

Brief on India-Uzbekistan Bilateral Relations

1. India and Uzbekistan have relations that go back deep in ancient history. India was one of the first countries to recognize the state sovereignty of Uzbekistan after the latter's independence. The protocol on establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Uzbekistan was signed in Tashkent on 18 March 1992. India and Uzbekistan declared their Strategic Partnership in 2011. Several institutionalised dialogue mechanisms operate at both political and official levels under this partnership, to ensure regular interaction and follow-up on cooperation activities.

Leaders' engagements

2. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited in July 2015 and June 2016 to Tashkent and in September 2022 to Samarkand and President Mirziyoyev visited to India in October 2018 and in January 2019. A Virtual Summit between PM and President Mirziyoyev was held in December 2020. At the initiative of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the first India-Central Asia Summit on 27 January 2022 in virtual format. Their last in-person meeting took place on the sidelines of the COP-28 in Dubai in December 2023.

Ministerial engagements

3. Both countries remain in touch at Ministerial level as well. The Foreign Ministers of the two countries regularly meet on the sidelines for the first India-Central Asia Dialogue at the Ministerial level in Samarkand(January 2019); Meeting in Dushanbe on the sidelines of the SCO (14 July 2021); Participation in the international conference on 'Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity: Challenges and Opportunities' in Tashkent(15-16 July 2021); during the SCO Summit in Dushanbe Discussion (15-16 September 2021); in the CICA Ministerial 2021 summit(12 October 2021). The Foreign Ministers of the two countries met on the sidelines of SCO Foreign Ministers Meeting in May 2023 and last at Astana on the sidelines of the SCO summit on 03 July 2024. Similarly, the MoS, Defence Ministers, Speaker and other Ministers regularly meet their counterparts.

Inter-Governmental Commission

4. The 13th meeting of the Uzbek-Indian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 28 July 2022. The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of Railways, Trade and Industry of India Shri Piyush Goyal and Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Mr. Jamshid Khodjaev. An agreement was also reached to hold a meeting of India-Central Asia Ministers of Transport in order to develop mechanisms for developing logistics infrastructure, a regional network of multimodal transport corridors, and increasing direct and transit cargo transportation as part of the North-South initiative. Deputy PM also held talks with Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.

Foreign Office Consultations (FoC)

5. Secretary(West) Shri Sanjay Verma visited Uzbekistan on 8-9 August 2023 and held 16th Foreign Office Consultations with his counterpart Deputy Foreign Minister Bakhrom Aloyev. Secretary(West) also called on Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov. Earlier, Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Furkat Sidikov led the Uzbek delegation to the bilateral Foreign Office Consultations held in New Delhi on 11 May 2022.

Bilateral Trade and Investments

6. India is among top 10 trade partner of Uzbekistan with bilateral trade USD 756.60 million (as per Uzbek statistics-2023) is well below potential. The major items of India's exports are pharmaceutical products, mechanical equipment, vehicle parts, services, frozen buffalo meat, optical instruments and equipment and mobile phones. India's import from Uzbekistan consists largely of fruit and vegetable products, services, fertilizers, juice products and extracts, and lubricants.

As per figures released by the Uzbek Ministry of Investment and Foreign Trade, Uzbekistan's bilateral trade with India during the last Five years is:

S.No.	Year	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024-25 Till June- 24
1	Export	423	460.60	654.90	648.50	363.60
2	Import	19.70	29.90	35.60	108.10	50.00
3	Total Trade In \$ Million	442.60	490.50	690.50	756.60	388.50

7. Total Indian investments in Uzbekistan amount to US\$ 61 million. Notable Indian investments by Indian companies include those in the field of pharmaceuticals, amusement parks, automobile components, and hospitality industry. Investments in various fields, including pharma and healthcare, textiles and auto components, agriculture and food processing, and mining and jewellery sector are in various stages of discussion. Indian company GMR have expressed interest in investment in airports, development of air corridor, Navoi cargo complex in Uzbekistan. In October 2019, Amity University and Sharda University have opened campuses in Tashkent and Andijan respectively and Sambhram University in Jizzakh region & Acharya University in Bukhara. India and Uzbekistan have signed a Joint Statement in September 2019 to set up a joint feasibility study for entering into negotiations for a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and Bilateral Investment Treaty is fully negotiated between both countries and is ready for signature.

