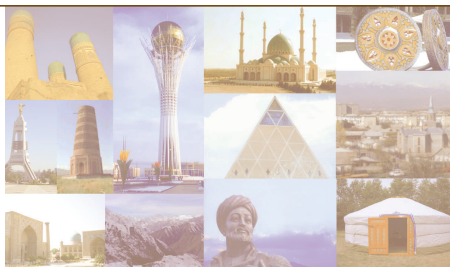


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CASA ASIA



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TURKMENISTAN

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Bimonthly article

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Highlights

On 27 October Turkmenistan celebrated its twentieth anniversary of independence. At the Council of Elders, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov summed up twenty years of development and outlined the challenges that lie ahead.

The Council of Elders awarded President Berdimuhamedov the title of hero of Turkmenistan and the “Altyn Ay” (gold crescent) medal.

The international company Gaffney, Cline & Associates (Great Britain) has finalized the second phase of the independent audit of Turkmenistan’s largest gas fields reserves -southern Yoloten-Osman, Minara and Yashlar- comprising 26.2 trillion cubic meters of gas. Jim Gillett, the company’s manager for business development, said that these figures may be higher as the limits of the northwestern, southeastern and western borders of the unique Turkmen field Southern Yoloten-Osman have yet to be defined.

Foreign and international policy

UN General Assembly

At the 66th session of the UN General Assembly, President Berdimuhamedov put forward new initiatives, among which the creation of an inter-regional energy dialogue under UN auspices to provide for a reliable and stable transit of energy to international markets. He also spoke of the Caspian Environment Forum which will consolidate joint efforts to protect the environment in the Caspian Basin at global, regional and national levels, and the establishment of the UN Interregional Centre to solve problems related with climate change.

Energy cooperation with Europe

The fourth meeting of the Turkmen-Austrian joint commission in Vienna and the meeting with the Austrian delegation headed by Ursula Fahringer, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Austria to Turkmenistan, gave a new stimulus to cooperation between the two countries.

In October, Austrian President Heinz Fischer paid an official visit to Turkmenistan. Austria considers itself a link between Turkmenistan and the European Union. During the visit Fischer noted the great interest of European countries in natural gas supplies from Turkmenistan and expressed their expectations for cooperation in energy projects.

As the result of the meeting, the Turkmen-Austrian memorandum of understanding was signed. The memorandum outlined the significance of intensifying cooperation on energy projects. Heinz Fischer and the Austrian delegation took part in the Turkmen-Austrian business forum in Ashgabat.

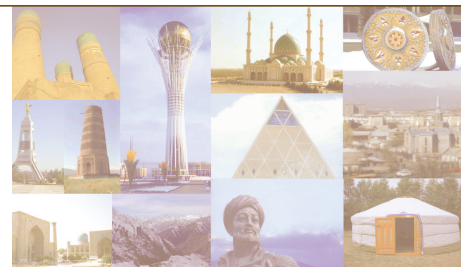
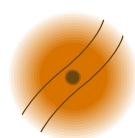
The establishment of close cooperation in fuel, energy and other sectors of economy was discussed at the meeting with a delegation of top business circles of Great Britain, led by Ronald Nash, the co-chair of the Turkmen-British Trade and Industry Council.

Relations with other European countries

A Romanian delegation headed by first deputy foreign minister of Romania and state secretary for European affairs Bogdan Aurescu arrived in Turkmenistan to participate in the Turkmen-Romanian consultations.

The sides discussed strengthening cooperation between Turkmenistan and Romania in international relations, economy, trade and energy, and in cultural and humanitarian fields.

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Meetings with the delegation headed by the chairman of the regional council of Veneto region of Italy Klodovaldo Ruffato enhanced the development of the Turkmen-Italian dialogue. The delegation visited the historical-cultural reserve of "Ancient Merv", where the Turkmen-Italian expedition of the National Turkmen Protection, Study and Restoration of historical and cultural Monuments and "Venice-East" Research Centre carries out archaeological works.

The EU delegation headed by Norbert Joustén, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the European Union in Turkmenistan (with residence in Astana), was received by the government of Turkmenistan. The sides exchanged views on the prospective directions of the growing partnership between Turkmenistan and the EU.

