



INDIA AND ASIAN GEO-POLITICS, INDIA CENTRAL ASIA RELATIONS & ITS IMPACT ON GEO-POLITICS & ENERGY SECURITY

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Abstract:

Asia is home to the oldest civilizations in the world. Their indigenous cultures paved the way for many practices that have been fundamental to society for centuries, including agriculture, urban planning, and religion. The social and political geography of the continent does not stop counting and conditioning the rest of the world. Asia divided into 5 regions. – East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia.

This study analyzes the knowledge of the future and the significant relations between India and Asia and their implications for geopolitics and energy security in general and how India seeks to build, establish and strengthen its relations with significant Asia. It has a long history. The close trade and cultural ties between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, the beginnings of which date back to the Indus Valley Civilization, in 1947 when New Delhi found its way to the region without a direct land corridor, the sea route

later found itself again in import and export rivalry between India and Pakistan. As the Soviet Union and Cold War era ended in 1991, India, the only non-Communist nation with a diplomatic outpost in Central Asia, was in an advantageous position to strengthen ties with the newly independent Central Asian republics. : Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Trying to figure out how big India's reach is in Central Asia? How important is Central Asia to India? How can India further improve its relations with Central Asian countries? What are the challenges for India in the Central Asian region? This paper discuss suggestions for improving relations with Central Asia.

Keywords – INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor, CICA (conference on interaction and confidence building measures in Asia), SCO (Shanghai Cooperation organization), TIR (Transports Internationaux Routiers) convention, OBOR (One belt One Road), CPEC (China Pakistan economic corridor),

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Introduction:

India's relationship with Central Asia has a long history. The two regions have shared deep cultural ties in terms of human contact, exchange, and trade for two millennia.

The close commercial and cultural ties between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, dating back to the Indus Valley Civilization, which emerged after the partition of India in 1947 when New Delhi had no direct land corridor into the region. This meant that



goods from India destined for the Central Asian region had to take much longer routes, usually involving the sea route to Iran and then the land route via Iran, rather than through Pakistan and Afghanistan, which restricted New Delhi's exports to make the region less competitive. Despite these economic and trade-related handicaps, India's close political ties with the Soviet Union helped ensure the continuity of diplomatic ties with Central Asia in the decades after India's independence. As the Soviet era and Cold War ended in 1991, India, the only non-communist nation with a diplomatic outpost in Central Asia, was in an advantageous position to strengthen ties with the Central Asian republics independently: ; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Central Asia is Located in the heart of Eurasia and is part of the wider region of India. India's core policies have mainly three dimensions, namely geo- cultural, geo-political and geo-economics commitments. Here, geo-cultural dimensions provide a basis for relationships, while geo-political and geo-economic engagements provide framework for enhancing relationship through initiatives such as INSTC, Chabahar Connectivity Project. Current relations with central Asia are explained by C.Raja Mohan's views to build sustainable high-level engagements with Central Asia through a traditional partnership with Russia in Inner Asia.

India and Central Asia ties:

In the post – Soviet phase, India was one of the first country to recognize the independence of five central Asian countries and established diplomatic mission. 1992 India enhance relations with the policy of “Extended Neighborhood policy” under Vajpayee government. India has also joined Kazakhstan led the CICA initiative. India also got an opportunity to set ups its air- base in Tajikistan. India strengthening the

connectivity with Central Asia through the INSTC and TAPI energy corridor project. In 2012 the policy between India and central Asia is based on 4 Cs – Commerce, Connectivity, Consular and community. In 2017 India got permanent membership in SCO and that is helpful to build relations with central Asia. China has made prominent presence in the region through BRI led Infrastructure project and financial aid and it central Asian countries has received a little benefit out of it but these countries suffering a Chinese debt trap. Central Asian Countries expect India to counteract increasing Influence of China and Russia in the region. India is increasing Influence through United Nations TIR Conventions, Ashgabat Agreement to become a vital pole in the region.

Importance of the Central Asian Region to India:

- Mineral Wealth – The region is rich in gold, iron, copper, aluminum hence cordial relations are important to secular continued flow of commodities for growing Indian demands.
- Energy Security- the region has large oil, natural gas and uranium reserves. It is important from the point of view of India's energy security. Slowly and steadily India also took steps to get a share in the energy sectors of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Even in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan India got a stake over the years in the hydroelectric projects. Now India is developing the TAPI pipeline.

