument to Abai Kunanbayuly in New Delhi, a monument to Mahatma Gandhi was erected in Astana on October 13. I think it has a symbol-ic meaning for the relationship and cooperation of the two countries. We have well-established cultural and eco-nomic relations, and I believe this event will contribute to their further development.

As the world looks to navigate the chal-lenges associated with current geopolitical and economic hardships, closer cooperation between Kazakhstan and India is essential. At the same time, Kazakhstan remains committed to developing its relations with all the countries and partners. As President Tokayev said during his inauguration following the recent presidential election, “Kazakhstan will continue to pursue a balanced, constructive foreign policy aimed at protecting national in-terests, ensuring mutually beneficial cooperation, and further protec-tion and firm commitments to reform, the referendum in June last year.

Beginning of a new era of New and Fair Kazakhstan?

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**A MONOPOLY STATE**

**Party approves China’s State Council members**

The 14TH NATIONAL PEOPLE’S CONGRESS has approved China’s new State Council. There are only two new-comers among the 26 heads of ministries and agencies: Defense Minister Li Shangfu and National Development and Reform Commission Chairman Zhang Shangguo. Officials loyal to Xi Jinping currently hold key positions in the State Council. New Prime Minister Li Qiang is one of them. However, his appointment is based not only on his personal loyalty but also on the expertise that he gained while leading the economically developed regions at the mouth of the Yangtze River, including Shanghai. As for Li Shangfu, his appointment is first and foremost a sign of Xi Jinping’s successful work to upgrade the Chinese army. In terms of economic policy, the new military leader but an engineer. The United States imposed sanctions on him for Russian weapons exports. We can’t say that his appointment marks or paves the way for a new phase of a standoff between China and the US. Over the past ten years, China has seen a significant consolidation of power in the hands of Xi Jinping, and the Communist Party’s supremacy over the state and society has also become more apparent. The next decade will be a difficult one for China; still, we can’t say that the old economic development model is exhausted, with cheap labor and free resources no longer available, while the external environment—relations with the US and its allies—is getting more and more toxic.

**Is today’s China yesterday’s Soviet Union?**

By Di Guo and Chenggang Xu

The 29th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), held in October 2022, confirmed President Xi Jinping and China’s top political leadership for the next five years. But that also means that for the next five years, the economy going forward will depend on three factors: the state of the country’s institutions, past and current economic conditions, and the leadership’s political intentions. China’s most fundamental institutions are totalitarian, reflecting and reproducing the party’s monopoly control over every facet of society, including the economy.

The party-state institutions of totalitarian control were transplanted, in full from the Soviet Union in 1949. When Soviet-style totalitarianism collapsed three decades ago under the dead weight of its economic failures, China appeared to be an exception. The question now is whether China’s own totalitarian experiment can last. To answer that, one must understand the structure of “totalitarianism with Chinese characteristics.” A key pillar is regionally decentralized totalitarianism, which combines highly centralized totalitarian control over politics, ideology and personnel with decentralization in administrative and economic affairs. This is the arrangement that facilitated the post-Mao reforms. Centralized totalitarian control of the economy was virtually unprecedented. And it is the regionally decentralized totalitarian authoritarianism. But since Xi came to power in 2012, China has shifted back toward totalitarianism, with the party leadership reasserting control, particularly in the foreign private sector. That reversal is a central reason for China’s sharp economic slowdown in 2022. OPENING UP Much of China’s rapid economic growth from the reform era was recovery following the devastation inflicted from the late 1950s until the late 1970s by the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. But the remaining share represented something less urgent: recovery, and is something of a puzzle. China’s reforms succeeded where all of the reform efforts by its communist counterparts in the Soviet Union and Central and East Europe had failed, because China had managed to solve a fundamental incentive problem that characterizes party-state bureaucratic systems, and thus success offers clues about whether its economy really depends on the party-state. Following Mao’s death, the party leadership came to believe that the way to key to its survival, and it settled on the institutional foundation for new reform policies. Under the new, regionally economic performance would determine the promotion of local party-state bureaucrats, which led to competition among local and regional party-state bureaucrats. To gain an advantage, some covered up or even supported illegitimate private enterprises, and thus adversely unbalanced rapid growth in China’s private sector, a development that was incompatible with totalitarianism and certainly not tolerated in the Soviet Union. With private enterprise becoming increasingly embedded in the Chinese economy, the party took the additional step of amending the constitution to recognize private-property rights, making China the first communist state to do so. At this point, there was a relatively relaxed relationship between the private sector, a rudimentary civil society, and nonstate-owned mass media. But the growth, and did so rapidly, provided that they did not challenge the party’s political monopoly. Then came China’s 2001 accession to the World Trade Organization, which brought an economic boon to the middle-class, among many other things. The most expensive. In the Xi era, China’s real estate value exceeds that of the United States and the European Union combined. But this intentionally created bubble is now on the verge of bursting. In China’s most fundamental institutions, both its economic monopoly has destabilized the Chinese banking system and fixed-ratio exchange rates. Using land as collateral, governments across China have borrowed massive amounts of bank credit at below-market rates. The country’s total debt-to-GDP ratio to 300% in the first quarter of 2019 and managed to erase itself from the highest in the world. Worse, the debt crisis is in China mortage loans that use land and financial securities as collateral. Now that the Chinese economy has slowed, the devalued mortgages behind these pro-cyclical debts are starting to weigh on the entire economic system, possibly triggering financial and fiscal crises. Moreover, including is the problem of state ownership, which combines highly decentralized political control, for example, over the entire banking system is almost completely under the state. Now that China’s ties with the world’s high-consumption advanced economies are weakening, the Chinese leadership per capita GDP (measured by purchasing power parity) comes in well below the US and Japan, whereas China’s per capita GDP today is only slightly above one-quarter of the United States. Even worse, as a consequence of the party’s decades-long “one-child policy,” China’s population growth rate has slowed to zero. This new demographic structure implies that both labor supply and domestic demand will run into deeper trouble. All of this means that China still has a long way to go just to catch up with the relative development level of the Soviet Union. Whether it will do so is an open question now that it is moving back to the failed Soviet system of the late 20th century. In the 1950s, one of the Communist Party of China’s most famous slogans was, “The Soviet Union’s today is our tomorrow.” That tomorrow may well have arrived, with the party on its way to transforming today’s China into a punitive authoritarian system. The party’s leaders apparently do not realize that the same problems that sank the Soviet system will also engulf China’s. With each passing day, that outcome appears more certain. **Courtesy: project syndicate**

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**Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a speech during the opening ceremony of the 20th National Congress of China’s ruling Communist Party in Beijing.**

*Photo: China / Xinhua, October 16, 2022*
The CICA environmental dimension has three priority areas: sustainable development, environment protection, and natural disaster management. Each priority area has areas: sustainable development, environment protection, and natural disaster management. The CICA environmental dimension so significant for the future of the CICA region.

