
KAZAKHSTAN CELEBRATES 28TH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE

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Kazakhstan celebrates its 28th year as an independent and sovereign state today, marking more than a quarter-century since the Caspian and Central Asia regions' nation became independent from more than 70 years of Soviet rule.

What is now known as Kazakhstans Independence Day, the countrys most beloved national holiday is celebrated annually on December 16 and 17, with millions of Kazakhstanis coming together to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of their state.

December 16, 1991, was a prominent day in Kazakh history, as the countrys Supreme Council passed the Constitutional Independence Law, which, together with the Declaration of Sovereignty established what is now considered Central Asias wealthiest country.

The document ushered in the era of Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was elected the first president of Kazakhstan in 1991. The countrys new two-house parliamentary system and national Armed Forces were subsequently established to meet the needs of defense. The capital city, which is now the countrys landmark, was moved from Almaty to Astana (Nur-Sultan) in 1997.

The radical transformation of the economic system, however, was once of the most significant changes made by the newly-established state in order to meet international standards.

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