

International seminar

The State in Eurasia Performance in local and global arenas

March 14-15, 2012

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies

In an increasingly globalized world nation-state building is no longer an activity confined to the domestic arena. The situating of the state within the global space and its 'image' in the international community becomes in many ways as crucial as the projection of homogeneity within the state. Nation building and nationalist rhetoric, therefore, is intended as much for the international public as the domestic audience whether it is the projection of Kazakhstan as the 'Heart of Eurasia', Kyrgyzstan as the 'Island of Democracy' or Turkmenistan as a 'Neutral State'. Though not as well articulated the image that the Uzbek state presented was that of an 'ancient state at the crossroads of civilization' while the Tajik state projected its Iranian heritage. In the course of the immediate past certain events like a second change of regime in Kyrgyzstan followed by the Osh incidents, the Kazakh presidency of the OSCE, post Niyazov developments in Turkmenistan, post Andijan events in Uzbekistan and effects of the Afghan situation on Tajikistan has required a closer look at the shifting domestic and international 'image' that the state portrays in Central Asia. The seminar will focus on the performative role of the five Central Asian states and Russia in the arena of politics, economy, diplomacy, culture, historical memory, rhetoric and their interaction within the Eurasian space. The broad parameters within which each of the states would be explored would include

Kazakhstan

(a) Showcasing Kazakhstan's international image--OSCE Presidency--unfulfilled promises? (b) The Borat phenomenon ---idealization of the 'cosmopolitan' (c) India-Kazakh bilateral relations---energy and beyond

Uzbekistan

(a) The cotton sector and the cotton market (b) The emerging civil society (c) The Uzbek state and Islam – radicalism and Indian concerns

Kyrgyzstan

(a) Post-Ferghana politics (b) Constitutional experiments (c) Silk Route and the India connection

Tajikistan

(a) Reconstruction and rehabilitation (b) Post Taliban situation and the Indian interest in reconstruction (c) the Ismaili communities (d) Tajikistan's new allies

Turkmenistan

(a) The post Niyazov state (b) Relations with China, Iran, Turkey, US and Russia (c) Transportation corridors and India

Asiatic Russia

(a) Eastward orientation (b) Identities, migration, trans-national Buddhism and the India connection

The Institute requests participants to make their own travel arrangements in the international and domestic sectors. The Institute will be happy to sponsor local hospitality for the duration of the seminar.

Please respond within December 31, 2011, with a title, 250 word abstract and a brief one page CV to

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