



Afghanistan

ADB Approves \$150m To Complete Ring Road



The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved \$150 million USD for the construction of the remaining parts of the country's ring road. Bank officials said they continue their efforts to complete the ring road in Faryab and Badghis provinces, in the north of Afghanistan. "We are working right now to finish the ring road across Afghanistan which is very important. In the north-west corner of Afghanistan, the ring road has not been completed," the ADB country director in Afghanistan[full story](#)

Kabul-Tashkent Transit Pact To Boost Regional Trade



With the implementation of the transit agreement between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, Afghan businessmen will have the opportunity to access Chinese, Russian and central Asian markets, The Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MoCI) announced on Thursday. Uzbekistan will also be able to expand its commercial relations with other countries...[full story](#)



Azerbaijan

FAO to assist Azerbaijan in improving food safety quality management system

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will assist Azerbaijan in improving the veterinary laboratory network and food safety quality management system in the country. FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia Vladimir Rakhmanin made the remark in an exclusive interview to Trend. The Food Security Agency will be one of the main beneficiaries of the forthcoming FAO technical support project "Improvement of the Veterinary Laboratory Network ..[full story](#)



Iran, Azerbaijan firms agree to cooperate on IT in transportation

An Iranian startup firm says it has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a Baku-based international company on cooperation in the sphere of information technology concerning transportation and logistics. Iran's Asanbar and the Baku-based Avirtel inked the MoU on the sidelines of Bakutel-2017, the 23rd Azerbaijan International Exhibition and Conference on Telecommunications and Information Technologies, in the Azerbaijani capital city, the Iranian firm told Trend....[full story](#)





Iran

Tehran to host intl. energy conservation conference



The 7th International Conference on Emerging Trends in Energy Conservation (ETEC) is scheduled to be held in Tehran on February 18-19, 2018. Representatives of prominent international organizations including the United Nations Industrial Development Program (UNDP), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) along with delegations from Thailand, Venezuela, Switzerland, Italy, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are expected to attend this year's event, IRNA reported...[full story](#)

Iran's trade surplus hits \$29b in 2016: UNCTAD



Iran's trade balance registered a \$29 billion surplus in 2016, Tasnim reported on Friday citing the "2017 handbook of statistics" report published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). According to the report, the country's total foreign trade stood at \$109 billion, of which \$69 billion was related to exports. The Islamic Republic also exported about \$10.202 billion worth of services while the total value of services Iran traded with the world was estimated at \$24.896 billion. Based on the UNCTAD report, Iran accounted for 0.34 percent of the world's total \$32.136 trillion trade in 2016. It put Iran's real ...[full story](#)



Kazakhstan

Officials and experts agree united efforts against corruption give positive results

More than 60 percent of Kazakhstan's public services are provided in electronic format which has reduced the level of domestic corruption by two-thirds, said State Secretary Gulshara Abdykalikova at the Dec. 8 Modern Anti-Corruption Standards and International Cooperation Development conference in the capital. The event was held one day prior to the UN-recognised International Anti-Corruption Day, marked annually since 2004. "President Nursultan Nazarbayev's political will is the basis of the country's anti-corruption policy. The fight against corruption is one...." [full story](#)



French representative presents Kazakh Invest opportunities abroad

Speaking at the recent Kazakhstan Global Investment Roundtable, Prime Minister Bakytzhan Sagintayev reiterated the importance of the Kazakh Invest national company for boosting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the national economy. Having overseas agents is an important idea, noted company representative for France François Marque. "I think that the way Kazakh Invest was restructured is very interesting and modern. It is an investment agency which is based on the use of local people and foreigners. It is very interesting because we have our own links and network in our countries and I know the French administration very well...." [full story](#)

KAZAKH INVEST



Kyrgyzstan

EBRD supports reliable power supply in Kyrgyz Republic



The EBRD is contributing to the reliability of power distribution in the Kyrgyz Republic with a financing package of up to €6 million to JSC Vostokelectro, one of power distribution companies covering 47% of Kyrgyz Republic territory. It will consist of a sovereign loan of up to €4 million and an investment grant of up to €2 million from the EBRD Shareholder Special Fund to support Vostokelectro's investment to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy losses. The EBRD is also financing a corporate...[full story](#)

Trade turnover between Kyrgyzstan & Central Asian countries amounts \$ 950 mln



The trade turnover between Kyrgyzstan and the Central Asian countries for January-November amounted to \$ 950 million, director of the Agency for Promotion and Protection of Investments Esenkul Momunkulov told at the Bishkek Investment Forum (BIF) 2017. He said that in 2017 the trade turnover between Kyrgyzstan and Central Asian countries is 4 times more than in the same period in 2016. "At the same time, it should be noted that the potential of Central Asia is not fully ...[full story](#)