Defence & Security Cooperation

8. India has longstanding and wide-ranging cooperation with Uzbekistan in the field of defence. Bilateral defence cooperation is carried out through the Joint working Group format, established in 2019 and the fourth JWG meeting having took place in Uzbekistan in April 2024. India-Uzbekistan military technical cooperation has evolved over time encompassing fields of military training, military education and defence industrial interaction. India & Uzbekistan participate in joint military exercises across the under the title “DUSTLIK”, with the fifth edition held in April 2024 and attended by COAS General Manoj Pande during his visit to Uzbekistan.

Science & Technology Cooperation

9. A Joint Committee on S&T was formed in February 2019 as envisaged under an MoU signed in October 2018. A Programme of Cooperation in S&T for the period of 2019-22 was signed in October 2019 facilitating joint research, visits of scientists and specialists and fellowships and internships for Uzbeks in premier Indian scientific institutions. 23 joint India-Uzbekistan research projects were identified and funded jointly by the Department of Science & Technology from the Indian side and the Uzbek Ministry of Higher Education & Innovation. These projects are under implementation.

Education

10. Mission has set up India Study Centres under “Aid to Eurasia” in 15 universities of Uzbekistan and activated two short term ‘Chair’ by ICCR in Samarkand State University and Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies. Some Indian Study Centres also have IT instruments installed in them and equipped with books, musical instruments, Indian traditional dresses and artefacts. In January 2023, four Uzbek Hindi scholars attended World Hindi Conference in Nadi (Fiji). Prof. Nilufar Khodjaeva of Tashkent State University for Oriental Studies was awarded Hindi Samman Award by External Affairs Minister.
11. There is huge potential in education sector. Four Indian Universities that have already set up their campuses in Uzbekistan. A proposal to set up IIT is under consideration. In 2023-24, more than 100 candidates have been selected from Uzbekistan under ITEC programmes.

Cultural Cooperation

12. There is close affinity between the cultures of the two countries. Indian films, actors and songs are extremely popular in Uzbekistan since the era of the legendary Raj Kapoor. There is interest in reviving the tradition of co-production and organization of and participation in film festivals.
13. The Lal Bahadur Shastri Centre for Indian Culture (LBSCIC) has had approximately 400 yoga students and 200 Kathak students in 2023. Yoga has been immensely popular with more than 2000+ participants each year attending International Yoga Day and Yoga Federation of

Uzbekistan having an Indian Yoga Teacher and close relationship with Indian Embassy. The first batch of Yoga Volunteers of Yoga Federation of Uzbekistan (YFU) were certified by Ministry of Ayush upon successful completion of their course.

Diaspora & people-to-people ties

14. The size of the Indian community in Uzbekistan is estimated at 14,000, with members involved in various sectors such as business (including pharmaceuticals, tiles and marbles, granite, and textile), working for multinational companies in Uzbekistan, and studying, among other activities. People-to-people ties are strong, with scaling cultural and tourism heights. The facility of e-visas for both countries has helped accelerate this process.

Year	Uzbek visited India	Indian visited Uzbekistan
2024	12500	28200
2023	17000	45500

Multilateral engagement

15. India and Uzbekistan cooperate closely at several multilateral platforms such as the UN, G20, BRICS & SCO. Both sides also interact under the India-Central Asia framework at India-Central Asia Summit, India-Central Asia Dialogue at FM level, Joint Working Group on Afghanistan and Central Asia Business Council. There is also India-Central Asia National Security Advisors' meeting. Uzbekistan has also actively participated in Voice of Global South Summit (VGSS).

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