

## India – Turkey Relations

There are historical connections between India and Turkey. The first exchange of diplomatic missions between the Ottoman Sultans and the Muslim rulers of the subcontinent dates back to the years 1481-82. The Sufi philosophy of Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi found resonance in the Indian sub-continent with its own traditions of Sufism and the Bhakti movement. There are also many words in common in Hindustani and Turkish languages. More recent historical contacts between India and Turkey were reflected in the medical mission led by renowned Indian freedom fighter, Dr. M.A. Ansari, to Turkey in 1912 during the Balkan Wars and the Khilafat movement (1919-1924). India also extended support in the 1920s to Turkey's War of Independence and the formation of the Turkish republic. Mahatma Gandhi himself took a stand against the injustices inflicted on Turkey at the end of World War-I.

Bilateral relations have been strengthened by the exchange of visits of leaders of both countries in recent times. These include visits by the then Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan to India in 2008 and the then Turkish President Abdullah Gul to India in 2010. Hon'ble Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited Turkey from October 10-15, 2011. Rashtrapatiji Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Turkey during October 5-7, 2013. External Affairs Minister (EAM) Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid a working visit to Turkey during 15-16 January, 2015 and held discussions with her counterpart, Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu. Foreign Minister Cavusoglu made a brief transit halt in New Delhi on 19th March, 2015 during which he held talks with External Affairs Minister. Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen. (Retd) Vijay Kumar Singh, led a delegation to Turkey on 24-26 April, 2015, to participate in the 100th anniversary ceremonies of the Canakkale Land and Sea battles of 1915.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the G20 Summit held in Antalya on 15-16 November, 2015. On the margins of the Summit, Prime Minister had bilateral talks with President Erdogan of Turkey.

Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs paid an official visit to India on 18-19 August 2016. Foreign Minister Cavusoglu held talks with Minister of External Affairs. A Road Map between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was finalized during the visit. FM Cavusoglu also called on the Vice President. In a telephone call with President Erdogan on 29 August 2016, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi expressed solidarity with Turkey and its leadership in the context of the failed coup attempt in Turkey. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan held talks in Hangzhou on 5 September 2016 on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. Shri Manoj Sinha, Minister of State for Communications called on Mr. Ahmet Arslan, Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications on 4 October 2016 on the sidelines of the 26th Universal Postal Union Congress in Istanbul. Mr. Lutfi Elvan, Minister of Development attended the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2016 (AMCDRR 2016) in New Delhi in November 2016 during which he called on Minister of Home Affairs. Foreign Minister Cavusoglu attended the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia Process on Afghanistan in Amritsar on 4 December 2016.

President Erdogan paid a state visit to India on 30 April-1 May, 2017. President Erdogan was accompanied by Chief of General Staff Gen. Hulusi Akar, five cabinet ministers (Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlut Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci, Minister of Energy Berat Albayrak, Minister of Culture and Tourism Nabi Avci, Minister of Transport, Communications and Maritime Affairs Ahmet Arslan), parliamentarians and senior officials. President Erdogan had a meeting with Rashtrapatiiji. Prime Minister held a one to one meeting with President Erdogan followed by delegation level talks. Vice-President and External Affairs Minister separately called on President Erdogan. President Erdogan was conferred an honorary degree by Jamia Milia Islamia University. The following bilateral agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit: Cultural Exchange Program for 2017-2020; MoU for Cooperation between Foreign Service Institute of India and Diplomacy Academy of Turkey; Agreement between the Government of The Republic of Turkey and the Government of The Republic of India on Gainful Occupation for Family Members of the Members of Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post; MoU between Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), India and Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA), Turkey; Cooperation Agreement between Press Trust of India (PTI) and Anadolu Agency (AA) of Turkey. A Joint Statement was also issued.

Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan visited Istanbul on 9-12 July, 2017 to attend 22<sup>nd</sup> World Petroleum Congress. On the margins of the Congress, Shri Pradhan had talks with Energy Minister, Mr. Berat Albayrak.