Pakistan

Local automakers gear up for competition

Local assemblers are not ready to reveal the models of cars and light commercial vehicles (LCVs) that they plan to launch in the next two years to compete with new entrants from China, South Korea and Europe. However, auto vendors said the existing car assemblers have already geared up to introduce new vehicles in 2018 and 2019. Requesting not to be named, the vendors said Pak Suzuki Motor Company is planning to introduce 660cc Alto in the first quarter of 2019. [full story](#)



IMF notes impressive growth

A monitoring mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Saturday completed talks with economic managers of Pakistan on the country's performance post-IMF programme. The three-year programme under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) had been approved by the IMF executive board in September 2013, weeks after the first budget for 2013-14 of the Nawaz Sharif government. According to the finance ministry, post-programme monitoring is an annual feature for countries graduating from an IMF programme whereby overall economic conditions of a member country that owes funds to the IMF are monitored and a report is presented to the executive board.... [full story](#)





Tajikistan

Tajikistan delegation attended the 24th meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers OSCE participating States



The delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sirodjidin Aslov participated at the 24th session of the OSCE Council of Foreign Ministers in Vienna on December 7. According to the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, in his speech, Sirodjidin Aslov expressed his opinion on the interests of Tajikistan on topical issues of the session agenda and the solution of existing problems in the OSCE region,...[full story](#)

Tajikistan and Canada Foreign Ministers discussed enhancing mutual beneficial cooperation in Vienna



In the framework of the 24th Session of OSCE Foreign Ministers, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan Sirodjidin Aslov met with the Foreign Minister of Canada Mrs. Chrystia Freeland. According to the MFA Information Department, during the meeting the parties exchanged views on current state and further enhancement of mutually beneficial cooperation between Tajikistan and Canada....[full story](#)



Turkey

Turkey, Iran security cooperation 'vital' for region

Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu on Saturday said that cooperation between Turkey and its neighbor Iran on security is "vital" for the region. Soylu's remarks came during a news conference after a security meeting with his Iranian counterpart Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli in the capital Tehran. "It is very important for peace and prosperity as well as for the security of the region that the two major building blocks of a large civilization -- Iran and Turkey -- come together, especially....[full story](#)



Turkish economy forecasted to grow 9.2 pct in Q3

Turkey is expected to grow 9.2 percent in the third quarter of this year, a panel of economists said Friday. A group of 17 experts questioned by Anadolu Agency projected the figure ahead of Monday's announcement of the third quarter's gross domestic product (GDP). Among the economists' expectations, the highest growth forecast for the third quarter of this year was 11.1 percent, while the lowest was 7.2 percent. Economists also forecasted that Turkey would see annual growth of 6 percent at the end of 2017, with the highest forecast at 6.7 percent and the lowest at 5.1 percent....[full story](#)





Turkmenistan

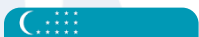
Turkmen GDP grows significantly since early 2017

Turkmenistan's GDP grew by 6.5 percent in January-November 2017, the country's Deputy Prime Minister Gochmyrat Myradov said at a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers, Turkmenistan State News Agency reported Dec. 9. Turkmenistan's GDP rose in industry by 5.8 percent, in construction – by 1.4 percent, in transport and communications sector – by 10.9 percent, in trade – by 9.6 percent, in agriculture – by 5.1 percent, and in services sector – by 8.9 percent. In January-November 2017, the growth rate of production reached 6.4 percent, as compared to the same period of 2016.....[full story](#)



Ashgabat hosts Turkmen-Austrian business forum

The Turkmen-Austrian business forum was held in Ashgabat. It discussed issues related to bilateral economic cooperation. The visiting delegation included heads and representatives of the state-owned and private companies of Austria specializing in power engineering, mechanical engineering, agriculture, food industry, construction materials manufacturing, transport, health and tourism. At the forum, the Austrian delegation was briefed on the current macroeconomic situation, investment climate and current trends in the private sector of Turkmenistan....[full story](#)



Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan produces 8.38m tonnes of wheat & 2.93m tonnes of cotton – President



Uzbekistan produced about 8.38 million tonnes of wheat and over 2.93 million tonnes of cotton in 2017, the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev said at the Congress of Agriculture Workers of Uzbekistan on 9 December 2017. Uzbek leader underlined that the country produced 12,450 tonnes of cocoons, 318,000 tonnes of rice, 23 million tonnes of fruits and vegetables, as well as 13 million tonnes of meat and milk products. President said that over 160,000 farmers operate in Uzbekistan. Number of multi-profile farms rose by 45% in last...[full story](#)

Uzbekistan plans to launch pilot cargo transportation by Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad in 2018



Starting from 2018, Uzbekistan plans to start a pilot transit cargo transportation by Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway line. President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed a resolution "On measures to improve the transport infrastructure and diversify foreign trade routes for cargo transportation for 2018-2022". The head of Uzbekistan approved a comprehensive program to improve transport infrastructure and diversify the foreign trade routes of cargo transportation. The program includes the measures on "Implementation of pilot transit traffic of foreign trade...[full story](#)