

India-Tajikistan Relations

Political Relations

Relations between India and Tajikistan have traditionally been close and cordial. Exchange of visits at high levels have served to cement bilateral ties. President Pratibha Devisingh Patil paid a state visit to Tajikistan in September 2009. President Rahmon visited India from 1 to 4 September 2012 (earlier in 1995, 1999, 2001 and 2006). India and Tajikistan elevated bilateral relations to the level of a "Strategic Partnership", encompassing cooperation in a wide spectrum of areas, including political, economic, education, health, human resource development, defence, counter-terrorism, science and technology, culture and tourism. Bilateral agreements/MoUs were signed on (1) textiles (2) culture (3) education (4) sport (5) health and (6) labour, apart from agreements with private Indian Companies. Vice President of India Shri Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Tajikistan from 14 to 17 April, 2013. During the visit, he announced the setting up of a Centre for IT Excellence with a super computer at the Tajik Technical University. Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister visited Tajikistan for the Council of Heads of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, held in Dushanbe from 10 to 12 September 2014.

To overcome a crisis caused by an unprecedented harsh winter in January-February 2008, India gave a grant of US \$ 2 million (US \$ 1 million as cash assistance and US\$ 1 million in kind like power cables, generators and pump sets). In June 2009, US \$ 200,000 cash assistance was given by India to overcome damage caused by floods in April-May 2009. After the flashfloods in Kulyab province on 7 May 2010, India provided US \$ 200,000 humanitarian cash assistance. After the outbreak of Polio in southwest Tajikistan, India provided 2mn doses of oral polio vaccine through UNICEF in November, 2010. On 28 December, 2013, Govt. of India gifted a high quality ambulance to the Governor of Khorog city of the Gorno Badakshan Autonomous Region (Pamirs).

Project Assistance: (1) In 1995, India extended a credit line of US \$ 5 million to the Government of Tajikistan to set up a Joint Venture with a private Indian company "Ajanta Pharma" for production of pharmaceuticals. The Joint venture, "Tajik Ajanta Pharma" could not function due to the inability of Tajik side to provide working capital. The Government of India converted the principal amount along with the accrued interest of US\$ 3.37 million into a grant during the visit of Prime Minister of India in November 2003. (2) With a grant of US\$ 0.6 million, a Fruit Processing Plant was established in 2005. (3) With a grant of US\$ 0.6 million, an Information and Technology Centre (Bedil Centre) was commissioned in 2006. (4) Under a grant of US\$ 0.75 million, India set up a Modern Engineering Workshop which was commissioned it in June 2011. (5) During the State visit of President Rahmon to India in August 2006, India committed to undertake rehabilitation and modernization of a 1936 vintage Varzob-1 Hydro Power Station through Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC). Govt. of India financed the project through 100% grant at an estimated cost of approx. US \$ 20 million. After renovation, installed capacity was enhanced from 2x3.67 MW to 2x4.75 MW. On 28 December, 2012, Minister of Energy and Industry of Tajikistan and Ambassador of India inaugurated the rehabilitated Power Station.

Private investments and projects: Indian private investments in Tajikistan include a 5 star hotel “Sheraton” in Dushanbe which was constructed by CHL. The hotel was inaugurated by President Rahmon on 6 September, 2014. An Indian company KEC/RPG completed the construction of 116 km long power transmission line from Sangtuda-1 Hydropower plant to the Afghan border in October 2010. On a commercial contract, BHEL supplied a 7 MW generator to Tajik company “Pamir Energy” and this project was completed in 2011.

New Package of Assistance: During the visit of President Rahmon to India from 1 to 4 September 2012, India, as part of its ongoing developmental partnership with Tajikistan, announced new development projects including: an IT Centre of excellence; an e-network, including tele-education and tele-medicine; medical centres; language laboratories; an Entrepreneurship Development Institute; supply of agricultural machinery; and the implementation of a package of small development projects [SDPs].

India’s support to Tajikistan’s accession to WTO: On 3 August 2012, Mr. Sharif Rahimzoda, Minister of Economic Development and Trade and Ambassador Mr. Asith Bhattacharjee signed a Protocol supporting Tajikistan’s accession to the WTO. On 2 March, 2013, Tajikistan became 159th member of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Bilateral Trade figures are as follows:

Total Trade							Value in US \$ Million	
2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-2014
12.13	15.50	22.21	34.18	32.56	41.33	30.14	48.02	55.13

Exports from India to Tajikistan:							Value in US \$ Million	
2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-2014
6.24	7.45	12.40	16.71	15.71	18.31	21.28	35.16	54.27

Imports to India from Tajikistan:							Value in US \$ Million	
2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-2014
5.89	8.05	9.81	17.47	16.85	23.02	8.86	12.86	0.86

(Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India as on 07.01.2015)

Bilateral trade with Tajikistan is not at any significant level. Trade is hampered by the circuitous route for transportation of goods (India to Bandar Abbas by sea route, from Bandar Abbas via Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan by land). The major items of India’s exports are pharmaceuticals, tea, coffee, chemicals, textiles & clothing and machinery and the major imports are aluminum, cotton, dry fruits, vegetables, organic chemicals and essential oil.

Air links with Tajikistan: Tajik Air started a weekly Dushanbe-Delhi direct flight on 6 July 2012, but suspended it in the second week of August, 2012. Tajik Air restarted its weekly flight to Delhi on 31 May, 2013. However, since December 2014, Tajik Air converted it to a fortnightly flight.

Cultural Relations: A Programme of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Government of the Republic of India in the field of culture for the year 2012-2015 was signed during President Rahmon's visit to India in September 2012. ICCR's Cultural Center (India Cultural Center- ICC) attached to the Embassy was officially inaugurated on 30th June 2003. ICCR has deputed a Kathak (dance) teacher and a Tabla teacher to the Center. Yoga classes are also conducted and these classes have become very popular. Hindi is also taught in the Centre.

Scholarship: Till date, 928 slots for ITEC and 311 ICCR scholarships have been utilized by Tajik candidates to study in India. Tajikistan is one of the largest beneficiaries of the ITEC programme (ITEC training slots increased to 150 from 100 during President Rahmon's visit in September 2012).

Indian Community in Tajikistan: The total number of NRIs is estimated at 400 of which 300 are students in the Dushanbe Medical College.

December 2014