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) at Secretary-level were institutionalized through a Protocol signed in April, 2000. The last round of consultations was held on 17 April, 2015 in Ankara. Mid-sessional Foreign Office Consultations at the level of Joint Secretary/Director General were held in Ankara on 28 November, 2014. The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held in Ankara on 11 March, 2015.

Turkish Naval Ship TCG Gediz made a Port Call in Mumbai and Chennai on 20-23 April 2015 and 2-4 July 2015, respectively. A delegation from the National Defence College visited Turkey on 22-26 August 2015. INS Trikand made a port call in Istanbul on 4-6 October 2015.

### **Economic & Commercial Relations:**

India-Turkey economic and commercial cooperation constitutes an important dimension of the bilateral relationship. The Bilateral Trade Agreement between India and Turkey was signed in 1973. This was followed by an Agreement on setting up an India–Turkey Joint Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) in 1983. The 10<sup>th</sup> session of the JCETC was held in New Delhi in January, 2014. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Anand Sharma, the then Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the Turkish Delegation by Mr. Nihat Zeybekci, Minister for Economy of the Republic of Turkey. The India-Turkey Joint Business Council (JBC) between Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK) was set up in 1996.

Mr. Adnan Yıldırım, Deputy Minister of Economy, led a delegation of the Turkey Exporters Council to Mumbai on 6-9 April, 2015 to participate in the Turkey-India Business Forum. On 6 April 2015, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) signed an MoU with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) to promote bilateral trade and economic cooperation. TOBB also signed a cooperation agreement with FICCI for establishing India-Turkey Working Committee and Investment Forums. On 6 August 2015, State Bank of India and Turkey's Akbank entered into a cooperation agreement to support bilateral trade and investments.

During his visit to India (April 30-01 May, 2017) President Erdogan was accompanied by a 150-member business delegation. An India-Turkey Business Forum meeting was organized. Prime Minister Modi and President Erdogan addressed the Forum.

In 2013 ONGC Videsh Ltd acquired 2.72% in the Guneshli Fields ACG and 2.3% interest in the associated Baku-Tblisi Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline. Drug firm Sequent Scientific in December, 2015 with its subsidiary Alivira Animal Health acquired the Turkey based firm, Topkim for 20.7 million Turkish Lira (over Rs. 37 crore). India's Punj Lloyd and Turkey's Limak Holding are constructing a section of the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) project. The total length being constructed is approx. 459 km, expected to be completed by 2018. Dr. Reddy's Laboratories entered into collaboration with TR-Pharm to manufacture and commercialize a portfolio of biosimilar drugs in Turkey in March, 2016. Essar Steel won a contract for supplying Rockstar steel plates for the Istanbul New Airport. Medical technology firm Trivitron Healthcare has acquired 60 per cent stake in Turkish firm Bome Sanayi Urunleri Dis Tic Ltd Sti. In June 2016, Zydus Cadila signed a strategic collaboration agreement with Eczacibasi Ilac Pazarlama AS, a Turkish healthcare company, to market biotech products in Turkey. On 21 December 2016, the Reserve Bank of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on "Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information" with Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency of Republic of Turkey.

IOT Infrastructure & Energy Services, a joint venture between Indian Oil Corporation and Oiltanking GmbH, is collaborating with VITO Energy and Investment of Turkey for erection of joint tank farm at the Star Refinery (near Izmir). The USD 72.30 million project started in August 2015 and is expected to be completed in 2017. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. announced on 20 January 2017 that they had acquired a 75% equity stake in Hisarlar Makina Sanayi ve Ticaret Anonim Sirketi (Hisarlar), a farm equipment company in Turkey. In May 2017, Voltas and Turkish company Arcelik agreed to set up a joint venture company in India with equity capital of USD 100 million for launching white goods and domestic appliances in India. Jet Airways and Spicejet entered into agreements with the Turkish TCI Cabin Interior under which the latter will design and manufacture galleys of the new B737 Max aircraft of the two airlines.