International organizations

A series of meetings and consultations under UN auspices was held in Ashgabat covering the issues of organizing a high level international meeting and inter-Afghan talks. The settlement of Afghan issues was also on the agenda of the meetings with Patrick Meinhardt, a Bundestag deputy and member of the German-Central Asian Parliamentary Group of Bundestag, and the UN Secretary General's special representative for Afghanistan, Staffan de Mistura.

Numerous meetings with international organizations were held in different ministries and departments of Turkmenistan.

The meeting with UNDP international expert Juris Gromovs was devoted to the exchange of international experience in the electoral system.

A delegation headed by the representative of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime Miwa Kat was received at the foreign affairs ministry.

Saber Azam, the regional representative for Central Asia of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees held a meeting with the head of the Turkmen parliament.

The executive secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe and Deputy Secretary General Jan Kubis held a meeting with the national media representatives in the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

The OSCE delegation headed by Dunya Mijatovic discussed prospects of cooperation between Turkmenistan and the OSCE in the field of mass media.

Issues related with further strengthening cooperation between Turkmenistan and OSCE within the framework of existing and new joint projects were on the agenda of the meeting of Turkmen officials with the OSCE delegation headed by OSCE High Commissioner for national minorities Knut Vollebaek.

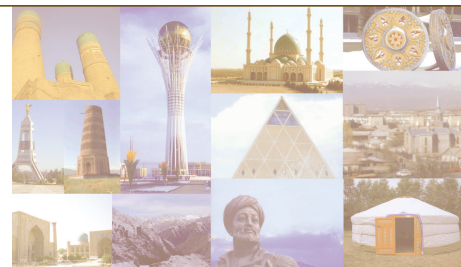
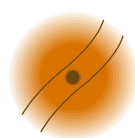
Caspian region

Managers and specialists of water transport structures from Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, and representatives of inter-regional program for the development of the TRACECA transport corridor "Europe-Caucasus-Asia" attended the third meeting of heads of administrations of Caspian state seaports.

Turkmenistan-Russia

Business representatives from eight regions of the Russian Federation took part in the third Turkmen-Russian economic forum "A new level of inter-regional cooperation - a pledge of a new quality of life for peoples of Turkmenistan and Russia" held in Ashgabat. The delegation from Astrakhan region arrived in the Turkmen capital to discuss prospects of participating in national programmes on modernizing trains and fishing vessels.

Rustam Minnikhanov, President of Tatarstan, arrived in Ashgabat to take part in the twentieth indepen-



dence anniversary celebrations. During his visit, Minnikhanov held a meeting with the President of Turkmenistan at which the two men discussed the implementation of existing joint projects and outlined the prospects of their activities.

Cooperation with China

The forthcoming official visit to China was discussed at the meeting of President Berdimuhamedov and Meng Jianzhu, China's minister of public security, and Cheng Guoping, deputy minister of foreign affairs.

The delegation representing China headed by Liu Tienan, deputy chairman of the State Committee on Development and Reform Commission of China and head of the State Agency for Energy, arrived in Turkmenistan to attend the first meeting of the Turkmen-Chinese Sub-committee on Energy Cooperation, with an agenda that focused on increasing gas supplies from Turkmenistan to China.

Internal affairs of the country

The meeting of the central committee on elections and referendums of Turkmenistan took place in Ashgabat and was devoted to the presidential elections, which will take place on 12 February 2012. Citizens abroad will be able to vote in polls that are to be created under the diplomatic missions of Turkmenistan.

The minister of petroleum and mineral resources of Turkmenistan Bayramgeldi Nedirow took part in a bilateral meeting in New Delhi. The main purpose of the meeting was the discussion of issues related with the TAPI pipeline project.

The octagonal star of Oguz Khan - the main decoration of the Turkmenistan broadcasting Centre in Ashgabat- was designated a Guinness world record.

Turkmenistan launched the project with the creation of a virtual Presidential Museum, designed as a virtual gallery of Turkmen art. In addition to art galleries, the museum will present a super-course on health care issues in the context of implementing the millennium development goals. The idea of creating the virtual museum was welcomed by Google.

Economy and business enterprises

Turkmenistan's Mejlis considered and unanimously adopted the draft Law on the state budget 2012. The budget provides for a significant increase in the funds allocated to the development of education, health, culture, the system of state social security and housing services.

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