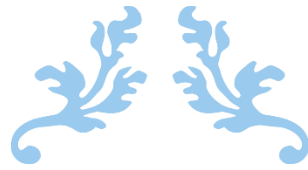
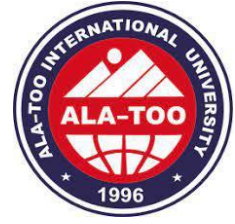




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Indo- Central Asia Dialogue

International Round Table



**Date: May 30 & 31 2022,
Venue: Almaty**





International Round Table

on

Indo- Central Asia Dialogue

Date: May 30 & 31 2022

Venue: Almaty

Organisers

Centre for Neighbourhood Studies
Policy Perspectives Foundation, New Delhi, India

Central Asian Research Centre
Suleyman Demirel University, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Silk Road Research Centre
Ala-Too International University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan





About the Organisers

✚ Central Asian Research Centre and Suleyman Demirel University, Almaty:

The Central Asian Research Center of Suleyman Demirel University is a regional hub for academic and research on Central Asia that generates scholarly and teaching expertise in the region and facilitates international research projects and graduate study programs. The center focuses on the issues related to Law, International Relations, and Media & Journalism.

Suleyman Demirel University (SDU) is a private higher education institution in the Eurasian country of Kazakhstan. The University was founded in 1996 following a joint venture between Turkey and Kazakhstan and was named after the then president of Turkey who also inaugurated SDU together with his Kazakh counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbayev. SDU currently has four faculties: Education & Humanities, Engineering & Natural Sciences, Law & Social Sciences, and the Business School. SDU operates a trilingual education system (English, Russian and Kazakh).

✚ Silk Road Research Centre and Ala-Too International University Bishkek:

Silk Road Research Center, Ala-Too International University's one of the premiere centers, is in the heart of Kyrgyzstan: Bishkek. The Center is dedicated to promoting interdisciplinary research on Central Asia. It encourages interdisciplinary thinking and promotes opportunities for meeting, interaction, and exchange of views with scholars from Kyrgyzstan and abroad. In terms of facilitating academic interaction, the Centre regularly organizes international/national seminars, round table discussions, talks and lectures.

Ala-Too International University is one of the leading universities established in 1996 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The main language of instruction is English. Russian, Kyrgyz, and Turkish are auxiliary languages. Students from more than twenty countries are currently studying at the university."

✚ Centre for Neighbourhood Studies and Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF):

The Centre for Neighbourhood Studies (PPF-CNS) focuses primarily on promoting dialogue, strengthening bi and multilateral relationship, and undertaking studies related to India and its neighbouring countries. The scope of activities of CNS covers India's immediate neighbourhood such as South Asia and East Asia as well as extended neighbourhood like Central Asia and West Asia.

The PPF-CNS is nested within the Policy Perspectives Foundation (PPF) which has been functioning since 2005 as a non-profit and apolitical think-tank. The organisation's activities focus on complex and inter-connected challenges to internal peace, stability, and development in India. It promotes debates and dialogues with scholars, development practitioners, civil society, government organisations and other stakeholders, and implements training, research, and advocacy programmes on issues of national interest.

Concept Note

India has attached significant importance to Central Asian Republics (CARs) since their independence in 1991. The region is increasingly getting linked to the process of globalisation in terms of production, supplies of raw materials and services. The Round Table is being held against the backdrop of a clarion call (Online address - First India – Central Asia Summit- January 2022) by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for envisioning an ambitious future for 'an integrated and stable extended neighbourhood' between India and Central Asia and for a mutually beneficial cooperation for regional security and prosperity.

Initiatives through structured dialogue and interactions on strategic partnerships, energy security, combatting terrorism, comprehensive economic engagement between the two regions have already commenced in recent years. India had earlier come up with 'Connect Central Asia' approach in 2012 leading to institutionalization of India-Central Asia Dialogue at the Foreign Minister's level, India-Central Asia Business Council, and the India-Central Asia Development Group. The growing bond between India and CARs had also been cemented with Prime Minister Modi's visit to the region in July 2015.

There is a growing trend of 'convergence of framework' and 'convergence of interest' between India and CARs ranging from multipolar world order to counter terrorism to economic cooperation. However, the relationship between India and CAR countries has a lot more to achieve. Both the regions share a close historical and cultural contacts, on three indicators of relationships, i.e. (a) government to government, (b) people to people and (c) business to business which need to be further strengthened.

