

Uzbekistan 2019

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Art, Food & Fashion

PRESIDENT SHAVKAT
MIRZIYOYEV:
Expanding Export
Drive & Investments



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Management Development
Institute of Singapore
Reg. No. 201001793H
20 May 2018 to 19 May 2022

☎ 6372 1000 / 6247 9111

✉ etc@mdis.edu.sg

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For further inquiries, contact:
The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Singapore
 20 Kramat Lane #04-01/02 United House, Singapore 228773 |
 Tel: (+65) 6734 3942 | Fax: (+65) 6734 5849 |
 Web: www.singapore.mfa.uz

This commemorative special is published under the advocacy of the **Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Republic of Singapore**

PUBLISHER **Sun Media Pte Ltd**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF **Nomita Dhar**

EMBASSY EDITORIAL SUPPORT **The Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Singapore**

EDITORIAL **Ranee Sahaney, Syed Jaafar Alkaff**

ADVERTISING & MARKETING **Swati Singh**

PHOTO CONTRIBUTIONS **Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Republic of Singapore**

PRINTING **Times Printers Pte Ltd**

EDITORIAL OFFICE **Sun Media Pte Ltd** 20 Kramat Lane #01-02 United House, Singapore 228773 | Tel: (65) 6735 2972 / 1907 / 2986 | Fax: (65) 6735 3114

E-mail: business@sunmediaonline.com
 URL: <http://www.sunmediaonline.com>

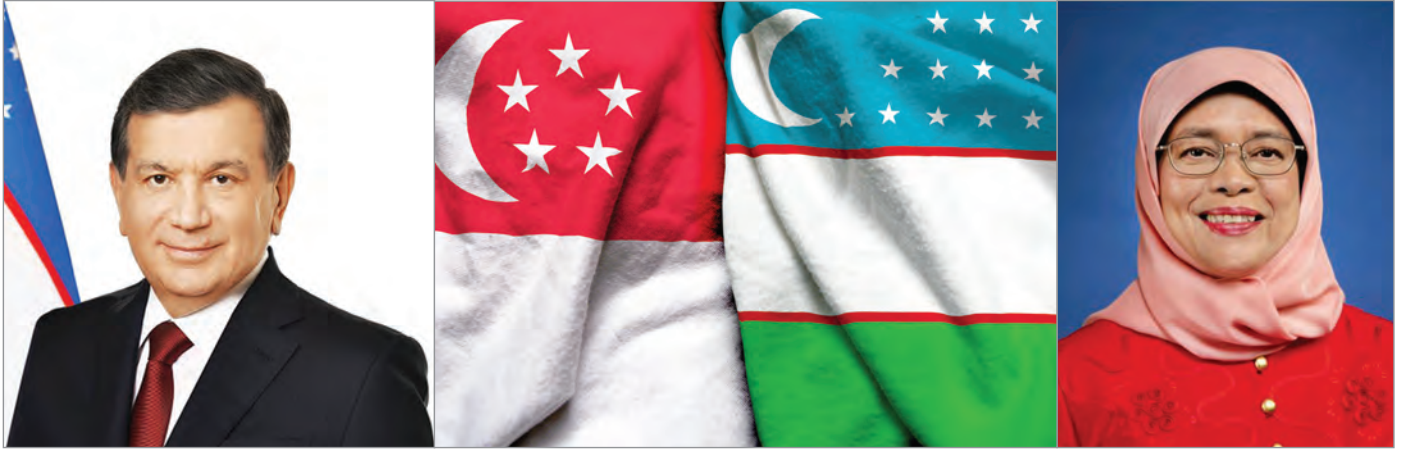
MCI (P) 068/02/2019



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MESSAGES

This year Uzbekistan and Singapore celebrate their respective 28th and 54th Independence Days. The following is the exchange of messages between President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and President Halimah Yacob on Uzbekistan's and Singapore's National Days



9th August 2019
Her Excellency Mdm Halimah Yacob
The President of the Republic of Singapore

Your Excellency,

It gives me a great pleasure to extend my sincere congratulations and good wishes on the National Day of Singapore.

I would like to emphasize that cooperation between Uzbekistan and Singapore has been developing comprehensively in recent years in the spirit of friendship, mutual trust and respect.

For instance, revitalization of the visits exchange at various levels, the rapid growth of trade turnover, and the adoption of the Road Map by our Government for the development of cooperation with Singapore are becoming important steps along this way.

Undoubtedly, our long-term, multifaceted and mutually beneficial partnership with our joint endeavors and common efforts will reach an absolutely new level in terms of quality and significance in the near future. Your Excellency, taking this opportunity, I wish you long life, sound health, happiness and every success at your responsible post, as well as peace and further prosperity to the friendly people of Singapore.

Yours respectfully,
Shavkat Mirziyoyev
President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

21st August 2019
His Excellency Shavkat Mirziyoyev
President Republic of Uzbekistan

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the people of Singapore, I would like to convey our best wishes to Your Excellency and the people of Uzbekistan on the occasion of Uzbekistan's 28th Independence Day.

Singapore and Uzbekistan have always enjoyed warm and friendly relations. Engagement between our two countries has continued to see steady growth in areas including education, trade, and legal cooperation. With Your Excellency's continued support, I am confident that the bilateral relations between Singapore and Uzbekistan will further strengthen in the coming years and mutually benefit our two countries.

I wish Your Excellency good health and every success, and peace and prosperity for the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Yours sincerely,
Halimah Yacob
President of the Republic of Singapore

Priority Development Goals

Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on diplomatic and business ‘offensive’ to seek closer trade ties and investment opportunities to boost the country’s economy

A **string** of diplomatic visits have taken place since the start of this year by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to more than a dozen countries to strengthen ties and trade links. Towards this end, the President has also welcomed business forums and international organisations such as the Uzbekistan - South Korea Business Forum that was held in April and the visit by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in August this year. Here are some of the highlights of these visits.

On 17th January 2019, the President attended the 9th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2019 where he addressed the plenary session of the summit, as well as held negotiations with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss current issues of Uzbekistan – India cooperation, international and regional policy. He also made a visit to West Germany in January 2019 to seek a “tangibly new and higher level” of relations. He also hoped the closer ties would boost German investment as well as technological cooperation in Uzbekistan. German Chancellor Angela Merkel (*see right & bottom right*) reciprocated by sharing that, “We see a lot of opportunities to expand ties” and said that Germany also wanted to be “Uzbekistan’s reliable partner.” Altogether nine inter-governmental and interagency documents were signed related to the economy, trade, finances, education, science, and innovations.

On 24th March, the President visited the UAE where he received pledges of more than US\$10 billion in areas such as finance, alternative energy, infrastructure and agriculture. This was followed by a visit to Kazakhstan on 14th April and the President met on 20th April, the President met South Korean President Moon Jae-in who attended the Uzbekistan-Korea Business Forum in Tashkent where a reported US\$12 billion worth of deals were signed in sectors such as energy, oil and gas, chemical, mining, mechanical engineering, among others. Later in April he called on President Xi Jinping and took part in the second International ‘One Belt, One Road’ Forum. Subsequently President Shavkat visited Russia to meet Prime Minister Medhvedov in May and in June he called on the leaders of Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Turkey as well as Belorussia in July. Uzbekistan is also tapping into the world market for investment funds to build up its infrastructure.

On 13th August 2019, Uzbekistan’s President Shavkat Mirziyoyev received a delegation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), led by its President Jin Lique. The Bank actively supports the current structural reforms in Uzbekistan and has committed to one of the first investment projects worth US\$1.3 billion for development of water supply and sanitation and reconstruction of roads in the country.



President Shavkat global diplomatic initiatives with (first row): India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi; West German Chancellor Angela Merkel; UAE’s HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and (second row) PM Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum; South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in; China’s President Xi Jinping. (Third row): Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and AIIB meeting session

Reform Roadmap Charts Growth for Next 5 Years

The Uzbekistan Ambassador to Singapore, HE Kakhramon Shakirov, provided insights on how the embassy is promoting the country's interests here and how the government is tackling challenges ahead

This year in January, the Uzbekistan government adopted a 2019 -21 “ Reform Roadmap”; could you share with us the highlights?

Since December 2016, in Uzbekistan, with the initiatives of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, large-scale reforms have been started and are still ongoing within the framework of the Strategy for Action on the following five priority areas for the development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021, which are marked by a qualitatively new approach to the system of strategic planning of the state and social development of the country. It defines economic development and liberalization as a priority direction for the further development of all spheres of state and public life:

I. Improvement of state and social construction - aimed at further strengthening the role of parliament and political parties in deepening democratic reforms and modernizing the country, reforming the public administration system, developing the organizational and legal foundations of public service, improving the E-Government system, improving the quality and efficiency of public services, practical implementation of public control mechanisms — and strengthening the role of civil society institutions and the media;

II. Ensuring the rule of law and further reform of the judicial system - aimed at strengthening the true independence of the judiciary and guarantees reliable protection of the rights and freedom of citizens, improving administrative, criminal, civil and economic legislation, increasing the effectiveness of the system of combating crime and preventing crime, the full implementation of the principle of adversarial process in the judicial process and improving the system of providing legal assistance and legal services;

III. Development and liberalization of the economy - aimed at further strengthening macroeconomic stability and maintaining high economic growth rates, increasing its competitiveness, modernizing and intensively developing agriculture, continuing institutional and structural reforms to reduce the

state's presence in the economy, further strengthening the protection of rights and the priority role of private property, stimulating the development of small business and private entrepreneurship, comprehensive and balanced socio-economic development of regions, regions and cities, active attraction of foreign investment in the industry economies and regions of the country by improving the investment climate;

IV. Development of the social sphere - aimed at a consistent increase in employment and real incomes of the population, improving the system of social protection and protecting the health of citizens, increasing the socio-political activity of women, implementing targeted programs for the construction of affordable housing, the development and modernization of road transport, engineering and communication and social infrastructures, the development of education, culture, science, literature, art and sports and the improvement of state youth policy;

V. Ensuring security, inter-ethnic harmony and religious tolerance, implementing a balanced, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy - aimed at strengthening the independence and sovereignty of the state, creating a belt of security, stability and good neighborliness around Uzbekistan and strengthening the country's international image.

The Asian Development Bank, forecast for the country's growth rates it at 5.2 percent for this year, which is on a higher side compared to other Central Asian countries; how would you like this and any other factors to be considered by the investors looking for new markets?

The potential of Uzbekistan is based on strong macroeconomic fundamentals - it is a country with a strong domestic market; it is relatively young and has cheap labour, rich sources, diversified economy and a rapidly developing infrastructure. With a population of 33 million Uzbekistan is the first major consumer market among the countries of Central Asia and the second in the CIS after Russia. In January-March 2019 its GDP growth was 5.3%, the GDP deflator - 120.4%, industry growth - 6.8%, construction - 5.9%, agriculture, forestry and fisheries - 2.5%, trade - 4.2% and services - 5.7%.

In general, Uzbekistan has the advantage of macroeconomic stability, which, combined with ongoing reforms, opens up new opportunities in various sectors of the economy where it



could be in financial services, construction or tourism. Over the past 2.5 years, Uzbekistan has achieved an improvement in the business climate in the World Bank's Doing Business ranking, where the country rose from 166th place in 2012 to the 76th position in 2019.

In February 2019 Uzbekistan for the first time in its history placed state Eurobonds in the amount of 1.0 billion Euros on the London Stock Exchange. It is noteworthy that the demand for government Eurobonds exceeded the amount of 3.8 billion Euros — and the main buyers of the 5 and 10 year sovereign bonds were investors from the UK, USA, EU, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. According to experts, the success of the debut issue of Uzbekistan's Eurobonds was due to investor confidence in the strong economic foundations of the country, progress in reforms and management strategies.

Further reforms of the investment climate take on a special meaning, especially in 2019, which in Uzbekistan has been declared the **Year of Active Investment and Social Development** in which the following tasks are projected to be completed: decreasing unemployment rates and increasing peoples revenues, reforms of pension system, improvement of science development and continued education, medical services, strengthening of social support of women and youth, increasing of social housing number, promotion of healthy nation, further development of tourism and etc. As a result of active measures by the Government, in the first quarter of 2019, 195 enterprises and facilities in the field of education, production, trade and services were privatized. In January-March 2019, US\$3.6 billion or 129.9% of the corresponding period of 2018 were spent on the development of the economy and social sphere of the Republic of Uzbekistan from all sources of financing.

