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Kazajstán



Kazakhstan focuses on coalbed methane production

ASTANA (TCA) — Kazakhstan's gas production and transportation company KazTransGas and Saryarka social-entrepreneurial corporation on April 3 signed a cooperation agreement for a project to explore coalbed methane at the Karaganda coal field, KazTransGas said.

The two companies will conduct joint exploration and research works to develop the most optimal coalbed methane production technology at the Karaganda coal field.

The project is being implemented in accordance with a personal instruction of the President of Kazakhstan.

Earlier this year, KazTransGas and Gazprom Dobycha Kuznetsk, a subsidiary of Russian gas giant Gazprom, signed a memorandum of cooperation in exploration and production of coalbed methane in Kazakhstan.

The document provides for development of more effective technologies of coalbed methane production — from geological prospecting to commercial use. To achieve the goals of the project, the parties would exchange information, create joint ventures, and implement a pilot project for exploration and production of coalbed methane.



“Coalbed methane is an innovation direction in hydrocarbon production, and a non-traditional energy source whose forecasted reserves allow considering it as an alternative component of Kazakhstan’s fuel and energy base. The study of this issue is important and in future it may become an alternative option for gasification of central and northern regions of Kazakhstan,” the Kazakh company said in a press release.

Coalbed methane (CBM or coal-bed methane) is a form of natural gas extracted from coal beds. In recent decades it has become an important source of energy in the United States, Canada, Australia, and other countries.

Fuente: Timesca

Kazakhstan Railways USD 23 billion assets sale in 2014

Kazakhstan Railways (KTZ), the largest subsidiary of Sovereign Wealth Fund «Samruk-Kazyna», has tendered 35 subsidiaries and affiliated organizations, as part of the second wave of the privatization programme carried out by the fund.

Since the beginning of the assets sale in 2014, KTZ has sold 14 subsidiaries and affiliated organizations, for more than USD 23 billion (KZT 265 million).

On the 1st of April, KTZ signed a KZT 1.78 bn contract for the sale of 100% shares of JSC "Center of transport service" (CTS). The company provides legal services to individuals and rail access routes, including the provision of access roads for the passage of rolling stock, shunting, loading unloading, and other technological operations of the transportation process.

Mandatory provisions of a contract are the maintenance of the business profile and the state throughout the year, also the conclusion of a collective agreement with employees of KTZ.

Fuente:Zakon.kz

TCO Plans to Press Ahead with Expansion at Tengiz Despite Low Oil Prices

ASTANA – The twofold drop in oil prices on the world market didn’t change the investment strategy of Tengizchevroil. The company, a joint venture between Chevron (50 %), ExxonMobil (25%), KazMunayGas (20%) and LUKOil (5%), is developing another major expansion at its Tengiz field in the Atyrau region which, when completed, will increase oil production from the current 24 million tonnes to 36 million tonnes per year.

The third-generation plant, part of the so-called Future Growth Project, will be among the most-technologically advanced in the world. Despite financial difficulties faced by oil companies due to lower oil prices, Tengizchevroil made the decision to continue to progress in critical areas, including infrastructure,



camps and site preparation activities already underway at Tengiz, said its supply chain manager Jerry Jacobson.

Tengizchevroil has already concluded 30 contracts for construction work and supply of the necessary equipment to the amount of \$1 billion. Sixty-six percent of this amount is local Kazakh content, he added.

Preliminary design has been completed, but detailed design work will be made in Atyrau, Almaty, Aktau, the U.K. and the U.S. Project infrastructure works are in process and construction is expected to be finished in 2019, as quoted by the ceeconstruction.com website.

“To date, early and preliminary work on construction sites is being conducted at the deposit; that is the construction of the new camp and building infrastructure for future facilities for the project,” said Murat Munbayev, Tengizchevroil head of strategic planning.

First Vice-Minister of Energy Uzakbai Karabalin spoke about the threefold increase of resource base in the state at the March 12 Kazakhstan geology, oil and gas forum. The forecast is based on the results of a full-scale study of 15 sedimentary basins in the country. The review, pursued in recent years, showed that deep-lying resources of the Caspian Sea trench are estimated to contain 67 billion tonnes of coal equivalent and 27 billion tonnes of oil equivalent, according to the [EnergoNews](http://EnergoNews.com) website.

Fuente: The Astana Times

Almaty on route to financial hub role in Central Asia: its own legislation to provide security for investments

Talks about Almaty becoming the financial hub of Central Asia have resurfaced last summer, when Kairat Kelimbetov, Governor of Kazakhstan's central bank, talked about the city's potential on the international financial arena.

Kelimbetov talked about revisiting the Concept of Developing Almaty as a Financial Center. Earlier, Kazakhstan's Minister of Finance Bakhyt Sultanov said that a conceptual document on development of a separate legislation for Almaty was being considered.

“Almaty has already become a financial center. In some terms, the city has been recognized and rated as one. But, for Almaty to be more attractive for businesses, first of all the city needs a specific legislation and secondly, there has to be a mechanism for comprehensive protection of investments and investors in place. That is why we are considering introduction of an international commercial court and a separate legislation altogether convenient for investors. This can be achieved fairly soon,” Sultanov told the journalists.