According to the updated CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), the member states have specified the priorities for cooperation in environmental areas for the implementation of the CICA CBMs, such as sharing information on best practices concerning national policies on environmental protection and sustainable development, exchanging information on natural and industrial disasters in the countries, which, in their view, may affect their neighbors. In addition, seminars, workshops, conferences, and trainings are held within the priority areas of the CICA environmental dimension. In general, the topics coordinating and co-coordinating countries cover green transformation, sustainable development, low-carbon developments, waste management, carbon markets, natural disasters, and circular economy.

Recent history has shown that Asia is exposed to various climatic events and natural disasters. CICA member states were affected by swelling weather conditions, droughts, floods in 2022, as well as earthquakes in early 2023. For example, Pakistan has had a challenging year because of floods. According to the World Bank, at least 9 million people were displaced and over 1,700 people died as a result of this disaster. The cost of floods in Pakistan is around $40 billion. Moreover, the World Health Organization reports that over 7.1 million Bangladeshis were displaced by climate change in 2022. China, India, Thailand, and the Middle East also had difficulties due to climate change in 2022. Recently, the world has experienced a devastating sequence of earthquakes in Turkey. After the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the economic damage of the climate crisis and natural disasters has been taken into account, and the question of how fragile countries are for the future has come to the fore. CICA covers a broad geography, therefore observing various environmental characteristics. Member states are taking multiple actions to ensure sustainable development and environmental protection. The major environmental problems in Asia include desertification, climate change, lack of water resources, deforestation, earthquakes, and forest fires. Indeed, there are environmentally vulnerable CICA countries. Among the most vulnerable member states, according to the University of Notre Dame’s Vulnerability index score of the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, are Afghanistan in the 168th and Bangladesh in the 154th place. Pakistan ranks 147th, while Cambodia is in the 133rd place.

China and the USA, the countries with the highest carbon emissions, decided to engage in climate diplomacy at COP27. Furthermore, COP28 will take place in the United Arab Emirates, another CICA member state. From this point of view, it is a fact that the environmental theme becomes increasingly relevant in Asia.

The initiative of Kazakhstan’s President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to hold a high-level conference in 2024 in Astana to identify environmental challenges among the CICA member states was one of the major outcomes of the sixth CICA summit. Thanks to this meeting, the CICA region and the entire world will benefit from the potential establishment of the CICA Council for Environmental Cooperation.

Indeed, it will be in the interest of the CICA member states to hold the 2024 High-level Environmental Conference, where best practices can be shared among the CICA countries and a sustainable mutual dialogue is likely to be ensured. As a result, the CICA environmental dimension is expected to progress rapidly among other CBMs.

The 2024 high-level environmental conference is at the forefront of priority initiatives for the CICA Kazakh chairmanship. Kazakhstan’s goal of being carbon neutral by 2060 sets an example for other countries in the region. According to the CICA Secretary General Kairat Sarybay, the CICA member states are extensively introducing green technologies, pursuing the ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality. In addition, within the scope of the preparations for the conference on environment, the member states agree to arrange a series of expert meetings of the countries to develop goals and objectives for the conference.

There is no doubt that CICA is an evolving international organization, and its environmental dimension is developing its capabilities. With the dialogue and support of member states, the interest in environmental topics is increasing gradually in line with the region’s sustainable development goals. (The author is an expert on the environmental dimension and have experience of working in China and Turkey as a researcher on international organizations’ projects)
**ROADMAP**

Türkiye is all set to become a gas trading center

Türkiye is almost entirely dependent on imports to cover its energy needs, which leaves it vulnerable to rising costs that skyrocketed following Russia’s military operation in Ukraine. Domestic demand has increased since the pandemic. Türkiye imports gas mainly from Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia as well as liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar, the USA, Nigeria, and Algeria.

In November 2022, Iran increased its natural gas supply to Türkiye by 7.69 percent compared to the same period in 2021, bringing the overall amount to 857.13 million cubic meters and becoming the first biggest gas supplier. Azerbaijan has become the second biggest natural gas supplier of Türkiye and increased gas export to Türkiye by 23.45 percent amounting to 749.9 million cubic meters in November 2022. Russia is in third place with 746.16 million cubic meters. The country’s gas supply to Türkiye decreased by 53.87% compared to November 2021. Turkey’s annual gas consumption rose from 48 bcm in 2020 to 61 bcm in 2022. It is expected to stand at around 53.5 bcm in 2022. However, as the nation’s hydrocarbon explorations in the Black Sea near the Bosporus Strait in Istanbul, Türkiye.

In October 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed setting up a gas hub in Türkiye following explosions that damaged Russia’s Nord Stream gas pipelines under the Baltic Sea. Putin suggested developing transshipment and exchange terminals for Russian gas, potentially making Türkiye a significant center for sales of Russian gas to third countries. Erdogan backed the idea and the two countries instructed authorities to work on a roadmap, which is expected to be announced soon.

Türkiye is a well-positioned country to be a gas trading center that will support the energy transition across the world. Its strategic location on the EU and Asia, the transportation hub of sea, rail, and road, and the region’s high consumption rates make it a key player in the regional gas market. The country’s infrastructure and experience in gas trade and authorities have potential in Central Asia.

