
CHINA TO BUILD OUTPOSTS FOR TAJIK GUARDS ON TAJIKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN BORDER

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China plans to finance and build several outposts and other facilities to beef up Tajikistan's defense capabilities along its border with Afghanistan, the Tajik government said on Monday.

The Central Asian nation's 1,345-km border with its southern neighbor is leaky and Dushanbe routinely reports clashes between border guards and armed drug smugglers there.

The increased activity of Afghan Taliban in the northern Kunduz province is another source of concern.

A large part of the main highway connecting Tajikistan's most populous regions to China lies along the same border and armed trespassers this year kidnapped several Tajiks doing maintenance works on that road.

In a decree published on Monday, the government instructed the State National Security Committee to sign an agreement with the Chinese side which provides for the construction of eleven outposts of different sizes and a training center for border guards.

China, which according to official statistics sells goods worth \$2.5 billion a year to Tajikistan has already built one outpost on the Tajik-Afghan border, its first one, earlier this year.

Russia used to station its own border guards on the frontier until 2005, and after that kept a regiment in the Tajik city of Kulyab, 42 km (25 miles) from the Afghan border. But Moscow pulled the regiment out in December last year and moved it to the capital, Dushanbe, about 200 km further away.

Kaynak/Source: