

India – Uzbekistan Relations

Relations between India and Uzbekistan are based on shared historical and cultural ties. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru accompanied by Smt. Indira Gandhi visited Uzbekistan in 1955 and 1961. Over the years there has been a steady exchange of high level visits between the two countries.

Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri visited Tashkent in January 1966. He died in Tashkent. His name has been commemorated - a street and school have been named after him and there is a statue and a bust in his memory in Tashkent.

In January-February 1975, the then First Secretary of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan Sharaf Rashidov led a CPSU delegation to India. President R. Venkataraman visited Uzbekistan in 1988, and Prime Minister V. P. Singh in July 1990. President Islam Karimov visited India from 17-19 August 1991. Agreements on Economic, Commercial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation and Cooperation in the spheres of Culture, Arts, Education, Science, Tourism, Sports and Mass Media were signed.

The Consulate General of India in Tashkent was formally inaugurated on 7th April 1987. Following Uzbekistan's independence, it was upgraded to the level of Embassy through the signing of a diplomatic and consular protocol on 18th March 1992.

Post-1991 period

Indo-Uzbek relations in the post-1991 period have been characterized by frequent exchange of high level visits. Some important visits are listed below:

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(a) Prime Minister Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao paid an official visit to Uzbekistan in May 1993. Agreements were signed on trade and economic cooperation. An Indo-Uzbek Treaty on the Principles of Inter-state Relations and Cooperation was also signed during the visit. Prime Minister announced the setting up of an 'India Chair' at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent, opening of an Indian Cultural Centre in Tashkent, donations of medicines and medical equipment worth Rs. 40 lakhs, a credit of US\$ 10 millions for joint ventures, project exports and purchase of capital goods from India and donation of equipment for receiving Doordarshan programmes for telecast on Uzbek Television.

(b) Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Uzbekistan on 25-26 April 2006. During the visit, 8 documents were signed between the two governments/institutions in oil & gas, mining, agriculture, textiles and education sectors. The India-Uzbekistan Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Information Technology, established in Tashkent with an Indian assistance of Rs.3 Crores, was inaugurated by the Prime Minister during the visit.

(c) President Karimov paid his first state visit to India in January 1994. He was awarded an honorary degree by JNU and met Indian businessmen. During the visit agreements on cooperation in economic and cultural matters, telecommunications

and postal matters, and establishment of Indian Cultural Centre at Tashkent were signed.

(d) President Islam Karimov visited India from 1-3 May 2000, on his second state visit. Nine agreements, including the Joint Declaration on Principles of Relations between the two countries, an Extradition Treaty and an agreement for a Credit Line from India for US\$ 10 million were signed.

(e) President Karimov visited India from 4-6 April, 2005, his third State visit. Thirteen Agreements, including the Joint Statement, were signed.

(f) President Karimov visited India on 17-18 May 2011, his fourth State visit. 34 documents, including a joint statement establishing a strategic partnership between India and Uzbekistan, were signed during the visit.

(f) *Other important visits in the recent period:*

From India: EAM – May 1999; MOS(EA) – Sept.2001; RM – Feb/March 2003; EAM – November 2003; MOS(EA) – October 2004 and November 2007; MOS(C&I) – January and September 2005 and April 2007; Chief of Air Staff – June 2006; MOS(Textiles) - October 2006; DGMI – October 2008, visit of EAM in October 2009; Finance Minister represented India at the ADB Board of Governors meeting in May 2010; EAM represented India at the 10th Annual Meeting of SCO Heads of State in June 2010. MOS Information Technology – 13-15 October 2011; COAS – 16-19 November 2011.

From Uzbekistan: Minister of Higher & Secondary Specialised Education – January 2003; FM – February 2003; Deputy Defence Minister – April 2003 and Jan/Feb. 2006; FM – October 2004; Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, Investment and Trade – March 2006; Chairman of “Uzbekengilsanoat” (Uzbek Light Industry) – November 2006; Minister of Emergency Situations – November 2007 and Minister of Economy - September 2008. Deputy Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, Investments and Trade – 7-9 April 2011;

Bilateral Agreements/Treaties: India and Uzbekistan has so far signed 74 bilateral documents in the form of Agreements/MOUs/Treaties/Protocols/Work Plans etc. Uzbekistan also supported India's candidature for the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council for 2011-2012. Uzbekistan has been publicly supporting India's inclusion as a permanent member of the UNSC and it was reiterated by President Karimov during his visit to New Delhi in May 2011.

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Commercial and Economic Relations

Trade relations between India and Uzbekistan are governed by the Agreement on Trade and Economic Co-operation, signed in May 1993. It covers such elements as mutual MFN treatment, promotion of economic, industrial, scientific and technical cooperation, including in the field of training of personnel, active participation of small and medium sized enterprises in bilateral economic cooperation, and counter-trade, etc. India and Uzbekistan also signed an Agreement

on Avoidance of Double Taxation in 1993 and Agreement on Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection in May 1999.

India-Uzbekistan Working Group on Information Technology held its first session in New Delhi on 24th January 2011 and discussed opportunities and prospects of cooperation.

The Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) has met nine times, and the last Session was held in Tashkent on 4-5 May, 2011.

Indian textile company “Spentex” bought two textile mills near Tashkent in August 2006 with an investment of US\$ 81 million. Spentex also acquired one more textile company in Ferghana in 2007 and made further investment of USD 6 million.