**Objective Development**

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**Transformation**

Public-private partnerships have potential in Central Asia

by Cassandra Colbert

Infrastructure is critical for accelerating economic growth, creating new jobs, and providing access to critical services to millions of people across Central Asia. But finding the money to support these essential projects can be difficult, especially given today’s challenging global headwinds and the strain the pandemic put on public resources. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can help address this funding gap by enabling governments to leverage private sector expertise, raise private capital, and optimize scarce public funds. More and more governments around the world are now using PPPs — along with traditional public procurement — to help deliver the infrastructure and services their citizens need and adapt to climate change. Central Asian countries are no exception, with many governments in the region now integrating PPPs into their development strategies.

One of Kazakhstan’s major public-private partnership projects was first signed in 2017, the same year it signed an agreement with the Karasay and Talgar regions of the province of Almaty.

Meanwhile, Türkiye is set to start pumping the natural gas it discovered in the Black Sea into the national grid by the end of March 2023. It has gradually discovered about 730 bcm of natural gas since August 2020, which is estimated to have a market value of $1 trillion. The current reserve is sufficient to meet Türkiye’s demand for 30 years; however, as the nation’s hydrocarbon explorations increase, this number may rise. About 10 million cubic meters (mcn) of gas per day is expected to be transferred in the initial phase, while the infrastructure has been set up to enable this figure to peak at 40 mcm through 2026.

In this context, the first step has been taken with Bulgaria, as the agreement includes an annual gas supply of about 1.5 bcm to Bulgaria until 2035, which will be 30 percent of the country’s annual gas consumption. Moreover, the agreement will give Bulgaria access to Türkiye’s gas network and LNG terminals to help bring in supplies. Therefore, in addition to Bulgaria, Türkiye is carrying out similar processes with North Macedonia, Romania, and Moldova.

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Türkiye has the infrastructure and experience in gas trade and authorities are taking steps for it to be a hub where regional benchmark prices are set. Turkish target is to bring together supplier and consumer countries and become a gas trading center where the benchmark price of gas is set.

Take Uzbekistan, where the government’s energy sector reforms paved the way for several groundbreaking renewable energy PPPs that are boosting the country’s electricity generation capacity and reducing its dependence on natural gas. For example, the Nur Navoi Solar project developed under the World Bank Group’s Scaling Solar Program, the country’s first competitively tendered PPP, has the capacity to power 31,000 households and offset nearly 150,000 tons of carbon emissions. Kazakhstan has also been implementing PPPs to meet its needs for better roads, railways, airports, and power and gas distribution networks. According to the Kazakhstan Center for PPPs, more than 1,000 PPP agreements and concessions with a total value of 2.2 trillion tenge have been concluded in the country, mostly in education, healthcare, energy, transport, and municipal utilities. Big Almaty Ring Road was the largest infrastructure project in Kazakhstan outside the oil and gas sector, and the first infrastructure PPP of its magnitude in Central Asia, when it reached financial close in 2020. The project will reduce traffic congestion and pollution in the Almaty city area and increase road safety, benefiting residents, commuters, and the economy. In Kyrgyzstan, the Ministry of Health signed the country’s first PPP in 2017, a groundbreaking agreement to finance, build, equip, and operate four dialysis centers covering three-quarters of the country’s population. The project was the first PPP in the region’s healthcare sector. This paved the way for a pipeline of PPP projects with more than $1 billion in potential private investments, according to the Kyrgyz PPP Center. This includes a competitive tender for a qualified airport operator to manage the Manas International Airport in Bishkek, which IFC is assisting the government with, and a strong commitment from the government.

Tajikistan, meanwhile, was the first Central Asian country to use PPPs to finance infrastructure development, including the Pamir Private Power project. Several more PPPs are currently being developed, including a 200 MW solar PV plant in the Sughd region to help the country diversify its energy mix and reduce its reliance on imported fuel. But while these achievements are to be lauded and PPPs can provide clear advantages for governments, much more could be done to unlock the private sector’s capital and expertise to meet the region’s vast infrastructure needs. The increasing number of competitive tendered PPPs are turning Central Asia into an important destination for international investors. (The author is International Finance Corporation’s senior manager for Central Asia)
Trade

**ROUTES**

**Baku port, a transport link between East and West**

The Baku International Sea Trade Port (Baku Port) is one of the main gateways for the transportation of goods from East to West and vice versa, and the expansion of its infrastructure will create alternative routes for the efficient and fast transportation of cargo. The current geopolitical and geo-economic realities have prompted global manufacturers of goods and cargo carriers to look for alternative ways to transport their goods. The cargo that previously passed through the territory of Russia, Ukraine and some other countries have been redirected to corridors passing through Azerbaijan, among other things. It is expected that in the coming years, shippers will only increase the flow of goods on these corridors. It should be noted that in 2022, over 6.3 million tons of cargo were transshipped through the Baku Port, which is 14 percent more than in 2021. During the reporting period, 52,276 TEU containers were handled, which is 16 percent more than in 2021. Transshipment of wheeled vehicles (TIR) grew by 31 percent to over 51,514 trucks, while passenger vehicle transshipment tripled.

In addition, in 2022, for the first time in the last three years, an increase in the transshipment of railcars was noted. It amounted to 27 percent - up to 38,692 wagons. It is worth emphasizing that about 90 percent of the cargo transshipped by the Baku Port is transit, and the post is an active participant in the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, and is also logistically connected to the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. For the sustainable provision of timely cargo transshipment, the Baku Port plans to expand its current capacity and transport network being created by Azerbaijan continues to invest in transshipment and unpacking of goods; moreover, a number of other logistics operations are important exporters of mineral fertilizers, having a large production potential (about 10 million tons per year), in connection with which Azerbaijan has already reached preliminary agreements to attract these cargoes to its territory for further transportation to the EU. Besides, to expand the port's capacity for transshipment of bulk cargo, a grain terminal is expected to be built in the short term.

The master plan for the second phase of the Port of Baku is being prepared by the Dutch Royal Haskoning DHV company. It is expected to be ready by mid-2023.

The flow of goods through Baku Port, particularly energy, from Central Asia to Europe has become a vital issue since the Ukraine situation commenced, with Europe looking for alternative routes.