Altogether 304,000 new small enterprises and micro-firms were created, which is 2.3 times more than the same period in 2018. The largest number of small enterprises and micro-firms was formed in the sphere of trade - 44.7% (13,604 units), industries - 21.2% (6,444 units), construction - 9.2% (2,789 units), rural, forestry and fisheries - 6.0% (1,835 units) of transportation and storage (2.9%). The share of small business in GDP amounted to 45.5%. In 2019 small businesses provided growth in industrial production - 7.4%, provision of services - 3.6%, retail trade - 5.9%, export - 40.2%.

There has been a steady momentum on the government -to-government, business- to- business and people- to -people

engagement; could you update our readers on the major highlights of such engagements?

In the years of 2018 and 2019 Uzbekistan and Singapore accelerated their efforts in further strengthening and promotion of bilateral relations in the political, economic, cultural and tourism sectors.

For example both sides saw exchange of visits of high ranking delegations, including Mr.J.Kuchkarov, Deputy-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance of Uzbekistan (November 2018), Mr. R.Davletov, Minister of Justice, Mr. E.Yuldashev, Deputy Attorney-General, Mr B. Isakov, Deputy Chairman of Supreme Court (November 2018), Mr. B. Sayfullaev, Minister of Culture (March 2019) and Mr.R.Irgashev, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs (July 2019).

Landmark visits were conducted in April 2019 with two Singapore delegations to Uzbekistan: the first was made by by HE Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mayor, South East District who had fruitful meeting with various Ministers in Uzbekistan; the second visit was that of HE Mr. Edwin Tong, Minister of State, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health, to participate in Tashkent Law Spring Forum.



Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, hosted lunch in honour of Minister of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Bakhtiyor Sayfullayev, 14 March 2019. Photo: Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Of course we should not forget the series of visits by representatives of business and cultural circles between both countries for discussions on joint projects and participating in various trade exhibitions and cultural forums.

Outstanding activities were conducted in the sphere of tourism promotion: in February 2019, Uzbekistan-Singapore Centre for tourism development was opened in Singapore; in August 2019 the first time in the history of both countries the honourable Mr. Phillip Tan, Financial Director of the Group of Companies 'Citystate Capital Asia' in Singapore was awarded the Certificate of Appointment as MICE Tourism Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Singapore.

You have been promoting Uzbekistan cuisine, fashion and wines through a series of activities; what about these activities and outcomes so far in 2019 — and what can we expect in the coming months?

On the 5th of August Singapore was fascinated by Uzbekistan's great culture, cuisine, and heritage during the evening of Uzbek Culture, which was held on the famous island of Sentosa, and attended by about 200 guests from among business elite, investors, representatives of the diplomatic corps and creative circles, who got acquainted with many aspects of Uzbekistan. The evening was organized by the Embassy of the

MESSAGE FROM THE EMBASSY

Republic of Uzbekistan in Singapore and the Visit Uzbekistan Partnership.

To represent Uzbekistan in the best traditions, leading representatives of the Uzbek cultural business arrived in the Asian metropolis, amongst them the founder of the Uzbek perfume line Begim – Gulchehrabegim Makhmudova, the creator of the Anor fashion brand – Dilnosa Umirzakova, the initiator of the international partnership platform and the magazine Visit Uzbekistan – Dinara Dultayeva, a talented photographer Mukhiddin Ali, and a member of the team of culinary masters - who prepared the eight-ton pilaf for the Guinness World Record –led by chef Hassan Rasulov.

The photo exhibition “Visit Uzbekistan” surprised everyone. Guests of the event were welcomed by Muhiddin Ali with a photo exhibition “Visit Uzbekistan”. An exciting collection of 28 photographs reflecting the photographer’s unique views of the historic landmarks, the spirit of the nation, the interesting forms of architectural complexes and the richness of the national traditions, encouraged people to visit Uzbekistan.

■ **Chefs showcase a gastronomic feat** - Guests also witnessed a gastronomic performance by Hasan Rasulov, a seventh-generation culinary master and member of the Guinness World Records cookbook. The chef introduced the guests to a variety of soups, dumplings and national desserts and created a true Uzbek hospitality ambience. Other highlights included:

■ **Fashion show** - The exclusive offerings of Anor fashion house were presented at the Feel Uzbekistan fashion show. Also presented was the collection of national attire of the Mursak brand

■ **Perfume Presentation** - The presentation of the fragrance

collection “Begim”, created in France, devoted to the history and culture of Uzbekistan, was presented during the evening.

■ **Presentation of business magazine** - The presentation of Visit Uzbekistan, the first English-language magazine for travellers and businessmen in Uzbekistan, made a worthy end to the evening. The magazine provides high-quality information on tourism and investment potential, events in the social and cultural life of the country, arts, gastronomy, traditions, heritage and people. It also features a lot of useful information about travel itineraries, maps, posters for future events, and shopping.

The magazine’s 3,000 copies are distributed worldwide through embassies, travel agencies and partners. In two years, 20 issues of the magazine had been published and broadcast in more than 15 countries. The project is based on the Visit Uzbekistan international cooperation platform, which brings together expert councils in 11 countries and tourism and business circles in Uzbekistan.

Which are the major SINGAPORE companies in Uzbekistan and what are the areas in which other companies can find opportunities?

Nowadays these are the Singaporean companies that are actively working and starting their operations in Uzbekistan: INDORAMA, in the chemical, textile and agricultural fields; MDIS – in education; Modern Montessori International; KinderWorld; Educare and SixClouds – in preschool, school and higher education; GnC – in fishery and fruits processing; AGC – in logistics and infrastructure development; ISSA



Global – in agriculture products and trading. There are many other companies also. Currently over 70 Singaporean companies are operating in Uzbekistan from the production, processing and trading spheres.

Could you run through the steps to get a business started in Uzbekistan and how your embassy can help people keen on the market?

Uzbekistan has eased many of the procedures needed to start a business. Starting from December 2016, more than 160 licensing procedures and 19 administrative activities were addressed to create more favorable conditions for foreign companies to set up their businesses in Uzbekistan.

For example, accreditation of foreign company now takes only 10 days.

Detailed procedures for foreign companies to start their operations in Uzbekistan are provided on the following web-site of the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade: <https://mift.uz>.