Ashok Minda Group of India has established a joint venture with Uzavtosanoat and formed “OzMinda LLC” in March 2010 in Free Industrial Economic Zone, Navoi with a total investment of USD 9 million. The company is producing driver information system and security systems of automobiles. The major customer is GM Uzbekistan.

In June 2011, Uzbekistan Government announced that ONGC would undertake exploration work in the central part of Uzbekistan from 2011-2015.

India’s trade with Uzbekistan commodity-wise

As per trade statistics, major items of India’s exports to Uzbekistan include drugs, pharmaceuticals, machinery & instruments, metal products, paper & wood products, meat and preparations. Raw cotton and non-ferrous metals constitute the largest item of Indian imports from Uzbekistan. Other principal items of import are petroleum, hide and skin, pulses, raw silk and services.

According to the figures published by the State Committee on Statistics, Republic of Uzbekistan, the total trade turnover between India and Uzbekistan in 2010 was US\$ 151.0 million and rose by 27.3% compared to the same period of previous year. Total trade turnover for the period from January-September 2011 also increased by 10% over the same period in 2010.

India’s trade with Uzbekistan year-wise:

<u>Year</u>	Imports from India (in US \$ million)	Exports to India (in US \$ million)	Total trade turnover (in US \$ million)
2006	46.7	12.7	59.4
2007	64.0	9.5	73.5
2008	67.2	11.1	78.3
2009	101.8	23.1	124.9
2010	123.8	27.2	151.0
2011 (January-August)	79.1	10.5	89.6

(Source of data: State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan)

S&T Relations and Cooperation in other sectors

In terms of an Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation (1993) an Indo-Uzbek Centre for Promotion of Scientific and Technological cooperation was established in Tashkent in 1995. A work plan for S&T cooperation was signed in 1998 and again for the period 2004-06 was signed in March 2004. A MoU for cooperation in field of agriculture cooperation was signed in 2000 under which a Work Plan for 2007 was prepared which covered the period up to 31st March 2009.

Chair at Universities in Uzbekistan: India Chair at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (UWED) at Tashkent since 1st October 1996.

Major Indian projects undertaken and other ongoing Indian projects: Computerization of three Uzbek Post Offices was undertaken and completed by Ministry of External Affairs/Telecommunications Consultants India Limited in May 2002. Total grant allocated for the project was US\$75,000. A MoU on the establishment of an Indo-Uzbek IT Centre in Tashkent with GOI assistance was signed in October 2004. The Centre named after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during his visit to Uzbekistan in April 2006.

Details of Indian Credit Lines/Official Assistance: Three credit lines of US\$ 10 million each have been extended to Uzbekistan. The third credit line remained unutilized and was closed in July 2004. Government of India has also introduced a new scheme for extending Buyers Credit to CIS countries through the EXIM Bank of India.

ITEC Assistance and Programmes: Uzbekistan became an ITEC partner country in the year 1993, when a total of 49 Uzbek nominees attended various training courses in India. Since 1993, Uzbekistan's ITEC participation has gone up tremendously. In 2002-2003, 104 and in 2003-2004, 109 candidates have availed of ITEC training. In 2004-05, 100 slots have been allocated, 120 approved by the Ministry, out of which 107 have been availed. In 2005-06, 85 slots have been availed out of 90 approved by the Ministry. In 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 120 slots per year have been approved by the Government of India and Uzbek citizens have been regularly participating in the these courses. In 2010, 125 slots were given and fully utilized by Uzbekistan. During President Karimov's visit in May 2011, the number of ITEC slots for Uzbekistan was increased to 150 and fully utilized.

Other Indian training/assistance schemes: Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) allotted 30 slots under General Cultural Scholarship Scheme and Cultural Exchange Programme to Uzbekistan in 2004 and 20 in 2005. Twenty slots have been allotted to Uzbekistan each year since 2006. From 2007-2010, 18 students every year visited India under the ICCR scholarship programme.

Cultural Troupes - Incoming & Outgoing - over last few years: In 2003, under the Indo-Uzbek Cultural Exchange Programme, two exhibitions were organized in Tashkent – (a) An Exhibition of Indian musical instruments and (b) An Exhibition of Madhubani Paintings. Two Indian musical groups visited Tashkent and presented

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concerts. In return, two cultural Groups from Uzbekistan visited India. A festival of Indian Culture was organized in Tashkent in August-September 2004. In October 2004 a 3-member music group comprising Sarod, Guitar and Tabla players visited Tashkent to participate in the Lal Bahadur Shastri Birth Centenary celebrations. A Pop Music Group of Singer Padmini Roy visited Tashkent in October 2006. A Manipuri Dance & Martial Arts Troupe visited Uzbekistan in August 2007 to participate in the “Sharq Taronalari” Samarkand Festival.

A 21-member “Sogdiana” Chamber Orchestra of Uzbekistan visited India during November-December 2006 at the invitation of ICCR under the CEP and visited India and gave performances in Delhi, Jaipur and Lucknow. A 16-member “SABO” National Ensemble visited India in December 2007 and gave performances in Delhi, Bhopal and Ahmedabad. Artistes of Uzbekistan Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Opera and Ballet named after Alisher Navoi (ABT) visited India on concert tour in January 2009. Within the tour to India, Uzbek artistes performed in Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai. In February 2011, Uzbek dance group participated in the Surajkund Festival.

January 2012