The International Round Table Discussion has been conceived to analyse and identify obstacles and challenges that come in the way of strengthening relationship between India and Central Asian Republics. A possible outcome of the Round Table could be in terms of specific strategies and policy measures to support the initiative.

Keeping the above objectives in view, the Conference is designed to have discussions to improve relations between India and the countries in Central Asian region on the following four major themes:

1. Innovative ways of strengthening civil society relationship;
2. Inter -regional Cooperation and boosting economic engagements;
3. Strengthening Regional Security and Cooperation in the field of de-radicalisation and Counter terrorism; and
4. Exploring areas of Technological and Scientific Cooperation.



Programme

30-31st May 2022

Day 0: May 29, 2022 (Sunday)

15:00-18:00 Arrival to SDU & Settling at SDU Accommodation

18:00-19:30 Dinner at Kazakh Family

Day 1: May 30, 2022 (Monday)

8:30- 9.30 am: Breakfast at SDU Guest House

9.50 am: Assemble at the Conference Venue

9.50-10.00 am: Registration of Delegates

10:00-11:00 am: Inaugural Session

Chair: Dr. Madiyar Saudbayev, Dean, Faculty of Law & Social Sciences, SDU

10.05 to 10.10 am: Chair's Remarks

10.10-10.20 am: Welcome Remarks: and Introduction to the Theme: SDU, ALA-TOO & PPF
(Dr. Assylzat Karabayeva, SDU, Dr. Kashif Hasan Khan, ALA-TOO & Prof. Anwar Alam, PPF)

10.20-10.25 am: Opening Remark: Dr Umarov Rustam Usmanaliyevich, Vice Rector, Ala Too University, Bishkek

10.25 am to 10.55 am: Key Notes. Speeches from the Rector of SDU.

10.55 am to 11 am: Vote of thanks by Dr. Aizada Nuriddenova, SDU

11:00-11:30 Coffee-Break

11:30-13:00 Thematic Session I: Innovative ways of strengthening civil society relationship between India and CARS

Chair: Prof. Anwar Alam

Co- Chair: Dr. Aizada Nuriddenova



Prof Muzaffar Olimov: Perceptions of India in Central Asia: Bollywood vs. Geopolitics (the Case of Tajikistan)

Dr. Dariga Kokeyeva: Kazakhstan-India Relations: Past and Future (on the example of cultural and educational ties)

Dr Umarov Rustam Usmanaliyevich: Indian Medical Students in Central Asia: Away of Cooperation Between Two Region

Shukurova Gulmira Rustamovna 'Prospect of Educational Cooperation between India and Uzbekistan'

13:00-14:00 Lunch at SDU

14:00-15:30 Thematic Session II: Inter -regional Cooperation and boosting economic engagements between India and CARS

Chair: Dr. Umarov Rustam Usmanaliyevich

Co-Chair: Dr. Kashif Hasan Khan

Dr. Aizada Nuriddenova, India-Central Asia Cooperation: Constraints and Prospect

Dr. Ulugbek, A. Khasanov, Emerging Dynamics of Cooperation Among Central Asian States

Dr. Assylzat Karabayeva, Indo-Central Asia Partnership as a path for new opportunities

15:30-16:00 Coffee-Break

16:00-17:30 Thematic Session III: Strengthening Regional Security and Cooperation in the field of de-radicalisation and Counter terrorism between India and CARS

Chair: Prof. Muzaffar Olimov

Prof. Anwar Alam, Challenges and Rebooting the Framework of Cooperation between India and Central Asian Republics

Dr. Beruniy Alimov, Indo-Uzbek Strategic Cooperation against Extremism and Terrorism



Mr. Oskar Schortz: The Opportunities and Challenges for India and Central Asia's security co-operation in the evolving 21st century world order

18:30-19:30 Dinner at "Sandyq"

19:30-21:00 Trip to ARBAT

Day 2: May 31, 2022 (Tuesday)

08:30-09:30 Breakfast at SDU Guest House

09:30-10:00 Way from SDU to Alatau Hub

10:10-11:40 **Thematic Session IV: Exploring Areas of Economic, Technological and Scientific Cooperation between India and CARS**

Chair: Dr. Ulugbek A. Khasanov

Dr. Kenzhebek Gabdullin: Kazakhstan's Energy Sector in Covid-19 period prospects for India

Dr. Kashif Hasan Khan: INSTC and Its Significance for Strengthening Relations between India and Central Asia

Ms Nigorai Fazliddin, India and Tajikistan: ambitions, challenges, and barriers in bilateral relations