The Uzbekistan Embassy in Singapore will extend its support by providing Investment offers to interested companies, connecting them with relevant Uzbekistan Government bodies and private companies to open up negotiations and dialogues and arrange visits to Uzbekistan by facilitating their bilateral meetings.

Please tell us about some of the products from your coun-

try which you would like to see on the shelves of Singapore Super markets?

Uzbekistan produces more than 20 mln. tons of fresh fruits and vegetables annually. Over the last 25 years the volume of fruits and vegetables has grown 4-fold; this includes grapes (9-fold), vegetables (8-fold); fruits (5 -fold) and beans (7 -fold).

More than 350 types of agriculture products are grown in Uzbekistan and 180 of these are actively exported.

Citizens and guests of Singapore will enjoy the flavours of Uzbekistan's delicious fruits from the "Great Silk Road" such as dry raisins, whole nuts, apricots, fresh melons, grapes, pomegranates, broccoli, cauliflower, beans and more.

If you were to share 3 amazing things about your country with students in Singapore so that a visit to your country is added to their wish list, what would they be?

Firstly – try to arrange a home stay in Uzbek family. It helps understand the openness, modest and friendly attitude and character of our people to foreigners and also their practical approach to the challenges of the world.

Secondly – Sampling Uzbekistan's fresh fruits and vegetables.

Thirdly -Visiting historical cities like Samarqand, Bukhara and Khiva – cities that are a heritage of the world and civilization; you will be transported, as if you were "on a time machine", to ancient times and witness the flourishing of applied science – mathematics, astronomy, medicine, music and poems and etc.



President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Expanding Exports & Investments

In the month before the nation's 28th National Day, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev focused on issues of increasing and efficient use of the export potential of sectors of the economy and regions, developing investments, especially foreign direct investments (FDI) and expanding the scale of localization of production

At a meeting chaired by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on 12th August 2019, the head of the state paid special attention to the issues of realising the full potential of the country's exports and level of investments which have regularly become the subject of discussion at such meetings where reports and proposals of heads of industries and regions were also heard.

In particular, in accordance with the resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures for strengthening the export promotion and stimulation" of 20th December 2018, a national export support system has been created. An **Export Promotion Agency** was established under the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade. A mechanism has been introduced to compensate 50 percent of transportation costs for the export of goods of 205 items.

Real practical measures in this direction have given the expected results. The number of exporters have increased by 2,000, the geography of exports expanded to 42 countries and the export of 59 types of products was established for the first time.

For the first seven months of this year, goods and services were exported at US\$7.33 billion, which is 23 percent more compared to the same period last year.

At the meeting it was noted that available opportunities for increasing exports were not fully utilized in Uztuqimachiliklarsanoat Association, the Uzbekoziqovqatholding Company, as well as in the city of Tashkent, Fergana, Andijan and Tashkent regions. Responsible managers were criticized for the lack of systematic work with problems of exporters, for the fact that they do not inform entrepreneurs about the opportunities created by the state and do not assist them in entering the foreign market.



It was emphasized that the Republican Commission headed by the Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade for increasing the export potential of regions and industries should hold meetings with representatives of enterprises and entrepreneurs, to help them improve their knowledge of exports, implement international standards and pass certification.

"We have great opportunities for export. One of the growth points should become, in particular, the production of export-oriented products based on processing cotton fiber, fruit and vegetable products. Through this, we will increase exports and create new jobs", said Shavkat Mirziyoyev. As it is known, agricultural products grown in Uzbekistan are



The Cabinet has been instructed to ensure the commissioning of industrial facilities within the framework of 145 projects with a total value of US\$4.2 billion within the time frames provided for in the 2019 Investment Program

appreciated all over the world. This ready-made brand is a great opportunity for expanding exports.

The President resolved that, “On additional measures for deep processing of agricultural products and further development of food industry” of 29th July this year aims to effectively use this opportunity and introduce modern technologies in the agricultural sector.

In accordance with this resolution, in 2019-2021 it is planned to create 45 agro logistics complexes, 205 new processing capacities, at least 36 thousand hectares of intensive gardens, for which it is planned to allocate almost US\$1 billion.

The progress in this direction was considered at the meeting. It was noted that it is necessary to implement these projects on time and double the export of fruits and vegetables in 2021. The importance of growing export-oriented crops, mainly leguminous products, was highlighted.

Issues of implementation of export contracts signed within the framework of foreign visits and international exhibitions, holding the international exhibition ‘Made in Uzbekistan’ in October were also discussed.

Proposals were made on increasing the authorized capital of trading houses of exporters abroad.

INVESTMENT KEY DRIVER OF ECONOMY

Investment is the driver of the economy. An active investment policy is being implemented in Uzbekistan, as a result of attracting foreign direct investment in sectors of the economy and regions, and because of this many promising projects are being implemented.

For example, in the first half of this year, investments at the amount of 85 trillion 775 billion soums, which is 1.6 times more compared to the same period last year, were attracted. In the structure of fixed capital, the share of foreign direct investment increased 2.5 times and reached US\$1.7 billion. And foreign loans issued without a state guarantee increased by 3.7 times. Almost 75 percent of the utilized foreign direct investment falls on regional projects.

In the context of these indicators, it was noted that during the remaining period of this year, the main attention should be paid to full development of investments.

Heads of industries, in which the development of foreign direct investment is progressing slowly, reported on the reasons of the current situation and plans for accelerating activities in this direction.

The Cabinet of Ministers has been instructed to ensure the commissioning of industrial facilities within the framework of 145 projects with a total value of US\$4.2 billion within the time frames provided for in the 2019 Investment Program. These in-

clude the organization of production of polyvinyl chloride and nitric acid at JSC Navoiyazot, expansion of production of liquefied gas at Mubarek Gas Processing Plant, commissioning new combined-cycle plants at Turakurgan, Takhiatash and Navoi thermal power plants, and construction of Tashkent Metallurgical Plant.

The analysis shows that about 40 large enterprises commissioned over the past 10 years are not working at full capacity.

The Cabinet of Ministers, the ministries of investments and foreign trade, the economy and industry were instructed to analyze the activities of enterprises and facilities launched within the framework of investment programs, and take measures on bringing them to the design parameters of capacity.

Formation of the Investment Program for 2020-2022 was also discussed at the meeting. It was noted that the program should include, first of all, specific projects developed under almost 650 agreements concluded within the framework of top-level visits, as well as projects related to deep processing of oil and gas raw materials, alternative energy, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, construction materials industry, agro-industry and other high-tech industries.