In response to the question on whether Almaty as a regional financial hub would be getting its own legislation, the Minister confirmed that institutions responsible for this matter were considering the possibility.

“Yes, this possibility is being considered. For instance, the usage of the British legislation on the territory of Almaty as the regional financial hub. The concept is at consideration stage yet,” Bakhyt Sultanov stressed.

On March 11, 2015 President Nursultan Nazarbayev talked about the importance of creating a special status for Almaty during the Nur Otan party congress. “The process of establishing Almaty as a financial center has stalled. It needs new dynamics. It requires fundamental changes. We need to vest Almaty with a special status and give it its own legislation for business like in Dubai and other countries. It is a necessity,” Nazarbayev stressed.

Going back to Kelimbetov, the concept for Almaty’s development into a financial hub by 2020 envisions strategic restructuring of the city’s infrastructure, business environment, financial infrastructure and creation of new education centers.

Fuente:TengrizNews

Kazakhstan targets at import substitution of basic food products

ASTANA (TCA) — Import substitution for the provision of basic food products is a priority issue for Kazakhstan, President Nursultan Nazarbayev said at a meeting with Kazakh Agriculture Minister Asylzhan Mamytbekov yesterday.

“It is necessary to start domestic production of food products that are currently imported, such as poultry meat, sausages, and apples. In general, we need to increase the processing and added value of agricultural produce,” the presidential press service quoted Nazarbayev as saying.

The agriculture minister said that in 2014 Kazakhstan saw a decrease in imports by 6 percent compared to 2013, and by 10 percent from the Eurasian Economic Union countries (Russia and Belarus). Kazakhstan annually imports agricultural produce and food products worth \$4 billion, including around \$1 billion worth of products that can not be produced in Kazakhstan.

President Nazarbayev earlier called on Kazakhstan citizens to buy domestic products.

“My proposal to organize in all shops and supermarkets sections with products ‘Made in Kazakhstan’ is not just words and another slogan — it is a patriotic act for all the Kazakhstanis,” Novosti-Kazakhstan quoted Nazarbayev as saying at the congress of the ruling Nur Otan party last month. “If we want to have all products of our own, we should consume domestic goods. I am 100 percent sure that our products are ecologically pure... Besides, it will help our business.”



Nazarbayev first called on Kazakhstanis to support domestic producers by launching a nationwide campaign "Made in Kazakhstan" in February.

As part of the campaign, sections with products of domestic manufacturers should be marked with special colored labels with the inscription "Made in Kazakhstan", to highlight Kazakhstan's products among other goods and make them more attractive to buyers.

Fuente: Timesca

Kazakhstan metallurgical companies look to new sales markets

ASTANA (TCA) — Iran is a very promising potential sales market for products of Kazakhstan's mining and metallurgical industry, Novosti-Kazakhstan reported citing Nikolai Radostovets, executive director of the Kazakhstan Association of Mining and Metallurgical Enterprises.

Radostovets told a media briefing yesterday that the Association hopes that Iran will become a more open country after lifting the sanctions. "We are very positive about the developments with regard to the sanctions against Iran. It is not just a large consumer but a consumer located close to us," he said.

According to Radostovets, since the beginning of this year the Kazakh government has taken unprecedented steps to support the mining and metallurgical sector, in particular by granting discounts for cargo shipment by rail transport. "I think that we would see a new, revised geography of our exports as early as in the second half of this year," he said.

Radostovets earlier said that metallurgical companies of Kazakhstan have to look to new sales markets for their products in East Asian and Arab countries.

"It is a very hard time for us now. Prices for almost all of our products have significantly lowered. Exports to Russia and China are on the decline. We are currently working on redirecting our products to East Asia and Japan. It is a very difficult task. We have started working more with East Asia, and are now considering Arab countries and Iran," Radostovets said at the 5th congress of Kazakhstan's mining and metallurgical industry last November.

"China is importing less. In Russia, sanctions have forced [local] companies to revise their plans. They are re-directing to the domestic market, and we now face a tougher competition. They [Russian producers] have started to sell at lower prices and we are becoming uncompetitive," Radostovets said.

He also said that Kazakhstan's metallurgical companies suggested amendments to the Tax Code to encourage metal processing inside Kazakhstan.

Fuente: Timesca



Agreement on constructing a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan to be signed before the end of June 2015

“The sides are thrashing out the details. The major agreement should be very detailedly considered so that the sides would have fewer issues when drafting the actual contracts and running the construction works (...) on Russia’s side the agreement has already been coordinated by respective agencies, whereas in Kazakhstan the process has taken longer than expected due to rearrangement of the country’s ministries and new requirements in place. We hope all the issues will be resolved in the nearest time (...) the agreement is likely to be signed in the H1 2015”, Mr. Ryabov told on the sidelines of an industrial exhibition held in Astana, the country’s capital city. According to him, Russia was ready to start construction of a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan as early as in 2014.