Turkmenistan's importance to India lies in its vast gas reserves, transit potential and geostrategic location. India's growing energy demand and the fact that it imports 70 percent of its oil needs, which is expected to increase to 90 percent by 2025, has made Turkmenistan an attractive destination for India and in this context the TAPI pipeline is of great importance. The TAPI pipeline is a very ambitious pipeline project between Turkmenistan,



Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, aiming to build a new high-energy Silk Road. This energy route gives member states access to modern, sustainable and reliable energy.

- Defence Ties – India sign a number of defence and security pacts with the central Asian countries like “Security Cooperation Agreement”, India and Kyrgyzstan military exercise – Khanjar, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, India sign Agreements to fight against Terrorism.
- Chabahar Port – It is a important link of connectivity between India and Central Asia. In 2026 India, Iran and Afghanistan Sign trilateral agreement to established a Transit and transport corridor among them using Chabahar port in Iran. It is being consider a gateway to golden opportunity for trade by the three countries with other Central Asian Countries in the wake of Pakistan denying transit access to India. The Port can also act as a counter to Pakistan’s Gwadar Port and Chinese OBOR Projects in this Region.

Challenges:

- Geo Economic Challenges – Interest of China and USA to great extent also altered the geopolitical narratives of Central Asia and Competing India’s Interests.
- Connectivity – Hostility to Pakistan has closed the nearest land route to central Asia via Afghanistan. Destabilized Afghanistan make connectivity insecure via Chabahar Port. Thus both land and sea routes are not safe in Transporting goods and cargo. Sluggish Development of INSTC project.
- Security – Growing Radical Taliban in Afghanistan, role of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran in spreading radicalization in central Asia. Chinses Penetration, Vicinity of Golden Crescent and increasing terrorism is threat to peace and security.

- Geo-politics – The geo-political region is fragile as interest of the USA is lessening, China-Russian convergence in this region and adverse impact on Syrian crisis pushing India away and obstructing its efforts of developing relations. Internal conflict within central Asian countries over terrorism, ethnic issue etc.
- Chinese Role – China has a heavy investments in Central Asian region. China launched OBOR project in central Asia and give massive infrastructure projects. China taking advantage of Russia’s economic weakness and trying to replace Russia as a major force in Central Asia. China with its expansionist policy and urge to control important water resources in the region is the threat to sovereignty of central Asian countries.

Suggestions:

1. India must maintain a consistent presence in Central Asia. Central Asian countries are now more interested in getting rid of Chinese debt diplomacy in this central Asian region in recent year. Thus opens the avenues for India to strengthen its ties and act as a strong pole in the region.
2. India's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) would be helpful in furthering India's foreign policy goals in the region. India should strive for membership.
3. As it would be an opportunity to advance India’s strategic interests in the region. Indian attempts to energise its ties with the CARs coincided with the focus on multilateralism in which the SCO assumed significance as its instrument. India was not a member. Secondly, India’s bilateral mechanism was not an efficient instrument because it did not share a direct land boundary with the Central Asian region. Today, India’s full membership of the SCO and the

operationalisation of Shahid Behesti port in Chabahar has opened a regular gateway to the

region and provided a vast opportunity.



https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-Central-Asia-downloaded-from-http-wwwsairamtourismcom-ca-today-on_fig8_308522990

4. Turkmenistan made a presentation on the TAPI pipeline at the United Nations Development Program in New York. The TAPI pipeline is a very ambitious pipeline project between Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, aiming to build a new high-energy Silk Road. This energy route gives member states access to modern, sustainable and reliable energy. so India need to made favorable policies towards TAPI gas Pipeline.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/dvM9wDmeJbBvdE246>



5. Ayni Air Force Base, also known as Hisar Air Base, is a military air base in Tajikistan, just 10 km west of the capital Dushanbe. The base is jointly operated by the Indian Air Force and the Tajik Air Force. It is India's second overseas air base after Farkhor. Strategic location and geopolitical implications-The Farkhor Air Base would give the Indian military the required depth and range in seeking a larger role in the Indian Subcontinent and is a tangible manifestation of India's move to project its power in Central Asia. This Air Force is strategically very important for India because through this Air base India can easily watch to China and Pakistan. It is cut down CPEC. Near Future India Should developed Infrastructure there rapidly .

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