EXPANSION OF LOCALIZATION

At the meeting, another important issue was discussed in detail – the expansion of localization. Creation of additional value and production of import-substituting products based on deep processing of local raw materials is an important factor in stability of the economy. In this regard, in Uzbekistan, necessary conditions are created for development of localization, expansion of industrial cooperation between enterprises. It has been criticized that in some industries and regions localization issues are left to chance.

“Opportunities are created, technologies are involved. But local leaders are accustomed to taking the easy path – not working on product localization, but importing it”, the President said.

Only 1.1 percent of molybdenum, 12 percent of natural gas, 21 percent of zinc, 25 percent of copper, 20 percent of fruits and vegetables, 46 percent of yarn are processed in Uzbekistan. It was noted that deep processing of this raw material would increase the added value of the finished product up to five times.

The Cabinet of Ministers was tasked with increasing the production of localized goods in all regions and industries by at least 20 percent over the next two years, as well as preparing a program for localization of products, which has a high share in the structure of imports.

The need for creation of a separate unit in the structure of the Accounts Chamber for analyzing issues of expanding localization was also noted.

Source: Uzbekistan National News Agency

CONNECTIONS

Events and visits promoting bilateral ties, business and trade

Showcase in Sentosa: The Best of Uzbekistan Culture

The 'Cultural Evening of Uzbekistan' held at the iconic resort island of Sentosa on 5th August 2019 provided a beautiful backdrop for an evening of food, fashion and art that ended with fireworks against the sea! The carefully curated programme co-organised by the Republic of

Uzbekistan Embassy in Singapore with Dinara&Co publishing company and other supporting partners who included the Visit Uzbekistan Partnership, Vmall Entertainment, Food Empire (Future Enterprise Pte Ltd) and Indorama. Guests arriving were given attractive door gifts that included exclusive Uzbek-inspired perfumes, attractively packaged Uzbekistan nuts and preserved fruits and *Visit Uzbekistan* magazines. The crowd was given a beautiful look at scenes of Uzbekistan life through the 'Impressions of Uzbekistan' photo exhibition by Muhiddin Ali; a gastronomical spread of food by famous Uzbekistan chef Hasan Rasulov; fashion show by Uzbek fashion houses Anor and Mursak as well as a presentation by the founder of Uzbekistan-owned Begim Perfumes, Gulchehra-Begim Makhmudova, which are made in France. The whole presentation was haute couture mixed with history and culture of Uzbekistan.







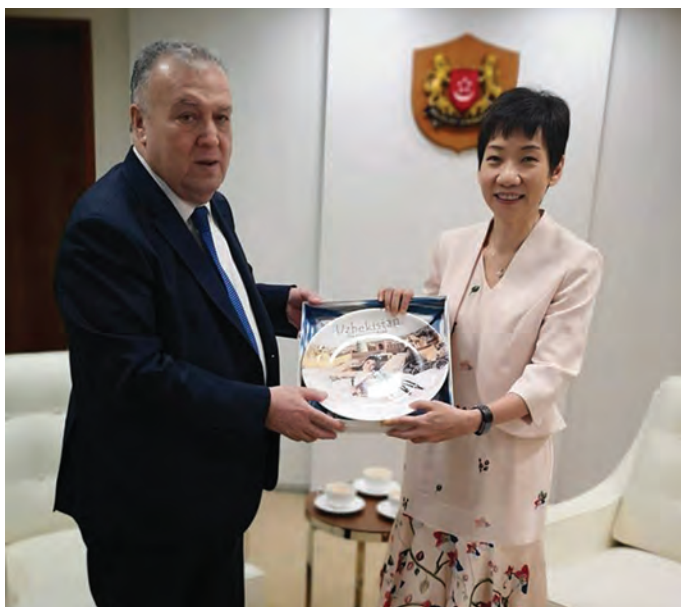
Singapore Senior Minister Visit to Uzbekistan

Senior Minister of State (SMS), Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohamad Maliki bin Osman, made his introductory visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan from 2th to 5th April 2019. In Tashkent, SMS Maliki called on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Jamshid Kuchkarov (above left), and acknowledged the growing cooperation between Singapore and Uzbekistan in sectors such as tourism, business and education. Both sides agreed that there was potential to do more together for mutual benefit.

SMS Maliki also met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulaziz Kamilov (above right) and Minister of Preschool Education Agripina Shin. During SMS Maliki and Minister Kamilov reviewed the bilateral relationship and reaffirmed the warm relations between Singapore and Uzbekistan. They also exchanged views on regional developments and security issues. SMS Maliki and

Minister Shin welcomed the growing interest from Singapore's private sector in Uzbekistan's pre-school education sector, and discussed their respective policies in this field.

During the visit, SMS Maliki also met with Deputy Minister of Defence MG Azizbek Ikramov, Deputy Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Shukhrat Vafaev, Deputy Mayor of Tashkent Rakhmanov Sharof, Chairman of the Senate Committee on International Relations, Foreign Economic Affairs, Foreign Investment and Tourism of the Oliy Majlis Alisher Kurmanov, and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies Eldor Aripov. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dilshod Akhatov also hosted SMS Maliki to lunch. SMS Maliki also visited Samarkand, which is the burial site of renowned Islamic scholar Imam Bukhari. SMS Maliki was received by the Mayor of Samarkand Furkat Rakhimov.



Uzbekistan's Minister of Culture Calls on Singapore Counterpart

Uzbekistan Minister of Culture, Bakhtiyor Sayfullayev and his delegation visited Singapore in March. He called on his Singapore counterpart, the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, Grace Fu, where they exchanged views on ways to strengthen cultural relations between the two countries. During the meeting Minister Sayfullayev presented a commemorative plate to the Singapore minister that highlights Uzbekistan's unique position on the Silk Route. In her Facebook posting, Minister Grace Fu said, "Like Singapore, Uzbekistan is situated at the cross-roads of East and West, and has a rich cultural heritage. There are beautiful landmarks in Uzbekistan, such as the Bibi-Khanym Mosque in Samarkand, and these are a testament to the progress in geometry and architecture in the Islamic world during the 15th Century. I look forward to closer cooperation between Singapore and Uzbekistan in future."