“The major point is for Kazakhstan to decide on the type and power of the plant. The Russian side has had a variety of suggestions, including a facility in Aktau. The latter has both associated gas and proximity to the Caspian Sea. Kazakhstan has suggested another place and Russia is ready to start the construction works there. Construction is of interest to us not only in terms of financial benefits; we believe it important to further the bilateral cooperation. We are interested in nuclear fuel, in uranium extracted in Kazakhstan. We are interested in the technology to be involved. There is a mutual interest”, he said, adding that some delays in signing the agreement is not an obstacle. “There are even some benefits. The more detailed in the agreement, the easier it will be to sign contracts and run the actual construction works”.

According to him, the value of the project hasn’t been defined yet.

Back in September 2014 Kazakhstan’s Government endorsed an agreement on cooperation to construct a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan. On the Kazakh side, the agreement was signed by the then Energy Minister Vladimir Shkolnik; Sergei Kirienko, Head of RosAtom, was the plenipotentiary on the Russian side.

Early 2014 the country’s President Nursultan Nazarbayev commissioned the Government to decide before the end of the Q1 2014 on the location, sources of investments and timing of constructing a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan.

In his Address to the Nation at the start of 2014, President Nursultan Nazarbayev elaborated why Kazakhstan needs to construct a nuclear power plant.

He emphasized that the future lies with nuclear power. “To use natural gas is a waste of resources. Instead, the gas could be used to produce high value added products. Kazakhstan is a global supplier of uranium (...) we do have all the capabilities [to develop the nuclear power industry]. Nuclear power is a clean energy we should take advantage of”, Nazarbayev said at the time.



“There may be more than one nuclear power plants (...) Their construction is not going to be cheap. Despite potential hazards, more than half of power generated in West Europe comes from nuclear power plants; Japan is not halting its nuclear power industry, either”.

In 2014 Kazakhstan produced 22 829 tons of uranium, up from 22 500 tons in 2013. KazAtomProm (including its shares in adjacent entities) was responsible for 13 156 tons of the amount.

Fuente: TengrizNews

Kazakhstan works new plans to boost mortgage market

After fears emerged in February that that the tenge will suffer devaluation in view of worsening economic factors and Russia' s financial slump, Kazakhstan's government is taking aggressive steps to stabilize the country's financial situation.

Kazakhstan has developed new measures to stimulate growth in its mortgage market after turbulence hit the sector. The mortgage market is now set to recover under the government's influence, reported Ranking.kz – analytic service .

The government plans to allocate 130 billion tenge (185.65 tenge = \$ 1) to the refinancing of residential mortgage loans disbursed during the period 2004-2009.

This is 15 percent of the total mortgage portfolio of banks (the entire mortgage loan portfolio of banks in January amounted to 916.5 billion tenge).

Back in December some Kazakhstan-based banks suspended their mortgage programs denominated in the tenge, the country's national currency. Experts assigned the problem to shortages of tenge. Later Kairat Kelimbetov, the Central Bank Governor, announced that banks would resume their lending operations shortly. A number of banks have stopped issuing mortgages in tenge, fearing the devaluation of the national currency in February will hit their bottom margin.

The average annual growth rate of the mortgage market in the corridor was 5 - 10 percent in the last five years said Ranking.kz. It said for comparison, the market of consumer would add an annual average of 25 percent. Astana has seen a steady increase of mortgage loan applications as part of its demographic boom. For five years, the population in the Kazakh capital has increased by 155.7 thousand people, up to 853 thousand people.

Earlier Kazakhstan's Central Bank said it will provide the country's banks with money to bolster mortgage programs. However, it noted that the measure did not include writing off debts as the only intent is to improve market conditions and make mortgages more available.



Of the top banks in the country, the People's Bank has accelerated its mortgage market growth. Following the publication of 2014 financial reports, the bank increased the volume of its mortgage loans by 30 percent to 139 billion tenge.

Another factor in the growth of the mortgage market is the refinancing of loans, according to Ranking.kz. It said the main goal of refinancing is to reduce the debt burden of the ultimate borrowers by reducing interest rates and / or increasing the loan period.

Refinancing loans increases the loyalty of existing customers and contributes to the emergence of new customers.

Three major banks will offer refinancing opportunities, while eight second-tier banks with 16 proposals compose the total market of refinancing.

The maximum loan amount depends on the value of the collateral (50-80 per cent) and the solvency of the borrower. PNB Kazakhstan offers the lowest maximum amount of refinancing - up to 7.5 million tenge, while VTB offers the highest - up to 120 million tenge.

The People's Bank offers refinancing with minimal (up to 36 months) and a maximum term (up to 360 months). The popular term is 20 years.

The lowest effective rate on the market as from the People's Bank is 12.3 percent, the highest is- in PNB Kazakhstan - 30.6 percent.