In the medium and long term, as part of the second phase of the construction of the Baku Port, the preparation of the master plan is planned to be completed by mid-2023; the construction of a large container terminal is expected, which will increase the throughput from 100,000 to 500,000 TEU containers. It is also not excluded that a terminal for loading and unloading and further transportation of block trains will be built as part of the second phase. In addition, a multimodal logistics terminal will be built, which will be able to perform operations for the replacement of transport, packaging and unpacking of goods; moreover, a number of other logistics operations will lead to the creation of added value. Azerbaijan continues to invest in transport infrastructure, in particular roads and railways, and creates the historical connectivity of the region. The transport network being created by Azerbaijan is closely connected and complementary to other routes and corridors that have a significant impact on the development of international trade and the creation of a new supply chain. In this context, the role of the Baku Port is significant.

POPULARITY

**World loves and likes carpets of Turkmenistan**

One must agree that it is always nice to see when a product closely associated with the culture of your country finds fans among the residents of neighboring countries and abroad. This is what happens to the Turkmen carpet - the pride and a symbol of the thousand-year history of the people of Turkmenistan. The art of handmade carpet weaving is preserved to this day. Craftsmen from Turkmenistan continue to weave carpets that are distinguishable by their unique beauty and durability. In December 2019, the UNESCO included traditional carpet weaving in Turkmenistan in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Let’s start with the most recent fact — in January 2023, former Irish UFC champion, mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor shared a picture on his social network page where internet users immediately recognized the Turkmen carpet.

Traditionally, the carpets reflect aspects of Turkmen culture and spiritual traditions through patterns, color harmony and the density of the spaces between warps.

**American actress Angelina Jolie playing with her son Maddox on a Turkmen carpet.**

**Legendary musician Jimi Hendrix’s apartment in London, now a museum decorated with antiques, Persian rugs and traditional Turkmen carpets.**

**In the clip of the song L’amore Eternity (Eternal Love) of the Italian duo, rapper Fedez and singer Noemi, a Turkmen carpet can be seen.**

**In 2014, ex-chief creative director of the Burberry fashion house Christopher Bailey presented the men’s autumn-winter collection. Accessories received special attention at the show, namely bags made of various carpets, including Turkmen ones. A 2005 photo circulared on the internet, where Angelina Jolie plays with her first adopted son Maddox, also shows a Turkmen carpet. But not everyone knows that the filming for the June issue of Vanity Fair magazine took place not at the Hollywood actress’ house, but at the Ritz Hotel. By the way, the photo shoot was conducted by American portrait photographer Annie Leibovitz, known for her work with many world celebrities.**

Cultural Heritage of Mankind. Let’s start with the most recent fact — in January 2023, former Irish UFC champion, mixed martial arts fighter Conor McGregor shared a picture on his social network page where internet users immediately recognized the Turkmen carpet.

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Time to revisit the legacy of Shah-e-Hamadan (R.A.)
by Dr. Abid Gulzar

WIDELY KNOWN AS Hazrat Amir Jon in Central Asia and Shah-e-Hamadan in Indian sub-continent, Mir Syed Ali Hamadani was an illustrious Sufi, a mystic, a revolutionary, a visionary and above all an eminent humanist; who till his last breath remained a flag bearer of the unconditional love, benevolence, tolerance, accommodation and freedom of speech. The available data on his early life establishes the fact that he was born in Hamadan, Iran in a distinguished family of highest nobility to Sayed Shahab-ud-din and Sayyida Fatima on October 22, 1314; both having lineage with Prophet Mohammad’s (s.a.w.w) family. As revealed by Noor-ud-din Jaffar Badakhshi in Khulasatul Manaqib, the Amir was by birth a genius and a prolific learner, so much so that he memorized Qur’an at a very tender age of twelve under the guidance of his maternal uncle, Syed Ala-ud-din who was also a distinguished scholar and Sufi.

His spiritual and mystical journey continued under the patronage of established mystics and Sufis like Sheikh Mehmood Muskanazi, Sheikh Taqi-ud-din Ali Doosti Simnani, Sheikh Najm-ud-din Mohammad, Qutb-ud-din Yehya Neeshapuri and others. The Amir under their selfless guidance got spiritually metamorphosed to the extent that very few among the Sufis could be distinguished as having been attained the highest realms of mystical experience during their spiritual journey. This is why the Amir has comprehended the real message of Sufism that suggests the equality of mankind, oneness of purpose, no distinction on the pretext of caste, creed or color and the religion, region or the race. Though he was associated with Kuhrawiyah Mystic School (Tsilab) but was always open to ideas and experiences from different shades of opinion. His comprehension of these humanistic traits fostered strong during his extensive journeys and voyages that many sources like Lata’iful Ashrafi, Aneesul Salikeen and Saherfatul Awa’iyah provide ample evidence how Amir by way of achieving spiritual elevation and authoritativeness, could cross over different parts of globe in shortest span of time (Tae-ul-Ar). In these journeys, he not only had illuminated interactions with thousands of learned Sufis and saints but always prioritized to have first-hand experience and understanding of the agonies and anguishes of the suffering humanity. He used to sit with the common masses; listen to their distresses; so-lace them and address their needs. Therefore, contrary to the conventional Sufi way of life, preferring seclusion and solitude, away from the hustle and bustle of the masses, the Amir instead preferred to live with the people. His aura of influence is witnessed all across Iran, Central Asia and in the entire sub-continent; particularly in Kashmir. The authentic historical records reveal that amidst Timur’s wave of destruction and plunder all across Central Asia and Iran, Amir Jon, visited Kashmir three times. First, during the reign of Sultan Shahab-ud-din in 774/1372 to have a feel of the overall socio-economic and cultural milieu of the region. Before his arrival, this intellectually fertile land where Naga, Buddhist and Shavite scholars had made tremendous contributions to their respective philosophies and way of life through the centuries; was engulfed into the murky waters of mental and material corruption of both the ruling elite and the people who would exercise authority in the matters of faith. This suffocating environment had pushed the already caste ridden stratified society into sheer poverty, dejection and distress almost for two centuries before the arrival of Amir. The second arrival of Amir in 781/1379 was to experience a serious and well organized socio-economic and religious voyage towards the people of Kashmir to end their tumultuous state of affairs. The records suggest that the Amir arrived with 700 scholars, mystics and artisans of varied skills and crafts.