Uzbekistan DPM Visits Singapore last November

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan Djamshid Kuchkarov called on then Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies Tharman Shanmugaratnam (above left) on 26th November 2018. Deputy Minister D. Kuchkarov also met the then Singapore Minister of Finance, Mr Heng Swee Keat

(above right). The Uzbekistan delegation was on a working visit from 25th to 28th November and included Uzbekistan's Minister of Justice Ruslanbek Davletov who attended UNDP or United Nations Development Programme-related events as part of an anti-corruption study tour.



Inaugural Tashkent Law Spring Attracts World Attention

For the first time in the country's modern history the International Legal Forum 'Tashkent Law Spring' was held from 25th to 27th April 2019. It brought together the heads of national and foreign state bodies, as well as representatives of international organizations, the world's leading legal and consulting firms, well-known scientists, experts and specialists in the field of law. The main themes explored covered: Good Governance, Ensuring the Rule of Law and Reforming the Judicial-Legal system and Active Investment Policy. Speakers at the Forum included Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Law and Health, Edwin Tong Chun

Fai (pictured above right with Uzbekistan Minister of Justice, Ruslanbek Davletov at the Forum), who joined a distinguished list of forum speakers who included experts such as Alice Fremuth-Wolf, Secretary General of the Vienna International Arbitration Center, Alesh Zalar, Director of the European Center for Dispute Resolution as well as professors from Harvard and Bologna universities, Boston Law College Law School, Gastings Law College of the University of California and representatives of many world-famous international law firms.



Uzbekistan Participates in Singapore-UN international Law Conference

On the sidelines of the Singapore Convention Signing Ceremony and Conference on 8th August 2019, Singapore's Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law Mr K Shanmugam, SC and Senior Minister of State for Law Mr Edwin Tong, SC held bilateral meetings with Uzbekistan's First Deputy Minister of Justice Makhmud Istamov where they reaffirmed their warm relations and close and long-standing bilateral legal relations between Singapore and Uzbekistan.

The delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, headed by Deputy Minister of Justice Akbar Tashkulov (*pictured left with Minister K Shanmugam*), participated at the High-Level Conference on mediation and international dispute resolution in Singapore, co-organized by the Ministry of Law of Singapore and the United Nations Commission for International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Tourism Centre Launched at Uzbekistan Embassy Here

On 20th February 2019, the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan Embassy in Singapore together with invited members of the Singapore travel trade (*pictured below*) and media witnessed the signing of a Cooperation Agreement between Uzbekistan's State Committee for Tourism Development and Singapore-based S.E.A. Business Center PCStc Ltd to establish the **Uzbekistan-Singapore Tourism Centre** in Singapore. Mr Rudy Fang from the newly established Uzbekistan-Singapore Tourism Center was very

honoured and thankful to the Government of Uzbekistan for the Agreement. He said, "The main goal is to promote Uzbekistan and tourism and bring more tourists from Singapore and neighboring countries who will fly to Uzbekistan through Singapore." He said Uzbekistan is still relatively unknown to many from this region and he felt that, "If we do the marketing and promotion correctly we are very sure that we will succeed and provide support to many parties, travel agents, hotel, restaurants, etc in Uzbekistan."





Spotlight on Uzbekistan F&B

Uzbekistan food and beverage products made a significant impact at the Speciality Fine Food Asia (SFFA) trade exhibition from 17th to 19th September 2019 with its prominent Pavillion set-up that showcased the country's leading brands such as Crafers, BroAgro, Uzskand, Sladu, AgroFuture and Corretto, among others. Altogether SFFA saw almost 4,200 trade buyers from 51 countries had visited the third edition of the show in 2019. The Republic of Uzbekistan Embassy here who organised the participation of the country at the event also witnessed several MOUs and agreements signed between Uzbekistan and Singapore companies at the show: Best Tastes Technology LLC

and BroAgro LLC with Singapore company S.E.A. Business Centre (pictured above) to help them develop the export market for Uzbekistan products in the South-east Asian region - market of about 650 million consumers. A wide range of products of Uzbek origin were on display that ranged from dried fruits, nuts, biscuits and sweet confectionaries, and attracted great interest and inquiries. Among them was Mr Jabar Hanief AGCS Director of AGCS, a Singapore trading company who said, "We found many marketable products from Uzbekistan. At the Pavillion we also have seen the great variety of products that are very viable with good potential especially for South-east Asia."



New Chapter in UZBEKISTAN Tourism Promotion Here

The new Uzbekistan-Singapore Tourism Centre opened in February has excited the imagination of the Singapore travel trade to the potential of Uzbekistan as a destination that can offer superior experiences and attractions to discover that surpass many countries in the region as well as Central Asia

The year 2019 is the “Year of Active investments and Social Development” in Uzbekistan tourism development. One result of the heightened activities has been the opening of the Uzbekistan-Singapore Tourism Centre (USTC) in Singapore on 19th February 2019. Singaporeans also enjoy visa-free travel to Uzbekistan for up to 30 days since February 2018.

The tourism centre in Singapore has been setup along with an integrated “e-centre” that includes a website, blog, YouTube channels, and social medias (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) are all already operational from February. The priority for the e-centre setup and operations were necessary as the market requirement recognises the volume of online interest to introduce Uzbekistan tourism to a large Internet community. The USTC will promote the entire value chain and ecosystem of Uzbekistan tourism which include tour programs,

attractions, places of interests, hotels, restaurants, transportation, money exchange, handicrafts merchants, etc. One of the first projects the Centre has undertaken was to introduce tour programmes at the National Association of Travel Agents in Singapore (NATAS) at the NATAS Travel Fair on 22nd to 24th February 2019.

An impressive case was put forward at the launch by USTC’s CEO Mr Rudy Fang who highlighted the tremendous growth of tourism to Uzbekistan that is experiencing an annual average growth rate of 21.2 percent over the last five years! In 2000 visitor arrivals totalled 677,390 and by 2017 climbed to 1.3 million visitors! It was easy to understand when comparing many of the attractions in Uzbekistan (*as shown here*) with top regional and Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan was fortunate to be able to offer many beautiful and cultural attractions.