Fuente: AzerNews

Kazakh National Fund to allocate KZT 20 billion for domestic car manufacturers

A sum of KZT 35 billion will be allocated from the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan this year to support domestic machine builders as part of the anti-crisis plan, including KZT 20 billion for car manufacturers, KZT 10 billion for helicopter manufacturers and KZT 5 billion for passenger car manufacturers. It's expected to reduce the number of imported machines and maintain domestic production volumes.

Fuente:KazInform

Kapchagay solar power plant in Kazakhstan increases its electricity generation

During the first quarter of 2015, 630 kilowatt hours of electricity generated at the Kapchagay plant was sold to consumers. The volume of commercial electricity generation at the plant stood at 442,000 kilowatt hours in 2014.



The Kapchagay solar plant started selling electricity to the settlement and financial center for supporting renewable energy sources from October 9, 2014. Under the law of Kazakhstan, the center carries out the centralized sale and purchase of electricity produced by the facilities by using renewable energy sources, Trend reports.

Samruk-Energo company said that the state provides guarantees for the producers of "clean" electricity in Kazakhstan for connection to the network, long-term agreements on purchasing all of the produced electricity, as well as a guarantee for the purchase of the electricity produced at the fixed price.

Alongside rich hydrocarbon reserves, 60% of Kazakhstan's territory has the potential to use solar, wind and water energy.

Fuente: Vestnik Kavkaza

Kazzinc copper plant among 30 breakthrough projects of Kazakhstan - President Nazarbayev

UST-KAMENOGORSK. KAZINFORM - During his trip to East Kazakhstan region the Head of State familiarized himself with the copper plant of LLP "Kazzinc".

This project was implemented as part of a larger project of the Industrialization Map of Kazakhstan called "New metallurgy" and entered the 30 breakthrough projects of Kazakhstan. The project's implementation was conducted in the full glare of the President. That is why the plant was the first object visited by Nursultan Nazarbayev in the framework of his current trip to the region.

The Head of State called the project a breakthrough in the industrial history of our country. The technology and the scale of investment of "New metallurgy" project made it second to none in modern Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev said.

Head of State was demonstrated technological processes. As a sign of gratitude a furnace operator Nurlan Idrishev presented the President a symbolic sampler.

The meeting of Nursultan Nazarbayev and the team of "Kazzinc" later continued in an open area near the precious metals production plant.

Fuente:KazInform

"Kazakhmys" to spend KZT 55 bln to upgrade production in 2015

The Company continues an ambitious program of technical re-equipment of mining production and renovation of the existing facilities, as well as the implementation of corporate major projects.



"Kazakhmys" will invest KZT 55 billion tenge in modernization of production in 2015, Kazpravda.kz informs with reference to the press service of the company.

"In 2014, most of the investment was spent on maintaining and updating the existing equipment and the overall repair at the existing mines. Last year the company launched major projects in Karaganda region," - the press service informed.

Besides, the research institutes were involved in development of technological regulations for concentrating plants to improve the quality indicators of ore processing. Under the project "Western Nurkazgan", construction of crushing and conveying complex, reconstruction of "Balkhash" and "Karagaily" concentrators are completed. Production at Zhezkazgan copper plant was resumed.

In 2015, the corporation plans to allocate KZT 55 billion for development of the ore base and reconstruction of production, the maintenance of the current production, the energy sector, major repairs of buildings and equipment of Balkhash copper plant.

Fuente:Kazakhstan Pravda

Kazakhstan started exporting coal to Japan

The coal mining companies are looking for new sales markets.

Kazakhstan started exporting coal to Japan, chairman of the NCE Mining and Metallurgy Committee Nikolay Radostovets told a briefing in the Central Communications Service, Kazpravda.kz correspondent reports.

"We have repeatedly discussed the issue with Russia, and already January 1, 2015 Kazakhstan exporters received internal railway tariffs on the Russian ports. This has significantly reduced the cost of our products. We said that it was difficult to sell our coal, but on the other hand with decreased tariffs it became possible to carry coal to Japan, "- Nikolai Radostovets said.

"With the situation changing all the time, the companies are looking to more sales markets. A promising direction is Iran, which will hopefully be more open, when the sanctions are lifted. We hope to move to the Arab Emirates and other states.

But we must admit that all the new markets require that someone is gone from them. The world is divided, and there is a tough competition in it," - Radostovets said.

Therefore geography of our export may change already in the second half of the year, he added.

Fuente: Kazakhstan Pravda

Time to take a closer look at Central Asia



With the economic and financial sanctions against Iran expected to be lifted soon and Afghanistan seemingly moving towards a measure of stability, it is time we took a closer look at the mineral-rich and energy-abundant Central Asian region to see what is happening in the countries located in close proximity to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Turkmenistan has the fourth-largest natural gas reserves in the world; Kazakhstan has the second-largest oil reserves of the former Soviet Union, second only to Russia; Uzbekistan is a major producer of uranium (as is Kazakhstan) and has large natural gas reserves, as does, quite likely, Tajikistan; and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have significant hydropower potential. And the natural beauty of these two countries could boost a lucrative tourism sector, as could Uzbekistan's great Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bohkhara and Khiva.

