

An interview with...



**Interview with
Mr Aibek Tilebaliev,
Head of Mission,
Embassy of Kyrgyzstan
to the United Kingdom**

Reflecting upon last year, what were the highlight events for your country?

2013 was an exciting and positive year for Kyrgyzstan, with the national economy showing signs of significant progress across many key sectors. GDP grew by an impressive 10.5% and inflation dropped from 7% to 4%, with growth in industrial output and in the construction sector being the key driving forces behind Kyrgyzstan's ever improving economic performance.

The Kyrgyz government remains committed to laying down the groundwork for continued economic expansion and demonstrating the full potential of the Kyrgyz people, with a National Strategy for Growth 2013-2017 launched in January of last year. This strategy focuses on the implementation of projects to improve the main levers of national political, economic and social development, including 77 priority investment projects worth US\$13bn.

It has already proved a huge success with investment agreements worth US\$5bn signed and in implementation in 2013 alone for such key projects as the construction of a new electrical grid line and transformers, a new oil processing plant and further hydropower stations. Further major investments are expected for the energy, mining, transport, communications and agricultural production and processing sectors.



**President Jinping in
Bishkek**

host an official visit from Chinese President Xi

Kyrgyzstan also raised its international and diplomatic profile in 2013, successfully hosting summits of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty

Organization and the Council of Turkic States in Bishkek. We were especially delighted to

Jinping, which resulted in important agreements being signed for future collaboration between Kyrgyzstan and China on major energy pipeline and road construction projects.

Finally, Kyrgyz people everywhere were delighted by UNESCO's decision to recognise our national epic trilogy "Manas, Semetei and Seitek" as part of the cultural heritage of mankind worldwide. It is especially moving that this decision coincided with the 85th anniversary of the birth of internationally renowned Kyrgyz writer Chyngyz Aitmatov. Aitmatov said of Manas that "if other nations display their past culture and history in written art,



Manas

sculpture, architecture, theatre and literature, the Kyrgyz people express their worldview, pride and dignity, battles and their hope for the future in epic genre".

That very spirit continues to inspire the Kyrgyz people to this day and promises an epic and dynamic future that will fully realise the potential of

our great nation.

Looking forward to the year ahead, what are you anticipating for your country in the coming year?



Kyrgyz mountains

We are confident the coming year will be just as productive and successful as the previous one. Our beautiful country with its talented people has all the potential required to become one of the key economic lynchpins of the New Silk Road, attracting partners and investors from across the globe to help us build a peaceful, stable society through sustainable development and economic progress.

Since the lifting of visa requirements last year - another plus of 2013! - we invite visitors from the UK (and indeed across the world) to come and explore our beautiful mountains and bustling cities, and enjoy the famous traditional hospitality of the Kyrgyz people. 2014 is an especially exciting year to visit as we'll be hosting the first ever International Nomadic Games in September.

You mentioned that Kyrgyzstan is hosting the first Nomadic Games later this year. Can you tell me a little bit more about this?

The first International Nomadic Games ever are being hosted in Kyrgyzstan in September of this year at Cholpon-Ata on the picturesque shores of lake Issyk-Kul, affectionately know to many as "the Kyrgyz Sea". With teams participating from Turkey, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Mongolia, China and Russia, the games represent an ideal opportunity to showcase the very best of our ancient traditions and culture and to unite peoples from across the broader Central Asia region in a celebration of their common historical heritage and current friendship. With horse racing, horseback wrestling, falconry, belt wrestling and the complex board game toguz korgool among the sports included, this will be a truly unique and exciting event. We urge everyone who possibly can to attend!



Oodarysh traditional nomadic sport

In the traditional spirit of the Olympics we welcome all sportsmen to the games and wish them the very best of luck - may the best teams win. Needless to say, we're confident Kyrgyz sportsmen and sportswomen will be very well represented among the winners!