With the patronage of then Muslim ruler, Sultan Qutub-ud-din, Shah Hamadan was successful to propagate the tenants of Islamic faith all across the valley for the new faith witnessed a mass acceptance in view of its teachings of equality, patience and tolerance. Alongside that, the craftsmen taught the new skills and arts to common masses that within a span of few years, it resulted into real economic transformation of the region. During his tenures, it resulted into real economic transformation of the region. During his working visit to Kulob region of Tajikistan.

Entrance to the Mir Syed Ali Hamadani complex.

Wherein, he emphasizes that the ruler should regard himself not the master but as one of the governed and issue such orders that he would expect from a benevolent ruler if he was a subject himself. He should promote justice and treat wealth and marginalized with sympathy. There are many such fascinating pearls of wisdom in the treatise. If seen in context of time and space, it could be asserted that the treatise is a well-mentioned document depicting the same spirit embedded in the letter of Hazrat Ali (a.s) written to Malik Ashfar, the then governor of Egypt; enlightening the principals of good governance.

Hazrat Amir Jon visited Kashmir third time in 785/1384 but left shortly due to ill health; stayed at Pakhl for ten days at the request of the ruler, Sultan Muhammad. But left for heavenly abode on 25 Jamadil Awal (January 14) 786 / 1385 at the age of 73 at Kanar in the vicinity of Pakhl. His body was carried to Kharian Sharif in Tajikistan and was buried there on July 14 1385. Amir’s matchless scholarly contribution is with us in the form of treaties deliberated on varied issues related to spirituality, gnostic journey (Sair-e-Salok) and the stages of mystic experiences. But the fundamental emphasis laid in all his works like Minhajul Aareen, Risala-e-Dab Qadizay, Risala-e-Talginah, Risala-e-Zikriyah, Risala-e-Meethpeeyah, Risala-e-Zikriyah, Risala-e-Hallu Mustik, Risala-e-Mochhakah, Risala-e-Mir’atul Taleeen, Risala-e-Na’fshiyah, Risala-e-Hall-ul Faqool, Mawaddal-Attar Qurb, Matoohaat-e-Ameer and scores of his other treasures is the duty of man to be honest and just to himself and with his fellow beings. He ought to be always in the state of absolute surrender before his creator. This only, is the path to achieve lasting salvation (Sa’aadat-e-Ab’badi) and become the perfect man (Insaan-e-Kamil).

Today, in this world of shifting values; intolerance and impatience, hate and hegemony, injustice and inequality, terrorism and tragedy, it is high time to revisit the legacy of Hazrat Amir Jan, Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, who, as lime lighted above, calls the man to become human by discovering his own self. Live with tolerance and love alongside different shades of opinion. True, the great men are humanity’s legacy but the leaders, academics and mystic lovers of India, Tajikistan and Iran are much more indebted to shoulder the mission of enlightening the world by the humanistic teachings of Amir Jon for they own him equally than others.

(The author is Associate Professor, Center of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir)
**Entertainment**

**STREAM**

Watch Russian movies and TV shows for free!
Below is the most recent list of sources for contemporary and classic Russian and Soviet movies and TV series, as well as Russian Film Hub. This website has many Soviet-era and modern Russian movies in high quality and with English subtitles.

**Russian Film Hub.** This website has many Soviet-era and modern Russian movies in high quality and with English subtitles. The website positions itself as “definitive encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet cinema.” It also has a useful option to sort content by decades. “Amazing Russian” YouTube channel. The “Russian movies with English subtitles” playlist offers a variety of Russian films, both classic and contemporary. There’s a decent YouTube channel has a decent playlist with English subtitles. The company’s YouTube channel has a decent playlist with English subtitles. The website positions itself as “definitive encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet cinema.”

**ENCHANTING**

**Magic, mystical Chor-Chinor garden near Samarkand**

There are many mystical, place around the world surrounded by ancient legends and stories. Moreover, they are surrounded by facts, and the modern science is still trying to find explanation to it.

One of these places is a sycomore garden Chor-Chinor, located in a small ancient city of Urgut, only 50 km to the south-east of Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The place outstands with unusual cypress, the age of the oldest one is more than 1160 years, and the youngest one is 600 years old. It is to mention a giant tree, a real Titan, 16 meters in girth. The most interesting inside the tree hollow; the carved door reveals a hidden room with minimalistic collection of furniture. Nevertheless, the sycomore is alive and continues to grow. Once there was a Sufi school inside the tree, and served as a haunting place for few generations of the dervish. Entering the garden, you will find yourself in a magic world with unique aura, as if in another dimension. The first you will feel is tranquility that gifts the atmosphere of this holy place. Many people from across Central Asia pay a visit to this place seeking peace and healing. People come here with their problems searching for peace and wisdom. Moreover, visitors belong to different religions and social status. There is a brook starting from an unusual spring with a small pond. It is unusual because the spring comes from the middle of the stone similar to millstone. Here is the mystery that has been mentioned earlier. A group of geologists decided to study the underground waters of this place. For these purposes, it was agreed to extract a clod, and it turned out in the morning that the spring has ended, and the pond dried out over the night. This phenomenon is beyond scientific explanation. There are different legends related to the Chor-Chinor garden; one of them says that the founder of the garden is a mighty hero who had stolen magic stone from evil spirits and built it on this very spot. As soon as he placed the cobble stone, the spring waters came out. The hero decided to plant four cuttings of sycomore that were brought to him by four beautiful birds. These sycomore trees outlived the centuries, and turned into a wonderful garden.

In the beginning of the 20th century a giant mosque was erected on the territory of the park. Initially, the building was conceived and served as madrassah, educational institution. Today visitors enjoy exquisite walls of the building adorned with a grand dome. The mosque attracts attention with the fact that it stands not on the ground, but on a little slope, still having ideal proportions and without any inaccuracies.

**DILIGENCE**

**The space game**

The Russian film “Challenge,” filmed in space with Yulia Peresild in the title role, will be released on April 12, 2023, writes Gazeta.ru. Peresild and director Klim Shipenko went to the ISS on October 5, 2021, from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. On the Soyuz MS-19 spacecraft, under the guidance of cosmonaut Anton Shkaplerov, they took part in the filming of the first ever feature film in space. The film “Challenge” will become part of a scientific and educational project, within the framework of which it is planned to shoot a series of documentaries about enterprises in the rocket and space industry.