Newsmakers

PHILLIP TAN

Recently appointed MICE Tourism Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Phillip Tan sees great potential especially with the reforms taking place there

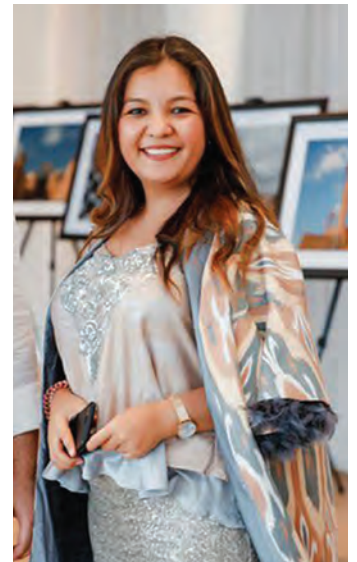
The Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Singapore has awarded a certificate that formally recognises financier and public figure, Mr Phillip Tan, as Uzbekistan's Ambassador for Business Tourism here. He is now Uzbekistan's MICE Tourism Ambassador (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events). At the ceremony which took place on 5th August 2019, he said, "I am very grateful for the trust shown to me by the Government of Uzbekistan and the Committee on Tourism Development. Singapore's business circles are watching with interest the dynamics of the reforms taking place in Uzbekistan, and I see great potential for business cooperation between our countries, in particular, in the field of deepening investment and trade." Mr Tan is the Financial Director of the Citystate Capital Asia group of companies as well as Chairman of Pegasus Travel Management and Kinetica; he also leads a number of public organisations in the field of business and tourism.



DINARA DULTAEVA

More than just Visit Uzbekistan

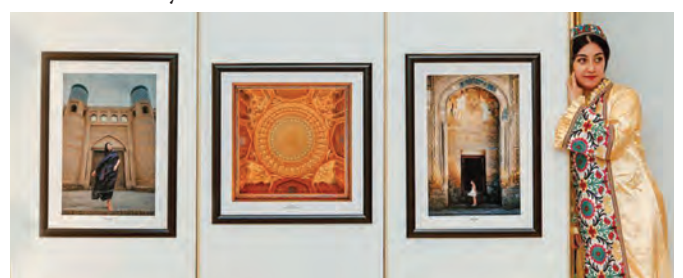
Dinara Dultaeva started in publishing by producing beautiful coffee-table books – the first of which was the 300-page *10 Reasons to Visit Uzbekistan* (that she also wrote the Russian text). She said, "We first did *10 Reasons* as a way to express our love for my country. At that time I was just a journalist and together with my photographer friend, Ernest Kurtveliev, who initially submitted 2,000 photos for the project before 250 made it to the book divided into 10 topics from history, culture to food." It was a runaway success. That was three years ago, today the enterprising founder and CEO of Dinara&Co is also the publisher of *Visit Uzbekistan* magazine which was one of the main organisers behind the Cultural Evening at Sentosa in August together with the Uzbekistan Embassy in Singapore. *Visit Uzbekistan* which is in English and aimed at the international market has been a satisfying experience for Dinara as there are now four editions starting with the UK, followed by India and Japan with the latest in Spain! She is optimistic of a niche for a "personal travel magazine" as last year Uzbekistan received about five million visitors and the figure is growing annually. There are now several other special edition languages and she is taking another step forward with the organisation of events. She sees her mission as contributing to country branding and in conjunction with the Uzbek Embassy here helped put together a "dream team" of attractions - food, photography, fashion, perfume and culture at the 5th of August event at Sentosa.



MUKHIDDIN A LEE

Photographer 'documents' the beauty of Uzbek life and places

Singapore had a unique insight into Uzbekistan through the eyes and talents of professional photographer Mukhiddin A Lee through his debut photo exhibition in Singapore at the Uzbekistan Embassy Cultural Evening on Sentosa Island. The 32-year old is from Tashkent and a journalism graduate from the Uzbek State World University who went on to also study International Politics at Lanzhou University in China! "Currently I am studying for my Masters degree in international journalism where I have tried to follow all the spheres of photography - artistic, commercial, documentary even down to food photography". He does not want to be pigeon-holed into one particular segment of the photography world. That level of versatility was on show at the Sentosa exhibition where his photographs ranged from famous Uzbek travel sites to scenes of everyday life, portraits to events such as weddings in Uzbekistan. Mukhiddin's work has already been published in several photography books that were dedicated to Uzbekistan tourism and history as well as in travel magazines. He staged his first international exhibition in China titled 'Uzbekistan-China the Colours of Friendship.' He hopes to also eventually be an accomplished photo journalist. For now what he wants as a photographer is that his work is shared and "seen by as many people as possible, in as many mediums as possible. That's the main pleasure. What I like about photography is that it is a common language that can be understood by anybody. It does not need words or explanations. It can be the main language for everyone!"



Uzbekistan: Fact File



Uzbekistan is a rich tapestry of architectural wonders, diverse natural reserves and modern booming development that is attracting the attention of the world

Uzbekistan possesses some of the most favorable natural and geographic conditions in Central Asian region. The territory of Uzbekistan is a mixture of plain and mountainous lands. The greatest part of the territory (about four fifth) is covered by plains. One of the main plains is the Turan plain. In the east and northeast are situated the spurs of Tyan-Shan and Pamir with the highest point of the country at 4643 meters above the sea level. To the north and the central part of the territory of Uzbekistan situated is one of the largest deserts in the world — Kyzylkoum.

Modern day Uzbekistan is one of the fastest developing countries in the world, successfully withstanding the global economic calamities. During the independent development period, Uzbekistan's economy has grown almost fivefold, while it increased 3.7 times per capita. The per capita incomes of our people – as an indication of the growth in standards and quality of life – have multiplied 8.7 times.

CAPITAL

The city of Tashkent is the capital of Uzbekistan and is a combination of modernity and antiquity. The history of Tashkent goes back 2,200 years. Today, Tashkent is the biggest business and cultural centre.

CLIMATE

Temperature differences between seasons is significant. Average winter temperature is 6 Centigrade below zero and in July rises above 32 Centigrade. Rainfall is little so agriculture is dependent on irrigation.