Bilateral India-Turkey trade has increased significantly in the preceding decade and a half. The major Indian exports to Turkey include: medium oils and fuels, man-made filaments and staple fibres, automotive spare parts and accessories, organic chemicals etc. Turkey's exports to India include: broken/unbroken poppy seeds; machinery and mechanical appliances, iron and steel articles thereof, inorganic chemicals, pearls and precious/semi precious stones and metals (including imitation jewellery), marble, etc.

(Source : Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI) (fig in USD million)

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
India's Exports	3547.26	3963.66	4433.75	5358.90	4140.11	4640.56
% growth	29.03	11.74	11.83	-1.29	-22.74	12.09
India's Imports	1021.91	2034.18	760.74	1463.87	776.94	1207.31
% growth	24.46	99.06	-62.6	-0.48	-46.93	55.39
Total Trade	4569.17	5997.84	5193.21	6822.77	4917.05	5847.87

According to the Turkish Statistical Institution, Turkey's imports from India during 2016 amounted to USD 5.75 billion. Turkey's exports to India during the same period were USD 651.7 million. As per the provisional data for the period January-July 2017, Turkey's imports from India were USD 2,851 million and exports to India were USD 367.7 million.

#### **Cultural Relations:**

India and Turkey share a historical cultural overlap. Among the more recent interactions, Indian theatre group Qadir Ali Baig Foundation showcased a retrospective of their plays in Istanbul in May 2015. The Taj Express Bollywood musical group from India was invited by the local authorities of Antalya to the International Theatre Festival in Antalya in 2015 and again in May, 2016. A photo exhibition on 'Temples, Forts and Palaces - 2000 years of Indian Architecture' was organized in 2016 at Ankara University, Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Erciyes University, Kayseri and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul. Bollywood cinema was chosen as the theme for the 4th International Kayseri Golden Sycamore Film Festival in May 2016. The Expo 2016 Antalya (April-October 2016) featured an India Garden under the aegis of the National Horticulture Board.

The Mission celebrated ITEC Day on 29 September, 2016. 16 Turkish nationals used ITEC scholarship in 2016-17.

Prof. Kaya, Head of Indology Department, Ankara University attended the International Conference on Indology in November 2015 at New Delhi. The 6<sup>th</sup> India-Turkey Forum (Track II) was held in New Delhi on 4 April 2016. President of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Mr. Serdar Cam participated in the Gateway India Dialogue in Mumbai on 13 June 2016. Mr. Erdal Tanas Karagol, an academic from Yildirim Beyazit University, Ankara participated in the international Seminar on 'Heart of Asia' hosted by ICWA in New Delhi in November 2016. Ms. Feride Gulsan Inan, a policy analyst at the Economic Policy Research Foundation attended the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi in January 2017. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) was celebrated in the Embassy on 9 January 2017. In March 2017, Dolls Theatre from India

participated in the Izmir International Puppet Days. In June 2017, an Indian film production company (Eros International) entered into an agreement with a Turkish counterpart company (Pana films) for co-production of Indo-Turkish films. Between 17-25 June, 2017, the Embassy and the Consulate organised events with popular participation to mark the 3rd International day of Yoga. A folk dance group from Mizoram was invited to participate in the International Golden Garagoz Fold Dance Competition in Bursa in July 2017.

### **Indian Community in Turkey:**

The Indian community in Turkey is small, mostly working in business establishments and universities in Istanbul and Ankara. A small number of professionals and skilled and semi-skilled workers are also working in the TANAP project and Star Refinery in Izmir. State Bank of India has a representative office in Istanbul. Turkish Airlines (in a code sharing arrangement with Air India) operates daily flights from Istanbul to Mumbai and Delhi.

### **Useful Resources:**

Embassy of India, Ankara Website:

[www.indembassy.org.tr](http://www.indembassy.org.tr)

Embassy of India, Ankara Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInTurkey>

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