The 37-year-old Russian actress Yulia Peresild arrived on the International Space Station (ISS) on October 5, 2021, to shoot a feature film there with the director Klim Shipenko.

**Exchange**

**Saffron export of Iran**

According to the latest statistics released by the Iran Customs Administration on February 1, 2023, a total of 178 tons of saffron worth $127.75 million were exported from Iran to 59 countries in the first 10 months of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2022 – January 20, 2023). The UAE with 54 tons worth 61.73 million of imports was the biggest destination for Iranian saffron during the period. Financial Tribune reported that it was followed by Spain with 35 tons worth 38 million and China with 28 tons worth $32 million. Iran produces over 90% of all saffron produced in the world, 80% of which are exported. However, the share of Iran in the global trade of saffron is disproportionately low, as many customers of the Iranian spice buy it in bulk and re-export after packaging it to third countries.

**RESULTS**

**Foreign investment in Uzbekistan during 2017-2022**

**The institute of forecasting and development**

Investments and organizations as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. As a result of an active foreign policy, the geography of countries investing into the economy of Uzbekistan is expanding. By 2022, the number of stable investing countries-investors has grown to 50, the leading positions among which are occupied by Russia, China, Turkey, Germany and South Korea. By the end of 2022, the volume of inflow of foreign investments and loans into the country increased to $9.8 billion compared to $3.3 billion in 2017. As a result, the share of foreign investments and loans in the total volume of investments in the economy increased from 23.8% to 40.5%. The number of enterprises and organizations with foreign investment is also increasing every year: if in 2017 there were 5.5 thousand enterprises with foreign capital, by 2022 their number reached 15.8 thousand, of which 6.4 thousand are joint enterprises, and 9.3 thousand - completely foreign. Of the total number of enterprises with foreign investment, 30.5% operate in trade, 27.5% in industry, 8.0% in construction, 4.8% in agriculture, 4.1% in housing and public catering, 2.9% - in the field of transportation and storage, 4.8% - in the field of information and communications, 17.4% - in other industries.

**COMMODITY**

**Trans-Caspian route sees double growth**

**The VOLUME of FREIGHT traffic in Kazakhstan along the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (ITTR) increased by 2.5 times and reached 1.5 million tons in 2022, according to the Kazakhstans national railways company. The ITTR international association met on February 8 in Almaty to address the cargo flows, the development of container traffic, and the results of the association’s work in 2022. The export of Kazakhstans goods increased by 6.5 times compared to 2021 and reached 891,000 tons. Some 33,600 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) containers were transported in 2022; 33 percent more than in 2021.

**APPOINTMENT**

**New Secretary General of FICCI**

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the country’s apex business chamber, announced the appointment of Shailesh Pathak as Secretary General March 1 2023. In a career spanning 37 years, he has spent time in government as an IAS officer as well as headed large companies in the private sector. A law bachelor and a diploma holder in orthopedic pathology, Pathak has an MBA degree from Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow. He has over 40 publications on infrastructure, cities, finance and public policy.
On the Sidelines

**TRADITION**

**Uzbekistan, the most welcoming in Central Asia**

The Canadian company Arton Capital has announced the Welcoming Countries Rank 2023 ranking of the most welcoming countries in the world. The distribution of countries in the ranking is based on how many citizens can enter the country without a visa (by obtaining a visa on arrival or issuing an e-visa).

Taking the 25th place in the rating, Uzbekistan has become the most welcoming country among the Central Asian countries. Citizens of 198 countries can visit the country without a visa.

In the rating, Tajikistan is in the 49th place (the country is open for visa-free visits to citizens of 87 countries), Kyrgyzstan – the 53rd (77 countries), Kazakhstan – the 54th (77 countries), Azerbaijan – the 61st (63 countries), and Russia stands at the 62nd place (63 countries). The rating was immediately followed by citizens of 87 Asian countries. Citizens of 198 countries can visit the country without a visa.

**DESTINATION**

**Valley of Flowers in Uttarakhand**

**Valley of Flowers National Park** is an Indian national park which was established in 1982. It is located in Chamoli in the state of Uttarakhand and is known for its meadows of endemic alpine flowers and other high-altitude birds.

At 3532 to 3658 meters above sea level, the gentle landscape of the Valley of Flowers National Park complements the rugged mountain wilderness of Nanda Devi National Park to the east. Together, they encompass a unique transition zone between the mountain ranges of the Zanskar and Great Himalaya. The park stretches over an expanse of 87.50 square kilometers and it is about 8 km long and 2 km wide. The park lies completely in the temperate alpine zone. Both parks are encompassed in the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (223,674 ha) which is further surrounded by a buffer zone. Nanda Devi National Park Reserve is in the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The park is open only during summer from June to October as it is covered by heavy snow for the rest of the year. Getting to the Valley of Flowers requires a trek of about 17 kilometers. From Delhi, one can travel to Haridwar and take a bus to Rishikesh. From there, you can walk down to the river Ganges. From there, you can take a bus to Dehradun. From Dehradun, you can travel by bus to Joshimath, which is about 50 kilometers away from Joshimath. From Joshimath, you can take a bus to Govindghat. You can also take a taxi from Joshimath to Govindghat. The road is very scenic, and you can see the Himalayan mountains, the Ganges river, and the coniferous forests.

**SOCIETY**

**Women are in shortage in China!**

A video of a blind dating event in China where more than 20 men scattered with each other to meet a woman has highlighted the country's gender imbalance and the difficulty men face seeking a re-

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Kyrgyzstan launches new booking systems for tourists

Five online booking systems are being launched in Kyrgyzstan, according to the country's Tourism Development Fund. Accordingly, this will help attract more tourists and establish new business contacts. Five new online booking systems: Bronerik, Travel-Line, Shelter, Ostrovok.ru, and KontrOtel will allow local entrepreneurs to enter the multi-million-dollar CIS market and open up new opportunities for the country's tourism sector.

