PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN KAZAKHSTAN

On June 9, extraordinary presidential elections took place in Kazakhstan. The winner was the current president Qasym-Jomart Toqayev, who received 6,539,715 or 70.96% of the votes.

According to the Member of the Central Election Commission, Lyazzat Suleimen, other candidates received as follows:
- Zhambyl Akhmetbekov won 167,649 votes or 1.82% of the votes,
- Daniya Yespaeva – 465,714 or 5.05%,
- Amirzhan Qosanov – 1,495,491 or 16.23%,
- Toleutai Rakimbekov – 280,451 or 3.04%,
- Amangeldy Taspikhov – 182,898 or 1.98%,
- Sadybek Tugel - 84,582 or 0.92%.

Today we have completed the election campaign that has been going on for the last two months. Final results of the elections were summed up; the president of Kazakhstan was elected. I congratulate everyone on this important state event, - said the chairman of the Central Election Commission, Berik Imashev.

It should be noted that, as experts note, the representative of the political opposition, Amirzhan Qosanov for the first time had such an impressive result. This indicates the development of the democratic process in Kazakhstan.

On June 12, the inauguration of the President of Kazakhstan took place in Nur-Sultan. President Q.-J. Toqayev received a number of congratulations from heads of various states of the world and international organizations.

The people of Kazakhstan hope to preserve stability and further progressive development with new president Qasym-Jomart Toqayev.

SCO SUMMIT TOOK PLACE IN BISHKEK

On June 14, the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held in the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek; heads of two Turkic states, the President of Kazakhstan Qasym-Jomart Toqayev and the President of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbay Jeenbekov took part in the summit.

During the summit, meetings of heads of the SCO member states were held in a narrow and expanded format. Following the summit, it is planned to sign and adopt a number of documents.

Q.-J. Toqayev held a number of bilateral meetings, among them are meetings with President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sooronbay Jeenbekov, Chairman of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping, and President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani. S. Jeenbekov held bilateral meetings with President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping, as well as with President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin.

Following the SCO summit, the Bishkek Declaration was adopted, which emphasized the need for a joint struggle against separatism, terrorism and extremism. Moreover, the parties agreed to
jointly fight protectionism in world trade and cross-border crime, as well as to build a polycentric world order.

In addition, 14 documents were signed by heads of the SCO member states, namely:
- The decision to approve the Work Plan (2019-2020) for execution of the Action Program on the implementation of the Anti-Drug Strategy of the SCO member states for 2018-2023;
- The decision to approve Regulations of the Forum of Heads of Regions of the SCO Member States;
- The decision to approve the Concept of cooperation of the SCO member states in the field of digitalization and information and communication technologies;
- The decision to approve the Program for development of interregional cooperation of the SCO member states;
- The decision to approve the SCO Secretary-General’s report on the activities of the Organization over the past year;
- The decision to approve the Report of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure Council on the activities of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure in 2018;
- The decision on approval of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Concept of cooperation of the SCO member states in the field of environmental protection for 2019-2021;
- The decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs;
- The decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the World Tourism Organization;
- The decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the Astana International Financial Center;
- The decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization;
- The decision to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;
- The decision to sign the Roadmap for Further Action of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group;
- Information message on the results of the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (adopted without signing).

Within the framework of the meeting, the heads of state bodies of the SCO member countries signed seven agreements.
- Agreement between the governments of the SCO member states on cooperation in the field of mass media;
- Agreement between the authorized bodies of the SCO member states on cooperation in the field of physical culture and sports;
- A plan of basic measures for the development of cooperation of the SCO member states in the field of health care for 2019-2021;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the World Tourism Organization;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the Astana International Financial Center;
- Roadmap for further actions of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group.
It should be noted that special attention at the summit was paid to signing of the Roadmap of cooperation between the SCO and Afghanistan, which is designed to help in the reconstruction of the country. The Roadmap sums up the work of the SCO-Afghanistan contact group, the last meeting of which was held in Bishkek on April 19.

**MEETING OF MINISTERS OF DEFENSE OF AZERBAIJAN AND TURKEY**

On June 10, the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Colonel-General Zakir Hasanov met with the Minister of National Defense of the Republic of Turkey Hulusi Akar in the city of Nakhchivan. The purpose of his visit to Azerbaijan is to observe the joint Azerbaijani-Turkish tactical exercises “Indestructible Brotherhood-2019”.