11:40-12:15 Coffee Break

12:15-14:45 Trip to Shymbulaq

15:00-17:00 Late Lunch at "TAL"

Vote of thanks by Prof. Anwar Alam

Profile of the Speakers

(Alphabetically arranged)



Dr. Aizada Nuriddenova

Aizada Nuriddenova is an assistant professor at the Department of Social Sciences in Suleyman Demirel University (SDU) in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Currently she is serving as the head of the Social Sciences Department. She obtained her MA and PhD degrees in International Relations with a major focus on China's foreign policy from the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Jilin University in China. Dr. Nuriddenova authored and co-authored over a dozen of articles and book chapters. Her current research combines Chinese foreign policy and the regionalism in Central Asia by particularly focusing on the normative aspects of the Chinese foreign policy such as the concept of 'Community of Common Destiny,' Chinese public diplomacy, recent Consultative Meetings in the Central Asian region, China- Central Asia foreign ministers' meeting, and the Belt and Road Initiative.



Prof. Dr. Anwar Alam

Dr. Alam is a currently Distinguished Fellow with Policy Perspectives Foundation, New Delhi and Full Professor at Department of Political Science and International Relations, Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja. Earlier he served as Full Professor at Department of International Studies, Zirve University, Gaziantep, Turkey, Professor and Director at Centre for West Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Associate Professor at Centre for West Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and Assistant Professor at Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Anwar Alam holds Master and PH. D in International Studies from School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.

Dr. Alam has been awarded a number of long term and short-term fellowships including the Indian Council of Social Science Research (I.C.S.S.R) Doctoral Fellowship (1991), Alexander Von Humboldt (AVH) Post-Doctoral Fellowship (2004-2006), Germany, AVH Renewed fellowship, Germany (June 2016, May-October 2017), International Visitor Programme (Islamic) Scholarship, (2002) USA, Indo-French Social Scientist Exchange Programme Fellowship (2003, 2010), France. He was Visiting Professor at Fatih University,

Istanbul, Turkey (2010 –2011). He was AVH Visiting Fellow at the Department of Philology, Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg, Germany in 2016 and 2017.

Dr Alam has more than thirty-five articles in national and international journal, in addition to two books, six edited books, one co-edited book and seventeen chapters in edited books in the related field of West Asia, Indian politics and Indian foreign policy and Muslim Politics. He has delivered approximately seventy lectures at different academic institutions including universities and Think Tanks within India and abroad, in addition to participation in more than seventy national and international conferences. His forthcoming publication is “Disintegration of ISIS: Implications for Indian National Security.”



Dr. Assylzat Karabayeva

She is assistant professor for the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences and a Vice-Dean on Scientific Research at Suleyman Demirel University, Almaty, Kazakhstan. Her doctoral research focused on the role of norms (ideas, identity, and culture) in the constraining and strengthening of region-building processes in Eurasia. She had worked at the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where she was also dealt with the negotiation process between the Kazakh government and other foreign governments and international institutions (WTO, ITC, UNCTAD, WIPO, ASEAN and Eurasian Economic Commission); and lecturing experiences at the Suleyman Demirel University (Almaty), KIMEP University (Almaty), and International University of Japan (Niigata prefecture).



Dr. Beruniy Alimov

Dr. Alimov is a Founder and Director of the New Media Education Center, the newest media NGO in Uzbekistan (2021-present). He graduated from the Journalism Department at the National University of Uzbekistan (1990-1995) and the News Agency Journalism course at the IIMC, Indian Institute of Mass Communication (1993-1994).

In 1996 B. Alimov joined the News Agency “Jahon”, where he was an international correspondent in London (1996-1997), Tokyo (2001-2005) and Moscow (2009-2011). Worked as a Press Secretary to the minister of Foreign Economic Relations (1998-2000), to the President of Uzbekistan (2008-2009), to the director of Press and Information Agency (2011-2012). Later he joined Webster University in Tashkent as an Adjunct professor

(2020-2021) and works as an Assistant professor at the International Journalism department of the Uzbek State World Languages University (2012-present). Received scientific degrees PhD (2018) and DSc (2021) with dissertations on the “Problems of Uzbekistan’s image in the International media”. He has a blog, beruniyalimov.uz, and is active on Facebook with five thousand friends. He is also a Director of the Media Research Institute at the Uzbek State World Languages University (2022-present).



