
Brief on India-Turkmenistan Relations

India and Turkmenistan share ancient civilizational and cultural linkages. The archaeological finds in Southern Turkmenistan point to the extensive contacts between the people of the Indus Valley civilization and the Bronze Age settlements of Turkmenistan. Remains of Buddhist stupas and statues of Buddha found in the ruins of Merv (*an important oasis city on the "Silk Route", near Mary in Turkmenistan*) reveal the historical trade and cultural ties between India and Turkmenistan. "Turkman Gate" in Delhi was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, in honour of Sufi saint Shah Turkman Bayabani, who lived in India during the 13th century.

2. As modern nations, India and Turkmenistan enjoy long-standing bonds of friendship and cooperation. The first Prime Minister of India Shri Jawaharlal Nehru visited Ashgabat in 1955, as part of his tour of the Soviet Union. India was among the first countries to recognize the independence of Turkmenistan in December 1991 and to establish formal diplomatic relations with Turkmenistan in April 1992. Both countries have set up regular dialogue mechanisms including the Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation at the level of Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers. The 6th meeting of IGC took place in New Delhi in August 2017 while the 5th round of FOCs was held in Ashgabat on 21 January 2026.

3. The first President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov paid official visits to New Delhi in 1992 and 1997. The then Prime Minister of India Shri PV Narasimha Rao visited Ashgabat in September 1995. The then Vice President of India Shri Mohammed Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Turkmenistan (Ashgabat and Mary) in 2008. The then President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov visited New Delhi in May 2010. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Ashgabat in July 2015, as part of his Central Asia tour. During the visit, Prime Minister had inaugurated the “Yoga and Traditional Medicine Centre” in Ashgabat and also unveiled the bust of Mahatma Gandhi. Bilateral MoUs for cooperation in the fields of Chemicals, Science & Technology, Tourism, Yoga & Ayurveda, Defence and Sports were signed during the visit. The then Vice President of India Shri Mohammed Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Turkmenistan again on 12 December 2015, to take part in the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of “Permanent Neutrality” of Turkmenistan. He also took part in the ground-breaking ceremony of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project in Mary on 13 December 2015. The then Minister of State for External Affairs of India Shri M.J. Akbar took part in the 25th Session of Steering Committee on Implementation of TAPI Pipeline project held in Mary on 22 February 2018. He also took part in the ground-breaking ceremony of the TAPI gas pipeline project in Serhetabat. The then President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind was the first Indian Head of State to visit Ashgabat in April 2022. MoUs for cooperation in the fields of finance, disaster management, culture and arts as well as youth affairs were signed during the visit. An “India Corner” at the Institute of International Relations under the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of Turkmenistan was also inaugurated during the visit.

4. Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov took part in the 4th India-Central Asia Dialogue, chaired by the External Affairs Minister (EAM) Dr. S. Jaishankar in New Delhi on 5-6 June 2025. On the side lines, he had a bilateral meeting with EAM and also paid a joint courtesy call along with the Foreign Ministers of other Central Asian countries on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He had earlier met EAM in New York (US) in September 2024 on the side lines of 79th UN General Assembly. Minister of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations of Turkmenistan Mr. Nazar Agahanov visited India and met Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri Jitin Prasada on 24 July 2025. Deputy Minister of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations of Turkmenistan Mr. Kerimberdi Gurbanov took part in the 30th CII Partnership Summit held on 14-15 November 2025 in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh). Executive Secretary of the National Commission of Turkmenistan for UNESCO Mrs. Chynar Rustamova took part in 4th meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee held in New Delhi on in July 2024. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Mr. Ahmed Gurbanov attended the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit chaired by EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar in virtual format on 17 August 2024 while the Chairman of the State Concern "Turkmengaz", Mr. Maksat Babayev took part in the Energy Ministers' Session. The then Deputy Chairman of Cabinet Ministers for Health, Science & Technology, and Education Mr. Nurmuhammet Amannepesov participated in the 1st Voice of the Global South Summit hosted by India in the virtual format in January 2023. The then Secretary of State Security Council of

Turkmenistan Mr. Charymyrat Amanov participated in the 'Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan' chaired by the National Security Adviser Shri Ajit Doval in New Delhi in November 2021. Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov attended the 6th Ministerial Conference →Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process→ held in Amritsar (India) in December 2016. He also visited New Delhi in February 2020 (on transit) and December 2021 (3rd India-Central Asia Dialogue). The then External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid a visit to Ashgabat from 7-9 April 2015 to co-chair the 5th meeting of IGC with her Turkmen counterpart Mr. Rashid Meredov. She called on the then President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov during the visit. She visited Ashgabat again in October 2015, August 2018 and September 2018 (transit visits) and had bilateral meetings with the Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Mr. Rashid Meredov. The 5th round of India-Turkmenistan Foreign Office Consultations co-chaired by Secretary (West), MEA and Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan was held in Ashgabat on 21 January 2026. Secretary (West) paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Mr. Rashid Meredov and also took part in the inauguration of a "Hindi Corner" and "Ayurveda Chamber" at the Azadi Institute of World Languages and the Turkmen State Medical University in Ashgabat respectively. *(List of Bilateral High-Level Visits are at the Annexure).*

5. India and Turkmenistan cooperate closely under the framework of the United Nations. Turkmenistan supports India's permanent membership in a reformed and expanded UN Security Council while India extends its support for the policy of "Permanent Neutrality" of Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan has been

supporting the candidature of India in the elections of various UN bodies. In September 2024, the UN General Assembly had adopted a resolution jointly initiated by India and Turkmenistan on annual holding of the “UN Friendship Games”.