Before the meeting, the Turkish minister laid a wreath at the Heydar Aliyev monument, erected in the center of Nakhchivan, and visited the Heydar Aliyev Museum. H. Akar also laid a wreath at the bust of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

The Turkish delegation visited the Alley of Martyrs, where laid flowers on graves of Azerbaijani soldiers who fell for independence and territorial integrity of their country.

During the meeting, held with the participation of delegations, the Minister of Defense of Azerbaijan, welcoming guests, has stressed that military cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey is built on fraternal and friendly relations, adding that these relations are constantly developing and meet interests of both countries.

In turn, Turkish Minister expressed satisfaction with the fraternal and friendly relationship and the level of fruitful cooperation between two countries. The guest spoke about significance of joint military exercises conducted with the participation of various types of troops, as well as reciprocal visits and meetings of military specialists of two states.

During the meeting, the sides also exchanged views on other issues related to regional cooperation.

**PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA VISITED KYRGYZSTAN**

On June 12, President of Mongolia Haltmaagiin Battulga arrived in Kyrgyzstan on an official visit. Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Muhammedkaliy Abylgaziev met the honorary guest. Within the framework of the visit, H. Battulga met with the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sooronbay Jeenbekov.

Following the meeting, the heads of state signed a number of bilateral documents.

In addition, the President of Mongolia took part in the regular meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO member states, and met with the top officials of Kyrgyzstan.

He took part in the opening of the Embassy of Mongolia in Kyrgyzstan.
At the end of his visit to Kyrgyzstan, Haltmaagiin Battulga visited the Ata-Beyit memorial complex.

EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT COMES TO UZBEKISTAN

On June 10, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev received a delegation of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), headed by its President, Suma Chakrabarti.

This is the third visit of the head of the EBRD to Uzbekistan in the last two years. During the meeting, the main directions of the development of practical cooperation were substantively examined, including issues of accelerating investment projects and the development of loans, expanding the assistance provided in promoting economic reforms, creating a favorable business environment and investment climate in the country.

In October last year, the Bank’s country strategy for Uzbekistan was adopted. Today, development and implementation of reforms in the energy, banking and financial sectors, in development of the capital market and improvement of the competitive environment in the Republic of Uzbekistan is underway with the support of EBRD experts.

“The portfolio of joint projects is increasing. Loan agreements have been signed and priority investment projects are being prepared to modernize the energy and utilities infrastructure in regions of the republic with loans in excess of $600 million. Projects worth over $100 million have been invested in private sector,” the press service of the President of Uzbekistan noted.

In addition, promising socially significant programs and projects worth about $ 800 million are developed. The European Bank’s representative office in Tashkent is actively involved in the process, and it is planned to open its branches in Andijan and other regions of the country.

TURKMENISTAN RATIFIES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH AFGHANISTAN

On June 11, the Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan ratified the Agreement on Strategic Partnership between Turkmenistan and Afghanistan. This document was signed by the heads of two neighboring states - Presidents Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Ashraf Ghani in Ashgabat in early 2019.

Earlier, intergovernmental agreements on customs cooperation and air communication, as well as memorandums of understanding in the oil and gas sector were signed between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan.

The parties also agreed to increase electricity supplies to Herat province in Afghanistan. Ashgabat is in favor of providing large-scale assistance to Kabul through the implementation of large infrastructure projects.

ANCIENT UNDERWATER CITY WAS FOUND IN TURKEY
On June 10, in the center of the historical region of Cappadocia, Turkey, an ancient city was discovered, partially submerged under water. According to experts, the age of the find is about 5 thousand years.

It was reported that earlier residents of Calis village began to complain to the authorities that water suddenly started flowing into their houses, but none of them could ever understand where it comes from.

Specialists began searching for the causes and found a hidden tunnel. When they passed through it, they stumbled upon a whole underground city. Flooded houses were located directly above the ancient city.

The city has a length of about 5 kilometers. It was discovered 25 years ago, when a small child accidentally fell into the tunnel. However, the authorities decided to simply block all entrances.