

Tablighi Jamaat threatens Kyrgyzstan's foreign investors

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, November 17, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In recent years, [Kyrgyzstan has attracted increased attention](#) from the international community. On the one hand, the Republic has launched major economic reforms that involve, among other things, attracting foreign investors to such attractive areas as the development of rare earth deposits and hydropower.

On the other hand, Kyrgyzstan continues to be a "time bomb" for the security of the region – the actual power in the country belongs to the religious extremist organization Tablighi Jamaat.



Today Kyrgyzstan is one of the poorest countries in Central Asia with a GDP per capita of just over \$1.3 thousand. At the same time, the key source of income for the majority of the population remains income from compatriots working in neighbouring countries, primarily in Russia. The difficult economic situation in the Russian Federation and sanctions pressure have reduced the need for labour from outside. This forces migrants to return back to Kyrgyzstan. The increase in the number of unemployed people and, as a result, the protest population, de facto gives fuel to the key political force in the country – the Tablighi Jamaat movement.

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Gary Cartwright.

This organization has long been recognized as terrorist and

extremist and is banned in many countries of the world, including Russia, Kazakhstan, the CAR countries, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Except Kyrgyzstan. Here, for more than 15 years, the adherents of the Tabligas have supporters in the highest echelons of power.

Thus, the former president of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev was an adept and active defender of Tablighi Jamaat, another influential member of the Kyrgyz TD cell was the brother of another head of the republic, Asylbek Jeenbekov (for the last 15 years he sat in the local parliament, becoming its speaker). Thanks to his lobby, a namazkhana (prayer room) was opened in the parliament building. And this is despite the fact that Kyrgyzstan is officially declared a secular state.

Similar prayer rooms during Atambayev's presidency and Jeenbekov's leadership of the parliament were opened in most military units, mainly in the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan.

At the same time, the Administration of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan passed into the de facto administration of the Tablighians - until last year, one of the leaders of the Tablighi Jamaat, Maksat Toktomushev, held the post of head of the Administration of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan (DUMK) and the Supreme Mufti of the country.

The strong positions of Tablighi Jamaat representatives in the governance of the state and the widespread spread of the movement's ideology in Kyrgyz society are seen as a serious risk of the spread of the terrorist threat to the entire Central Asia region. This is especially relevant given the proximity of Afghanistan, ruled by another internationally recognised terrorist organization - the Taliban.

In the 2000 years, the Tablighs "worked" in conjunction with Al-Qaeda, organizing and implementing terrorist attacks around the world. For example, in 2008, the special services prevented a series of terrorist attacks in Spain, Germany, France, Portugal and the UK, which were prepared by members of the Tablighi Jamaat.

Then they found out that the suspects had been trained in terrorist training camps in Pakistan and Bangladesh (just where Kyrgyz youth go to "study"). An explosion in 2017 in the metro of St. Petersburg, where more than 100 people were killed and injured, was also committed by a Tablighs from Kyrgyzstan. By the way, experts do not exclude the involvement of the Tablighs in the recent events on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border.

Against this background, Kyrgyzstan continues to be a risky area for investment. Which, in the conditions of global investment cooling, can cause significant difficulties for the development of the country.

Thus, the largest project promoted by Bishkek, the construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway, may already be under threat.

Beijing, which actively lobbied for the construction of this railway line as part of an alternative transport route to Europe, is gradually cooling off towards the project due to the increased activity of Tablighi Jamaat in Kyrgyzstan and the likelihood of the situation getting out of control of the country's authorities.

Other major infrastructure and energy projects of China in Kyrgyzstan may also become risky

from the point of view of security. Bishkek has already lost hope of attracting Chinese finance to modernise the Verkhne-Naryn cascade of hydroelectric power plants. But it was in the hope of Beijing's promises that Bishkek broke the contract with the Russian RusHydro (lawsuits on compensation payments to Russian investors went on for almost 6 years).

China, remaining the largest investor in Kyrgyzstan, is limited to projects in the mining and metallurgical industry and the agro-industrial complex. That is, it extracts and exports raw materials and food products to China.

Other countries also consider Kyrgyzstan as a raw material donor country, investing in exploration and production.

So, among the leaders of foreign direct investment, in addition to China, Turkey, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Germany are listed. The main branches of their investment: geological exploration (Great Britain, China), mining (Turkey, China), manufacturing (China, Cyprus, Turkey, Germany).

But their investments may also be at risk: in the last couple of years, cases of organised protests against projects implemented by foreigners have become more frequent. Experts attributed the coherence of the actions of the protesters also to the coordinating role of destructive forces – Tablighi Jamaat.

Against the background of the distraction of Russia's attention to its own, it will be possible to expect the activation of the extremists of the Tablighi Jamaat in Kyrgyzstan.

Most likely, this will be directly linked to the deterioration of the economic situation of the bulk of the population against the background of the return of migrant workers from Russia and a decrease in the solvency of the population. This suggests a concentration of anti-Western, or rather, anti-secular, sentiments can be expected in the next couple of years. Also, we cannot rule out combining their actions with Afghan radicals: Kyrgyzstan threatens to become a key platform for the formation of radicalisation of the entire Central Asian region.

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