Big neighbour and our all-weather friend China's economic influence is growing in the region at a fast pace. Beijing is very active in the region with its ambitious plans to advance Asian connectivity through overland and maritime routes. It is said to have committed tens of billions of dollars to building roads and rails to better connect its factories and markets in Asia and Europe. But that, it is believed, would only be possible if Afghanistan can connect its economy to the countries of Central Asia and South Asia, to China and to Europe, serving as a hub for regional energy markets and with reliable trade and transport links, benefiting the entire region.

Afghanistan expects to become a platform for cooperation in a vast region that extends from India to Azerbaijan and beyond. There is the Lapis Lazuli Corridor as well which would run through Afghanistan and Turkmenistan, across the Caspian to Georgia, and on to Turkey and Europe. China supports Afghanistan's transition; and it warily guards against extremist ideology among its youth.

Central Asia is located in close proximity to Iran, a country that shares many ancient cultural and economic ties with the region. And if the thaw in its relations with the US develops into business-like ties in times to come, Tehran would find itself in a position to serve as a gateway to Europe, as well as a gateway to India. Iran would also be able to help its Central Asian neighbours in water conservation, combating desertification and curbing drug trafficking. And Turkey is also very much interested in the region, given the Turkic influences there. At the time of disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkey had declared its intentions to exploit its Turkic influence to gain an economic foothold in the region.

The US, our friend but not of the all-weather variety, is already helping to build a regional energy market to connect Central Asia's tremendous supplies of natural gas and hydropower to 1.6 billion energy-hungry consumers in South Asia. The US support for the CASA-1000 electricity line is expected to help bring surplus hydro-electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan — where over 80 million people lack access to electricity. That's why, as part of the New Silk Road initiative, the US is helping develop the region's connectivity — improving trade and transport infrastructure, standardising customs and border procedures, and strengthening the links between energy producers and consumers. The US is also supporting



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Kazakhstan's efforts to join Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as members of the World Trade Organization, and it is expected that this long-sought goal would be realized this year.

The US does not see China's involvement in Central Asia in zero-sum terms. Its development of infrastructure in Central Asia is being regarded in Washington as fully complementary to US efforts. And in particular, the US sees an important role for China in supporting the transition in Afghanistan and advancing its own integration into the broader Asia region.

Where is Pakistan in this emerging economic and trade equation in a neighbouring region? As of today, no one seems to be even aware of our existence. And the reason why this is so is our continued refusal to see the tremendous economic potential for Pakistan in allowing India a transit route to Central Asia. India seemingly needs the route so badly that it would even be prepared perhaps, to revisit the proposed four-step Kashmir solution.

Fuente: <http://tribune.com.pk/>



Kirguistán



Five Years on, Has Kyrgyzstan's Democratic Revolution Put Down Roots?

On April 7, 2010, thousands of people crowded the streets of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan's small, mountainous, capital city and presided over the fall of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, the leader of the country's kleptocratic government. Clashes between protesters and security forces left 89 people dead that day, and Bakiyev fled the capital for exile in Belarus. A motley crew of opposition figures formed an interim government that pledged to end the corruption, violence, and despotism that has marked the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Five years later, democratic progress in Kyrgyzstan has been slow. As in the aftermath of the Tulip Revolution in 2005 that saw President Askar Akayev, Bakiyev's predecessor, removed through popular protests, the new leadership has largely failed to deliver on promises to reduce corruption. The rickety interim government that tried to fill the vacuum after Bakiyev's ouster passed a new constitution and moved the country to a mixed presidential-parliamentary system — an effort to prevent another leader from amassing too much power.

As the revolution marks its five-year anniversary, Kyrgyzstan's transition toward a democratic system faces its biggest litmus test yet as the country's politicians and parties prepare for elections in October amid economic uncertainty and interethnic tensions. "Unlike in the past, the current political system allows for real competition between politicians," Erica Marat, a Central Asia expert and an assistant professor at the National Defense University, told Foreign Policy.

But Kyrgyzstan's new constitution was not inspired by democratic idealism. It is deeply rooted in cold pragmatism. "The document was written on the assumption that all politicians are greedy and corrupt and that



safeguards are needed to prevent any politician or party from concentrating too much power,” said Marat. “Kyrgyzstan has chosen democracy by default.”

Despite the meager progress of reforms, there is evidence that new safeguards brought in after the 2010 revolution are working. Since taking power in 2011, President Almazbek Atambayev, the first leader to be elected under the new constitution, has led a high-profile anti-corruption campaign. But Kyrgyz media and analysts have accused the president of targeting his opponents as a way to gain influence within parliament.

Still, Kyrgyzstan’s political system has so far avoided slipping back into the soft authoritarianism of the past. “Most of the people in government are not democrats in background or outlook. But Atambayev and his inner circle do not control the economy like previous presidents,” said Marat. “It might not seem like it, but that’s progress.”

