

Uzbekistan Independence Day Special

Varied reforms, efforts reflected in GDP growth

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On Sept. 1 the Uzbek people widely celebrate the 28th anniversary of the country's independence. With the election in December 2016 of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, a completely new stage in the dynamic development of the republic began in our country.

Today, our republic is undergoing a period of large-scale and deep transformations, covering all spheres of life in society and the state. At the initiative of the president of the country, the 2017-2021 Strategy of Action for the Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Five Priority Directions was adopted. In particular, the following were identified as priorities: improving state and social construction, ensuring the rule of law and further reforming the judicial system, development and liberalization of the economy, development of the social sphere, ensuring security, interethnic harmony and religious tolerance, and implementing a balanced, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy.

The government of Uzbekistan gives great priority to the implementation of economic reforms, including further liberalization of monetary and financial policies, improving the investment climate, and promoting the development of small and mid-sized businesses. In this regard, the



President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

president declared 2019 the "Year of active investment and social development."

Today, Uzbekistan has provided free conversion of the national currency and cooperation with international financial institutions — the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development — is progressing successfully.

A favorable investment climate has been created and measures taken to stimulate investment and guarantees to protect the rights of investors have also contributed to a significant increase in foreign investment. In particular, for the first time in the history of Uzbekistan, the share of investments in gross domestic product exceeded 38 percent, while in previous years this figure did not reach 25

percent. Over the past year, indicators of the development of foreign direct investment grew 2.7 times, attracting funds from international financial institutions — 3.7 times.

In the first half of this year, gross domestic product increased by 5.8 percent, industrial production — by 6.9 percent.

Deep in capacity and wide-ranging reforms in Uzbekistan are positively evaluated by the international community and receive support from international financial institutions. Over the past five years, the rating of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the annual ease of doing business report from the World Bank has improved vastly — from 166th place in 2012 to 76th place in 2019 among 190 countries of the world. At the same time, in the latest report, our country was included in the top 10 reforming countries in terms of creating the most favorable conditions for doing business.

Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov's receptions, created to address the problems of local entrepreneurs and investors, act as effective institutions aimed at further improving the investment environment.

Uzbekistan today occupies a worthy place and has great authority in the world community. Thanks to a pragmatic foreign policy, it was possible to radically strengthen interstate relations between the countries of Central Asia, seriously improve the political atmosphere in the region, and strengthen unity and cooperation

in various fields. Today, a completely new political atmosphere has been created in the region, and relations based on mutual trust and good neighborliness are being strengthened. Thanks to joint efforts and on the initiative of the president, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution on "Strengthening regional and international cooperation to ensure peace, stability and sustainable development in the Central Asian region" in June 2018.

Japan is a time-tested key and reliable partner of Uzbekistan. This year is marked by the 27th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Uzbekistan and Japan. The official visit of the Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe in October 2015 to our country gave a powerful impetus to strategic cooperation between our countries.

The Uzbek-Japanese and Japanese-Uzbek committees on economic cooperation play an important role in the development of trade and economic relations, the 15th joint meeting of which took place in July this year in Tokyo.

It is gratifying to note that the joint Uzbek-Japanese film "To the Ends of the Earth" caused a great resonance among the Japanese public, contributing to the further deepening of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between Uzbekistan and Japan.

Awarding the title of ambassador of tourism of Uzbekistan to Japan, the main

heroine of this joint project, the famous singer and actress Atsuko Maeda, will, in our opinion, increase the interest of Japanese citizens in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan as a center of world tourism is a very attractive country for Japanese tourists and since February 2018, a visa-free regime for a period of 30 days has been introduced for Japanese citizens. The unique location of more than 8,000 historical monuments, the beauty of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Shakhrisabz, as well as the regular flights of Uzbekistan Airways from Tokyo to Tashkent are important factors for the dynamic development of tourism in the country.

In particular, the efforts of the government of Uzbekistan in 2019 will organize 17 charter flights from Tokyo and large



Registan Square, a UNESCO World Heritage site, in Samarkand EMBASSY OF UZBEKISTAN

regions of Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Sapporo and Hiroshima directly to Samarkand by Uzbekistan Airways.

The existing historical and cultural ties of friendship between our peoples, as well as the enormous potential of economic and political cooperation, will continue to strengthen the bilateral strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Japan.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Uzbekistan
on the Occasion of the 28th Anniversary
of Their Independence

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