The online booking system is built into the hotel web site instead of the on-demand booking form. The client just needs to choose the category of the room, the date of arrival and departure. These systems reflect the availability of actual hotel rooms.

**LANDSCAPES**

**Scarlet cypress trees at Sukho Lake**

Autumn is beautiful in any city and in any region, but what could be more beautiful than bright scarlet trees above the mirror surface of the lake? If you are looking for just such landscapes for your photos, visit Lake Sukho near Anapa.

The height of cypresses reaches 30 meters. These trees are famous for their essential oils, which help with respiratory diseases. In the 1930s, the people decided to plant cypresses in an artificially created reservoir in the Kuban. The tree needs a special climate, and, as a rule, it does not take root anywhere except in North America. But they settled down in the Kuban! The tree is very resistant to water and decay processes.
**Trends**

** Representation **

**Tatar for me is the language of love:** Guzel Khasanova

Guzel Khasanova is a popular Tatar pop singer of Russia. Before participating in a music show and achieving a wave of popularity, she lived in Ulyanovsk and was brought up in a Tatar family. The folk traditions were used to be honored in her house, which left an imprint on her whole life and work. In 2014, she participated in the first all-Russian festival “Tatar Azyu” in Moscow and became “Miss Muscality.” In the beginning of her career, men, having learned about her nationality, resented the choice of her profession, criticized her appearance and started the conversation by studying her culinary abilities. But she loves Tatar language, “Tatar is the language of love.”

**PAGEANT**

** Russian woman crowned Mrs. Universe 2022 **

Elena Maximova, 34, from the Russian republic of Udmuria has won the title of Mrs. Universe 2022. The contest was held in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia from January 30 to February 5, the final of which was held on February 4 2023.Elena Maximova runs a network of language centers in Irkutsk. She has two children, loves to travel and has already been to 34 countries. This is the first time in the history of the contest, which has been held since 2007, when a representative of Russia wins. In total 120 women from China, Thailand, the Philippines, Japan, India, Belarus, Ukraine, Germany, Spain, the USA and other countries took part in the beauty pageant.

**CHAMPION**

** Kyrgyz wrestler takes first place in world ranking **

Kyrgyzstan’s Akhol Makhmuudov took the first place in the world ranking among Greco-Roman wrestlers in the weight category up to 77 kilograms, reports the Universal World Wrestling. Akhol won the World and Asian Championships, as well as the Islamic Games. According to the results of 2022, he took the second place in the world ranking. He was also recognized as the best Greco-Roman wrestler in Asia last year.

**UNIQUE TALENT**

**Chinese cakes with extra-ordinary and artistic looks**

At traditional Chinese markets, tangyuan (sugar people) are a popular draw, as they make cakes for children and adults alike. Name practically any animal or famous fictional character and, with great ease, the folk artisans will mold maltose syrup into a figure that can be easily held and eaten off a stick. With deft handwork, vendors seem to bring the molten brown liquid to life, as they shape it into a mouth-watering piece of art. In the past five years, however, pineapple “Zhou Yi” has been taking the concept to the next level, combining fondant cake-making skills with Chinese dough-sculpting techniques to create elaborate edible figurines of the country’s historical likenesses, Imperial Mausoleums, and poet Tang Wan of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) or mythical characters like a flying apsara (a fairy, or feitian in Chinese) with a mythological beast that is half fish and half bird.

**PERFORMING ARTS**

**Fidan Hajiyeva of Azerbaijan, known as Carmen**

Since 1996 Fidan Hajiyeva, popularly known as Carmen, has been a leading vocalist at the Azerbaijan State Opera and Ballet Theater, performing national and classical leading opera roles. She became Bakı’s youngest performer of the title role of Carmen in Georges Bizet’s Carmen opera. Italians delighted by Fidan’s voice invited her to study in the master-class of the Italian mezzo-soprano Bernadette Manica di Nissa at the Academy of Chigiana, where she won first prize in the final international competition.

**RISING STAR**

**A singing star at just 19!**

A year ago, few people in Kazakhstan had heard of singer Ayu, but one hit, “oozylijyn,” got people talking about her. To date, more than 20 thousand short clips (reads) have been recorded using the audio track of the song on Instagram alone. Ayuylmy Rusayn, known as Ayu, is a 15-year-old performer and artist. She made her debut in September 2022 with the single “syzmi.” But her song “oozylijyn,” took first place in the Top 10 in Kazakhstan Apple Music and fourth place in the top tracks on Spotify.

**CELEBRATING**

**Rauf Hajiyev A legend of music**

The prominent composer and People’s Artist of the USSR Rauf Hajiyev (1922-1995), Rauf Hajiyev, is the author of nearly 100 songs like My Azerbaijan. Spring is coming, Balı, Leyla, around 20 symphonic and classical compositions, six ballets, and nine operettas as well as soundtracks for twenty movies. His lyrical songs in a patriotic spirit, combining national motives and modern style, entered the repertoire of famous performers and played an important role in the development of the song genre. Caucasian Niece (1969), the world famous Rauf Hajiyev’s operetta, is characterized by its superb music, interesting storyline, and subtle humor. The operetta has become a treasure in the golden fund of the Soviet classics. For over 50 years, theater-goers from Russia, Belarus, Latvia, and other countries have been able to enjoy this work of art.
The surge in oil and metals exports was the growth’s primary driver. Thus, revenues from oil sales increased by 51 percent to $46.9 billion, copper by 15 percent to $13.7 billion, ferroalloys by 51 percent to $3.4 billion, uranium by 95 percent to $1.34 billion, and copper ores by 51 percent to $2.4 billion. Exports of wheat grew by 37 percent, oil products by 73 percent, zinc by 43 percent, and sulfur by 91 percent. In 2022, the country’s import volumes reached $50 billion for the first time, surpassing a 2013 record of $48.8 billion. Compared to 2021, the figure increased by 21 percent.

UZBEKISTAN TO EXPORT URANIUM TO INDIA

An agreement has been reached with the Department of Atomic Energy of India, as per which Uzbekistan’s state-owned company NavoiUran will start export of uranium to India from March 2023, the company reports. Reportedly, Indian officials visited the company facilities and got acquainted with the processes and preparation of production and for export. In particular, the natural uranium to be exported to India was inspected and a positive assessment of all the processes and operations was made. NavoiUran is currently exporting uranium to Japan, Canada, USA, and South Korea.