After taking power in the aftermath of the Tulip Revolution that overthrew Kyrgyzstan’s previous kleptocratic president, Bakiyev quickly imitated his predecessor, placing his brothers, sons, and other relatives into high profile political and economic posts. Bakiyev’s family effectively ran all facets of the national economy — including the drug trade. Companies allegedly owned by Maxim Bakiyev, the president’s son, benefited from lucrative contracts supplying fuel to the U.S. Manas air base, which served as a hub for American personnel and equipment transiting to Afghanistan. Moreover, Bakiyev and his inner circle were also suspected of having close ties to Kyrgyz organized crime bosses and may even have used those connections to assassinate political rivals.

The cartoonish nepotism and corruption of the past appear to have faded, but Kyrgyzstan’s future remains uncertain. One open wound is the country’s tense ethnic relations between Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan. In the aftermath of the 2010 revolution, interethnic violence broke out in June between the two communities. The interim government was unable to coordinate a response, and four days of riots left 420 dead and over 80,000 displaced, according the United Nations. A 2010 report from Human Rights Watch documented major abuses by the ethnic Kyrgyz security forces during the violence and its aftermath, including extrajudicial killings, police torture, and the denial of due process.

“Nearly five years on, the abuses carried out in June 2010 have still not been addressed by the authorities,” Mihra Rittmann, Central Asia researcher for Human Rights Watch, told FP. Discrimination against the Uzbek community is still ongoing, according to activists. On March 27, the offices of Bir Duino, a human rights NGO known for providing legal assistance to ethnic Uzbeks, were raided by the GKNB, the country’s KGB successor.

A likely effort to intimidate ethnic Uzbek activists, the raid also comes at a time when the Kyrgyz parliament is considering a Russian-style “foreign agents” bill that would restrict the activities of civic organizations that accept foreign funding. (Bir Duino has received money from the Soros foundation.) Similarly, parliament is also set to decide on another Russian-inspired bill that would ban so-called “LGBT propaganda.”



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“Kyrgyzstan has a strong civil society, but passing these bills would dramatically curtail the space for activism in the country,” said Rittmann.

But the biggest test for Kyrgyzstan’s young government could come later this year when the full effect of Russia’s economic downturn begins to take effect. Approximately 1 million Kyrgyz citizens work as migrant laborers in Russia, and total remittances to Kyrgyzstan equal 32 percent of the domestic economy. The weakened ruble and lower demand for labor in Russia are likely to reduce remittance flows back to Kyrgyzstan.

During the 2009 global financial crisis, remittances to Kyrgyzstan fell by 28 percent, according to World Bank data, and helped fuel popular anger at the Bakiyev regime, helping to spark the protests that sent Kyrgyzstan down the path of revolution five years ago. With similar storm clouds gathering once again, Kyrgyz politics could get ugly.

“Political parties are already targeting returned laborers as voters and want to tap into their anger for support. It could make nationalist and popular messages much more appealing, which would impede the pace of reforms,” Marat said.

As this fall’s elections draw nearer, Kyrgyzstan’s young political system will show whether reforms have taken hold or not. Five years ago, Kyrgyzstan’s leaders chose democracy by default. Time will tell if they do again.

Fuente: foreignpolicy.com

Pak-China Economic corridor opens opportunities of trade with Kyrgyzstan – Kubanychbek

The China economic corridor, when it is made operational, would provide the shortest route to connect Pakistan with Kyrgyzstan and other Central and South Asian countries, said H.E.Mr.Kubanychbek Toktorbaev.

Excellency said that both countries have good business potential that can be enhanced through frequent interaction of businessmen from both sides. He said that 300 Pakistani companies are running successful business in Kyrgyzstan and encouraged that more companies should plan to do business there. He said that Pakistani businessmen can invest in small energy projects to meet the energy requirements of Kyrgyzstan.

Highlighting the importance of resumption of direct flight between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan, he said it can significantly save travelling time, as direct flight from Islamabad to Bishkek reach in almost in one hour. He said that efforts are afoot for early resumption of direct flights.

In welcome address, Mr.Muzzamil Sabri, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the trade between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan is not up to the potential that needs to be enhanced through regular interaction of businessmen and identifying the trading opportunities by both sides.



He suggested that both sides should hold Joint Ministerial Commission meetings on regular basis. The 3rd Session of JMC was expected to be held in November, 2011 but could not be held yet.

The TDAP may sign an MOU of cooperation with the TPO of Kyrgyzstan to develop better interaction between the Trade Promotion Organizations of both the countries, he said. It was proposed that there should be regular exchange of trade delegations of potential products at least once in a year.

The informative seminars can be organized by Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan to brief the businessmen about the existing business opportunities, said President ICCI.

Meeting was attended by a large number of businessmen. Mr.Shakeel Munir, in his concluding remarks emphasized for greater linkage of private sectors of both sides.

Fuente: customstoday.com

Kyrgyzstan fights energy crisis with run-of-river hydropower

Kyrgyzstan will construct several dozen small hydroelectric power plants (HPPs) in different regions of the country within the next several of years, which will help the government overcome current energy crisis, according to the official secretary of the energy and industry ministry Batyrkul Baetov. Experts estimate that the project may cost between KGS 7-10 billion (US \$115-160 million).