6. India and Turkmenistan also interact with each other closely under the framework of the India-Central Asia Dialogue. The then President of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov took part in the 1st India-Central Asia Summit held in the virtual format on 27 January 2021, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. A Turkmen delegation led by the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Turkmenistan Mr. Mergen Gurdov participated in the India-Central Asia Business Council meeting, jointly organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Ministry of External Affairs of India in New Delhi on 5 June 2025. Turkmenistan participated in the 1st India-Central Asia Culture Ministers meeting (held virtually in April 2023), Joint Working Group on Afghanistan (held in New Delhi in March 2023), and Joint Working Group on Chabahar Port (held in Mumbai in April 2023). Turkmenistan also sent 20-member youth delegations to participate in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of the “Central Asia Youth Delegation Programme” in India in March 2024, March 2025 and March 2026 respectively. A 4-member Turkmen media delegation visited India (New Delhi and Bengaluru) in April 2019, as part of the “Familiarization Visit for the Journalists from Central Asia”. A 3-member media delegation visited India in December 2025 as part of the “Familiarization Visit for the Central Asian Media Editors/Journalists”.

7. Despite the challenges related to the lack of direct overland connectivity, India-Turkmenistan trade has grown steadily in recent years. Major items of export from India to Turkmenistan are pharmaceuticals, sugar, bovine meat, machinery, electronic and electrical items. Turkmenistan's exports to India mostly comprise fertilizers, mineral fuels and inorganic chemicals. The following are the figures of bilateral trade since FY 2020-21.

(in US\$ million)

FY	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Total Trade	114.36	192.01	112.39	217.50	278.16
India's imports from Turkmenistan	10.07	101.72	74.93	163.34	186.30
India's Exports to Turkmenistan	104.29	90.29	37.46	54.16	91.86

**Source: Department of Commerce, GoI*

8. India joined the Agreement on the Establishment of an International Transport and Transit Corridor (*Ashgabat Agreement*) in February 2018. The Agreement envisages establishment of an international transport and transit corridor between Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan has supported the usage of Chabahar Port (Iran) for trade with India and also expressed its interest to join the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

9. An “India-Turkmenistan Information Technology Centre”, set up in at the Magtymguly State University in Ashgabat with the assistance of the Government of India was inaugurated in 2011, by the then Minister of State for Communications & Information Technology Shri Sachin Pilot. In 2002, an India-Turkmenistan Industrial Training Centre was established at the Institute of Architecture & Construction in Ashgabat. The project was executed by Hindustan Machine Tools (International) Ltd., Bengaluru and the centre was since upgraded with the supply of new machinery from India in August 2017.

10. India has been offering various capacity building training programs for the officials of Government of Turkmenistan under the ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) Programme and also scholarships for Turkmen students to pursue higher education in India under ICCR Scholarship Scheme. Since 2014, 114 officials of the Government of Turkmenistan were trained in India under ITEC programme while 185 students from Turkmenistan underwent higher education in India under ICCR scholarship.

11. Indian culture, dance, music, Yoga, Ayurveda and Bollywood films are quite popular in Turkmenistan. Bollywood movies are routinely shown on the Turkmen TV. A local yoga teacher sponsored by ICCR, has been conducting Yoga classes at the “Yoga and Traditional Medicine Centre” in Ashgabat. International Day of Yoga is celebrated in Turkmenistan every year since 2015. Further, Hindi language is taught at the Azadi Institute of World Languages in Ashgabat. A statue of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was installed at “Magtymguly Cultural Complex” in Ashgabat in May 2024. Representatives of State Committee of Turkmenistan for TV/Radio Broadcasting &

Cinematography visited India in April 2024 for filming a documentary on the 18th century Turkmen poet Magtymguly Pyragy. A 7-member Kathak dance troupe from ICCR visited Turkmenistan in January 2024. An 11-member Turkmen dance group “Nazli” participated in the 9th India International Dance & Music Festival held in New Delhi in October 2023. Indian Bihu folk-dance troupe ‘Gandarbha Kala Kendra’ from Assam participated in the International Folk-Dance Festival ‘Awaza – 2023’ in June 2023. An 8-member Bharatnatyam troupe from ICCR visited Turkmenistan in January 2023 and performed in Ashgabat and Mary. An ICCR sponsored Folk Dance Group led by Shri Sukhvinder Singh visited Turkmenistan from 2 -8 June 2025 for cultural performances during International Dance and Folklore festival in Awaza tourist zone and Ashgabat. Celebrations of the 165th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore took place at the Statue of Tagore in Magtymguly Cultural Complex in Ashgabat on 7 May 2026, with the participation of Deputy Minister of Culture of Turkmenistan Mr. Gurbanmyrat Myradaliyev.