KAZAKHSTAN INCREASES EEU TRADE TURNOVER

The trade turnover of Kazakhstan with the EEU countries amounted to $28.31 billion in 2022, according to preliminary information from the Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan. This amount is 6.5% more compared to the same period of 2021, Contralanightlight reports. For the year, exports of goods amounted to $9.7 billion (24.3% more), imports - $18.6 billion (0.9% less). In the total volume of foreign trade turnover of Kazakhstan with the EEU countries, Russia occupies the first place, with which the trade turnover is 92.3%, followed by Kyrgyzstan - 4%, Belarus - 3.6% and Armenia - 0.1%. At the same time, the largest increase in exports with the EEU countries is noted for chemical elements, which doubled compared to the same period last year.

IRAN, CHINA LAUNCH GREEN CUSTOMS CORRIDOR

According to a senior Iranian official, Iran and China plan to launch a Green Customs Corridor aimed at facilitating growing trade between the two strategic partners. Foroud Asgari, the deputy head of the Iranian Customs Administration, told media that China is a major trade partner of Iran in terms of imports and exports. He said Iran will work to create as many customs corridors as possible with China under bilateral agreements so that business people from both countries will be able to handle imports and exports without delay. It is noteworthy here that Iran has already launched a Green Customs Corridor with Russia, which offers special incentives to business sectors of the two countries.

UZBEKISTAN FACILITATES CONDITIONS FOR INVESTORS

A favorable environment for investors has been created in Uzbekistan, there is an effective system for protecting the rights of investors, said the Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan, Jamshid Khodjaev, centralasiangazette reports. Since 2017, the volume of foreign direct investment in Uzbekistan has increased by 2.5 times and amounted to $8.6 billion. Import duties on almost 8,000 types of goods have decreased; 70 types of business licenses and 34 different types of permits have been cancelled. The procedure for registering new business entities has been simplified. Land plots are provided through online auctions. In general, work will be actively continued to improve the legal framework to create a favorable investment environment, Khodjaev said.

TURKMENISTAN INCREASES EXPORT OF ELECTRICITY

Turkmenistan increased electricity production by 11 percent year-on-year in 2022, according to the Electricity Market Report 2023 of the International Energy Agency (IEA); in comparison with 2021, Turkmenistan increased electricity exports to foreign countries by 30 percent over the past year. It was noted that such a significant increase in exports was due to an increase in production at a large complex of gas-fired power plants in the Mary region in the southeast of the country. Turkmenistan began exporting electricity to Kyrgyzstan in August 2021, while increasing these supplies to 1.7 TWh in the first half of 2022. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have agreed to increase electricity supplies to 4 TWh per year in October 2022, which could increase the security of electricity supply in Uzbekistan, the report said.

IRAN’S TRADE WITH TURKMENISTAN

The value of Iran’s trade with Turkmenistan (excluding crude oil exports) in the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21 January 2020) increased by 32.64 percent compared to the same period of last year, the Financial Tribune reported on February 21 2023 with reference to the Iran Customs Administration. During the period, Turkmenistan and Iran traded 1.1 million tons of products worth $189.65 million. Iran’s total trade turnover period with Caspian Sea littoral states in the first ten months reached 5.54 million tons in 2022, marking a 4.2 percent drop compared to the preceding year. China produced 79 million and 500 thousand tons, becoming top steel-producing country in the world, producing 2 million and 700 thousand tons of steel in the first month of 2023. The figure shows a 27.7 percent hike in the corresponding period of the preceding year. Steelmaking countries produced 1.878 million tons in 2022, marking a 4.2 percent drop compared to the preceding year. China produced 79 million and 500 thousand tons, becoming top steel-making country in the world. India produced 10 million and 900 thousand tons, ranking second. With production making country in the world. India produced 10 million and 900 thousand tons, ranking second. With production China produced 79 million and 500 thousand tons, becoming top steel-making country in the world.
**Outlook**

**Turkish men love romantic rumors**

Men in Türkiye quickly open up, but at some point, they begin to violate your boundaries and build their own rather rigidly.

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**She wants to live the best version of life**

To appear on the pages of Yogue is the dream of every model. Vanessa Kan of Kazakhstan was lucky enough to pose for the legendary publication almost at the very beginning of her career. The 22-year-old has been working as a model for almost three years and has done modelling for premium Rolex watches. Vanessa shares her emotions, "To be honest, I always have a lot of desires and goals, but my cherished dream is to live the best version of life!"

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**Bucking conventions and values!**

Success in China has traditionally been tied to marriage and parenthood amid societal pressures to have children. But younger Chinese are increasingly forging their own path as they seek to break away from what some see as constraints on their lives.

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**Cultural Exchange**

Grooms from India in Russia!

The best grooms are from India. This is not the tagline of some Indian matrimonial agency, but the much-publicized view of Russian writer Maria Arbatova. She says, "Indian men are a better match for Russian girls because they’re closer to Russians emotionally. Besides, the success of Indian soap operas in our country suggests a similarity in the idea of a family of Russian provincial girls and Indian suitors."

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You have to be prepared that in terms of importance you will be in third place with the Turk at best. First and foremost are his family and friends. But at the same time, surprisingly, if an outside woman openly shows sympathy for a Turkish man, in his thoughts she has immediately fallen into the category of easily accessible. Even if there was no sex, he will tell his friends that it is easy to have physical intimacy with such and such. Turkish society adores such rumors, they will spread quickly. Turkish males love to announce their relations to everyone they know.

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China’s population is declining as an increasing number of young couples are shunning parenthood. Government policy and demographic trends are out of step with each other, a gap that cannot be fixed by simply increasing the country’s birthrate.

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"It’s hard to sustain a satisfactory quality of life once you have children because your life becomes consumed by them. If we choose to have children, it comes at the expense of losing our individuality. In our opinion, children are not essential if we do get married," according to a young girl.

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In traditional Chinese culture, children are typically viewed as something of an insurance policy for being looked after in retirement.

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