Hydropower accounts for a significant part of Kyrgyzstan's energy portfolio and large-scale HPPs of the Toktogul reservoir produce 70 percent of all energy in Kyrgyzstan, according to official data of the Energy and Industry Ministry. The energy crisis started two years ago when water levels of the Toktogul reservoir decreased, which hurt the local HPPs energy production.

The government has taken a number of measures to rectify the situation, and even enforced energy consumption limits. Kyrgyzstan suffers energy deficit of 2.4 billion kWh, so during the recent couple of years it had to import electricity from Kazakhstan. At the same time, the tariffs on energy in the country significantly jumped which provoked social discontent among the citizens.

Furthermore, official estimations show that the water flows in the country will continue to decrease until 2030 due to the reduction of glaciers, so the effectiveness of power generation at large HPPs may continue to decrease. The development of small HPPs will help this issue, and may lead to investment in other sources of renewable energy, according to Baetov.



"Working with large HPPs, back in 2008 we developed the National Energy Program until 2025. At that time the share of renewable electricity in the energy balance of the country was 0.16 percent [excluding hydro power generating], while in developed countries it standing at 20 percent. Given the reduction of water inflow in 2030 due to the reduction of glaciers, we urgently need now to construct small HPPs," said Baetov.

Kyrgyzstan Energy and Industry Ministry estimated that the construction of small HPPs that don't require large water flows will produce an additional 5 to 7 billion kWh per year by 2025. "The role of this [power generation] industry can grow many times. Businesses already understand the opportunities. In the country recently it has been created Association of small HPPs. In long-term this is very profitable business. However, we should support it to decrease the payback period of small HPPs from current 18-20 to eight years," said Baetov.

On the issue of electricity imports, Baetov reported that between 2015 to 2016 Kyrgyzstan will be have to import 760 million kWh from Kazakhstan, while now the daily import is standing at 4 million kWh. These figures should be decreased gradually with the commissioning of HPPs, so the country may abandon import supplies approximately by 2019.

"So, today we have organized a catalyst in the development of small HPPs with the participation of experts, authorities and investors in order to be able to quickly and for little money to build them," added Baetov.

Fuente: <http://www.hydroworld.com/>

Kyrgyzstan to spend \$ 150 million for latest agricultural technology «The Times of Central Asia»

By the end of this year Kyrgyzstan plans to spend more than \$150 million for support and introduction of the latest technologies in the agricultural sector, Kyrgyzstan's First Deputy Prime Minister Taiyrbek Sarpashev said last Saturday at a meeting with farmers in the country's Talas province.

Sarpashev emphasized that improving the competitiveness and increasing the export potential of the Kyrgyz agricultural sector is only possible thanks to the government's support for the introduction of the latest innovation technologies.

"There are some advances in this direction but they need to be sped up and widely distributed," the governmental press service quoted the First Deputy Premier as saying. "By the end of this year it is planned to spend more than \$150 million for support and introduction of the latest technologies in the agricultural sector. Late in April the Aravan district (in southern Kyrgyzstan) will host a nationwide conference on the introduction of innovation technologies in the agricultural sector. I call on farmers to unite into cooperatives and take the latest agricultural machinery on leasing. Late in May we will have the 3rd international agro-industrial exhibition Aiyl-Agro, which will present the latest agricultural technology and equipment to farmers."



In January Deputy Agriculture Minister Janybek Kerimaliyev said that by the end of this year Kyrgyzstan plans to cover 10 percent of its farmland with drip irrigation.

"Today less than 1 percent of the farmland is covered with drip irrigation. By the year's end we plan to increase the figure up to 10 percent," Kerimaliyev told KyrTAG news agency.

The deputy minister said the government planned to exempt imported drip irrigation equipment from customs duties.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

Volume of trading on Kyrgyz Stock Exchange in March rises by 71 percent

Volume of trading on the Kyrgyz Stock Exchange in March rose by 71 percent, its press service reported.

According to it, also the number of securities that were traded increased by 11 percent. Generally in March, the stock market held 168 transactions totaling 606.41 million soms. At the same time transactions in the listed shares dominated - 91 percent of operations.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

Price of gasoline AI-92 in Bishkek, Chui and Jalal-Abad provinces decreases

Price of gasoline AI-92 in Bishkek, Chui and Jalal-Abad provinces decreased by 1 som, the Oil Traders Association of Kyrgyzstan reported.

According to it, the price of other brands of fuel remained the same. In Bishkek a liter of AI-92 now costs 36 soms.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

Ministry of Agriculture: State irrigation network is ready for growing season by 92 percent

State irrigation network in the KR is ready for growing season by 92 percent, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation reported.

According to the agency, a division of the Department of Water Resources and Land Reclamation completed the preparatory work for water facilities for irrigation. Repaired 353.9 km of canals (the planned 405.3 km, which is 87 percent), 1,089 waterworks (the planned 1,222, or 89 percent), 943 gauging stations (the planned 1,071, or 88 percent) and 91 pumping stations (the planned 103, or 88 percent). And carry out mechanized cleaning of canals from the solid sediment over 256.3 km.