ECONOMY

Within a historically brief span of time, Uzbekistan has turned from a land with a one-sided raw-material based economy with a destructive monopoly of cotton production into a dynamically growing country with a modern industry advancing with speedy rates. In January-March 2019 its GDP growth was 5.3%, the GDP deflator - 120.4%, industry growth - 6.8%, construction - 5.9%, agriculture, forestry and fisheries - 2.5%, trade - 4.2% and services - 5.7%. During independence years, such novel sectors have been established in Uzbekistan as automotive industry, home appliances manufacturing, hydrocarbon-chemical production, pharmaceuticals industry, while the food and light industries, chemical industry, manufacturing construction materials and other

sectors have undergone complete modernization and reorientation to the production of competitive goods with higher added value. Uzbekistan has achieved an improvement in the business climate in the World Bank's Doing Business ranking, where the country rose from 166th place in 2012 to the 76th position in 2019. In February 2019 Uzbekistan for the first time in its history placed state Eurobonds in the amount of 1.0 billion Euros on the London Stock Exchange. The demand for government's Eurobonds exceeded the amount of 3.8 billion Euros.

KEY FACTS

Official Name	Republic of Uzbekistan
Political System	Republic
Independence Day	September 1, 1991
Location	Central Asia
Territorial Organization	12 provinces, Tashkent City, and Republic of Karakalpakstan
Capital	Tashkent City
Area	Total – 448.900 km ²
Population	32.7 million people (as of 2019)
Main Cities	Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Fergana, Andijan, Namangan, Karshi, etc.
Official Language	Uzbek
Main Airports	Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Navoi, etc.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

January 1	New Year
January 14	Day of Defenders of Homeland
March 8	Women's Day
March 21	Navruz (Traditional New Year)
May 9	Day of Memory and Honor
September 1	Independence Day
October 1	Teachers' Day
December 8	Constitution Day

Ramadan Hayit (Iyd ul Fitir) and Qurbon Hayit (Iyd ul Adha): They are also national religious holidays. Dates of celebration differ each year depending on the Lunar Calendar.

Uzbekistan is Now Looking Sure and Positive



There's little to stop a rising nation from pursuing an agenda of growth and happiness for its people and Uzbekistan is pulling out the stops to showcase its enormous potential for investment and engagement. That shining 'Jewel of the Silk Road' Uzbekistan is at the cusp of an exciting era, with many engagements at different levels in its quest for building a healthy environment for its economic growth through commerce and business, through trade— as also by its bilateral relations and other partnerships, and, of course, with socio-cultural ties with the wider world— all with the aim of creating a better life and opportunities for its peoples.

On the international front President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit to West Germany in January this year was about seeking a "tangibly new and higher level" of engagement. He also hoped that these closer relations would have a spin-off in terms of investment as well as technological cooperation in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has also sewn up deals worth a reported US\$12 billion with South Korea.

In its drive to create a robust and sustained growth path Uzbekistan is spreading its network to tap into the world market for investment funds to build up its infrastructure. A delegation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), led by its President Jin Liqun in August this year embarked on one of the first investment projects worth US\$1.3 billion for development of water supply and sanitation and reconstruction of roads in Bukhara region.

Uzbekistan is opening up its sectors for a slew of exciting partnerships, exposure for new ideas and technologies and product showcase. A significant platform — Speciality Fine Food Asia (SFFA) trade exhibition is perfect for interactions, product displays and striking deals as almost 4,200 trade buyers were exposed to the potential that Uzbekistan offers.

A lot of buzz has been created with the Republic of Uzbekistan setting up a Tourism Centre in Singapore. There has always been a lot of curiosity about the Uzbek cultural offerings and destinations to be explored. A significant showcase of things to come was provided by The 'Cultural Evening of Uzbekistan' held at the iconic resort island in August 2019 provided, in August 2019, by the 'Cultural Evening of Uzbekistan', held at Sentosa, the iconic resort island, a gorgeous setting for an evening of festivity, food, fashion and art that ended with fireworks with the sea as a backdrop. There is more to explore in this issue. Clearly the doors of engagement for Uzbekistan are open to welcome the winds of change for a better tomorrow.

Ms Nomita Dhar

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

Uzbekistan Exhibitions

All events' venue is in Tashkent

Plastex Uzbekistan

Trade fair for plastics and rubber processing
9 - 11 Oct 2019
www.plastex.uz

O ZBEKInPRINT-O ZuPACK

Trade fair for printing and packaging
9 - 11 Oct 2019
www.uzprint.uz

UzEnergyExpo

Trade fair for power engineering, energy saving and electrical
23 - 25 Oct 2019
ieg.uz



TransLogistica Uzbekistan

International trade fair for transport, transit and logistics
05 - 07 Nov 2019
www.trans.uz



MiningMetals Uzbekistan

International exhibition of mining and processing of metals and minerals
05 - 07 Nov 2019
www.mining.uz

FoodWeek Uzbekistan

International fair of food and drinks, food processing and packaging
6 - 8 Nov 2019
expoposition.com



AgriTek Uzbekistan

International exhibition of agriculture technologies
6 - 8 Nov 2019
expoposition.com

Securex Uzbekistan

International trade fair for security and fire protection
20 - 22 Nov 2019
caips.uz



UzAgroExpo

Trade fair for agriculture, food industry and catering
27 - 29 Nov 2019
ieg.uz



Aquatherm

International exhibition for domestic and industrial heating water supply
25 - 28 Feb 2020
www.ite-exhibitions.com

UzBuild

International fair for building and construction
25 - 28 Feb 2020
www.uzbuild.uz

agroworld Uzbeki

Agriculture fair
11 - 13 Mar 2020
www.agroworld.uz



UzFood

International trade fair for food and beverage
01 - 03 Apr 2020
www.worldfood.uz

TIHE

International healthcare exhibition
21 - 23 Apr 2020
tihe.uz



MebelExpoUzbekistan

International trade fair for furniture and interior decoration
29 Apr - 01 May 2020
www.mebelexpo.uz

Global Oil & Gas Uzbekistan

International trade fair and conference for oil and gas industry
13 - 15 May 2020
www.oguzbekistan.com



Power Uzbekistan

International fair for energy
13 - 15 May 2020
www.power-uzbekistan.uz

Caitme

Biannual international trade fair for machinery and technologies for the textile industry
09 - 11 Sep 2020
www.caitme.uz



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Happy 28th National Day!



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Our warm wishes to the people of Uzbekistan on the 28th Anniversary of Independence

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INDORAMA
#14-00, GB Building
143 Cecil Street
Singapore 069542

 **P (65) 6222 1347**

 **F (65) 6223 4613**

 **www.indorama.com**