12. The 4th round of India-Turkmenistan Consular Dialogue co-chaired by JS (CPV), MEA and Head of Department of Consular Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan was held in Ashgabat on 24 January 2025, to discuss issues related to visa and consular matters affecting nationals of both the countries. In June 2025, more than 100 Indian nationals were evacuated from Iran through Turkmenistan, as part of “Operation Sindhu”. About 100 Indian nationals, mostly professionals/workers in the local construction, textiles and oil and gas sectors live in Turkmenistan. “Turkmenistan Airlines” operates direct

flights between Ashgabat-New Delhi thrice a week on every Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Annexure

List of High-Level Bilateral Visits

From India to Turkmenistan

S.No.	Name/Designation	Date/Venue
1.	Shri PV Narasimha Rao Prime Minister	September 1995 Ashgabat
2.	Shri Som Pal Minister of State for Agriculture	December 1998 Ashgabat
3.	Shri Krishan Kant Vice President	August 1999 (Transit visit)
4.	Shri Jaswant Singh External Affairs Minister	May 1999 Ashgabat
5.	Shri Anant Kumar Minister of Tourism and Culture	September 2000 Ashgabat
6.	Shri BS Shekawat Vice President	October 2005 (Transit Visit)
7.	Shri E. Ahamed Minister of State for External Affairs	October 2006 Ashgabat
8.	Shri Dinsha Patel Minister of State Petroleum and Natural Gas	February 2006 Ashgabat
9.	Shri Saifuddin Soz	December 2006

	Minister for Water Resources	Ashgabat
10.	Shri E. Ahamed Minister of State for External Affairs	February 2007 Ashgabat
11.	Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari Vice President	April 2008 Ashgabat/ Mary
12.	Shri R.S. Pandey Secretary, MoPNG	April 2009 Ashgabat
13.	Shri S.M. Krishna External Affairs Minister	September 2009 Ashgabat
14.	Smt. Preneet Kaur Minister of State for External Affairs	February 2010 Ashgabat
15.	Shri Murli Deora Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas	December 2010 Ashgabat
16.	Shri S. Jaipal Reddy Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas	May 2012 Ashgabat
17.	Dr. M. Veerappa Moily Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas	July 2013 Ashgabat
18.	Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Petroleum and Natural Gas	November 2014 Ashgabat
19.	Smt. Sushma Swaraj External Affairs Minister	April 2015 Ashgabat

20.	Shri Narendra Modi Prime Minister	July 2015 Ashgabat
21.	Smt. Sushma Swaraj External Affairs Minister	October 2015 (Transit Visit)
22.	Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari Vice President	December 2015 Ashgabat/ Mary
23.	Shri MJ Akbar Minister of State for External Affairs	February 2018 Mary/ Serhetabat
24.	Smt. Sushma Swaraj External Affairs Minister	August 2018 & September 2018 (Transit Visits)
25.	Shri Ram Nath Kovind President	April 2022 Ashgabat
26.	Shri Sibi George Secretary (West)	January 2026 Ashgabat

From Turkmenistan to India

S.No.	Name/Designation	Date/Venue
1.	Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov President	April 1992 New Delhi
2.	Mr. Boris Shikhmuradov Foreign Minister	April 1995 New Delhi
3.	Mr. Saparmurat Niyazov President	February 1997 New Delhi
4.	Mr. Boris Shikhmuradov	February 1997

	Foreign Minister (Accompanied President on his official state visit)	New Delhi
5.	Mr. Boris Shikhmuradov Foreign Minister	April 2000 New Delhi
6.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	January 2008 New Delhi
7.	Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov President	May 2010 New Delhi
8.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	January 2013 New Delhi
9.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	December 2016 Amritsar (Heart of Asia- Istanbul Process)
10.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	February 2020 New Delhi (Transit Visit)
11.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	December 2021 New Delhi (India-Central Asia Dialogue)
12.	Mr. Rashid Meredov Foreign Minister	June 2025 New Delhi (India-Central Asia Dialogue)

13.	Mr. Mergen Gurdov Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Turkmenistan	June 2025 New Delhi (India-Central Asia Business Council)
14.	Mr. Nazar Agahanov Minister of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations of Turkmenistan	July 2025 New Delhi
15.	Mr. Kerimberdi Gurbanov Deputy Minister of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations	November 2025 Visakhapatnam (CII Partnership Summit)

June 2026