During repair work on objects 1,708 people were involved, special equipment (57 excavators, 26 bulldozers, 14 tractors, 8 truck cranes and others).

Ortho-Tokoi, Papan reservoirs and Batken Water Management reported on the complete readiness of irrigation facilities to control vegetation period.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

Sergey Kapinos: Draft regulatory reform to create conditions for rapid social and economic growth in Kyrgyzstan

"Draft regulatory reform to create the conditions for rapid social and economic growth in Kyrgyzstan," Head of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek Sergey Kapinos said at the first meeting of the Council for Regulatory Reform.

According to him, the analysis of the legislation in the field of business requires a lot of work. "We shouldn't count on the success of the reform without diligent effort. First of all, the responsibility falls on the shoulders of the leaders of ministries and departments, -Sergey Kapinos says. - Regulatory reform will create more favorable conditions for domestic and foreign investors. The project is complex and multifaceted. Schedule delay can create additional problems."

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

IDB is ready to finance projects in health sector

Islamic Development Bank (IDB) is ready to finance social projects in Kyrgyzstan, including in the health sector, the press center of the Ministry of Health reported.

According to it, the head of department Talantbek Batyraliev met with the mission of regional office of the bank in the Kyrgyz Republic. Head of the delegation Hisham Taleb Maruf said that the two projects, submitted by the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic for the financing of the Arab Coordination Group, were approved in the relevant funds, the third is being considered.

It is noted that the Ministry of Health sent a draft of construction of the National Hospital Clinic of Neurosurgery (Kuwait Development Fund, the total cost - \$23,383,500); surgical building construction of urban children's hospital ambulance (Saudi Fund for Development, the total cost - \$30 million). a proposal of construction of the new building of the Republican Clinical Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Bishkek is being considered (total cost \$8,935,500).

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>



Fund of State Property Management: Revenues to national budget for I quarter of 2015 amount to 86.7 mln soms

Revenues to the national budget for I quarter of 2015 amounted to 86.7 million soms, the press service of the Fund of State Property Management reported.

It is noted that the plan comprised 2 billion 220 million soms, and the implementation of the index - 3.9 percent.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>

Volume of imports of electricity in Kyrgyzstan in March-April 2015 is 95.5 mln kWh

Volume of imports of electricity from Ekibastuz-1 LLP named after Bulat Nurzhanov in Kyrgyzstan in March-April 2015 is 95.5 million kWh, the press service of Electric Stations JSC reported to 24.kg news agency.

It is noted that the contract for the December-February 2015 was initially concluded with Zhambyl TPP JSC named after T.I.Baturov, from which 411.9 million kilowatt-hours of electricity were received. In this case, the supply of electricity depended on KazTransGas, which supplies gas to Zhambyl TPP.

"In the autumn-winter period the only source in southern Kazakhstan to import electricity in the KR on specifications was Zhambyl TPP. However, the warming in March 2015 made possible to import cheaper source of northern Kazakhstan - Ekibastuz-1 LLP named after Bulat Nurzhanov," the Press Secretary of the Office Tagzhana Aidaralieva said.

Fuente: <http://www.eng.24.kg/>



Tayikistán



Russia to raise its troops number in Tajikistan

By Sara Rajabova

Russia plans to increase the number of its troops deployed at its military base in Tajikistan.

The number of troops deployed at Russia's 201st military base in Tajikistan will be increased 1.5-fold during the next five years — from today's 5,900 up to 9,000, Major-General Yevgeny Tubol, the 201st base commander was reported as saying by the Central Asian media agencies.

He was speaking during a visit to the base of the working group of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The 201st military base is considered Russia's largest military contingent in Central Asia and one of the strongest military units in the region.

The name of the base comes from the 201st infantry division stationed in Tajikistan from the Soviet era and converted into a military base by merging it with additional forces and services. The base's facilities are spread between three locations, including Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe.

Tubol said the base is staffed by servicemen who are Russian citizens, and has more than 1,000 pieces of military equipment.



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He also added that the base is currently receiving new types of military equipment. In his words, the military equipment currently used at the base will be modernized and passed over to the Tajik army.

Tubol pointed out that the main task of the base is protection of Russia's national security and its allies in the Central Asian region as well as assistance to Tajikistan armed forces in "repulsing aggression from the territory of Afghanistan".

Russia and Tajikistan agreed in October 2012 that the 201st military base would remain in Tajikistan until at least 2042.

In the meantime, Russian soldiers prepared the Tajik armed forces commander and gunner of multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) "Grad," according to TASS referring to official representative of the Central Military District Yaroslav Roshupkin.

He said the officers of the 201st military base will attend a three-month course training, included the testing of driving skills and maintenance of combat vehicles, guidance, given the coordinates and change of the direction of the firing range.

Roshupkin added that the final stage of training will be combat firing during daytime and nighttime at Liaur, where Russian officers have already trained 350 Tajik servicemen since the beginning of the year.

Fuente: <http://www.azernews.az/region/79993.html>