Dr. Dariga Kokeyeva

Since September 2021, she has been the Head of the Department of the Middle East and South Asia, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. From 2018 to 2019, she underwent a research internship at Hacettepe University (Ankara, Turkey). In 2017, she received an associate professor. From 2015 to 2018 she was the head of the Department of Indology at the Faculty of Oriental Studies. In 2015, she was awarded the title of the best teacher at the University of the Republic of Kazakhstan by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan. From 2013 to 2014 she did a research internship at the London School of Economics (UK). In 2010 she defended her scientific dissertation in the field of philosophy. From 2005 to 2008 she was a PhD scholar in philosophy, cultural studies, and religion at the Faculty of Philosophy and Political science of al-Farabi KazNU. From 1998 to 2004 she studied at the Faculty of Oriental Studies. From 2001 to 2002 she studied Hindi at Delhi University, India. She has been working at KazNU for 18 years. She has more than fifteen scientific research and educational methodical works, including two monographs, and two textbooks.



Hukurova Gulmira Rustamovna

Gulmira Rustamovna is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Department of International Journalism of the Uzbekistan State World Languages University; Senior Lecturer at the Department of PR and International Journalism of the Journalism; Mass Communication University of Uzbekistan and Co-Founder of NGO “New Media Education Center”; and Director of scientific e-journal and web portal “Foreign Languages in Uzbekistan”.

She has also attended **Distinguished Humphrey Fellowship Program: Media and Democracy in the Digital Age.**



Dr. Kenzhebek Gabdullin

Kenzhebek Gabdullin was born in 1982. He graduated Al-Farabi Kazakh National University by specialty Orientalist-historian in 2005. In 2007 he received master's degree in political sciences in Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. In 2012 he became Ph. D by specialty Orientalist in Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. His Ph. D thesis was by topic "Central Asian Factor in Energy Policy of India." From 2007 till present, he has been working in Oriental Studies Faculty of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. In 2018-2019 he held a position as Chairperson of Department for Middle Eastern and South Asian studies. In 2020-2021 he was as Deputy Dean of Oriental Studies Faculty. At present he holds as Assistant Professor in the Department for Middle Eastern and South Asian studies in Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. His Scientific interests includes Energy and Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan and India.



Dr. Kashif Hasan Khan

Kashif Hasan Khan is an Associate professor and Director of Silk Road Research Center, Ala-Too International University in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. His research and teaching interests include the economy of Central Asia, history of economic thoughts, international business, and trade theories. His latest publications include 'Emerging Central Asia: Managing Great Power Relations' (Blue Dome Press, New Jersey, USA, 2021), 'India and Central Asia: The Strategy of Re (connectivity)', (KW Publishers, New Delhi, 2020). His forthcoming publication with Dr. Anja Mihr is "Europe-Central Asia Relations - A New Connectivity Framework" from Palgrave Macmillan.



Dr. Muzaffar Olimov

He is Professor, Head of the Center for Regional and Comparative Studies at the Tajik National University, Consultant and Scientific head of the Research Center SHARQ /ORIENTS. Author of more than two hundred works on the history of Muslim medieval India, modern political processes in post-Soviet Tajikistan and Central Asia, including, "Brain Drain vs Brain Circulation (Central Asia)," Published by NOVA Science Publishers Inc. New York, 2020; "Youth of Central Asia. Tajikistan Based on a sociological survey" (Almaty, 2017); How to

counteract religious extremism: experience in Tajikistan. in 16th Rhodes Annual Volume 2018 “Making multilateralism work: Dialogue for peace, security, and development. DOC Rhodes Forum (Berlin,2018); North-east Afghanistan and the Republic of Tajikistan – post-ISAF security challenges. ISAF’s withdrawal from Afghanistan - Central Asian perspectives on regional security. (Conference report, Almaty 22-23 May 2013).



Nigori Fazliddin

Nigori Fazliddin as Multimedia Journalist & PR has experience in organizing large events and public awareness campaigns for International Organizations, working closely with civil society & state institutions. Furthermore, she is actively working on self- development, busting her professional skills by participating in international workshops, trainings, and Fellowship programs. Nigori is skilled in photo/video editing, authoring articles, storytelling, success stories, and press releases.



Oskar Schortz

Oskar Schortz is a Research Assistant at the Silk Road Research Centre, Ala-Too International University. He studied Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge and the London School of Economics. He has worked as a history teacher and for the British government on education, security, and health issues. He also recently worked as an analyst for the United Nations in Baghdad, Iraq. He is beginning a PhD programme in at the University of Cambridge in October 2022 on the topic of the “New Silk Road”.



Dr. Rustam Umarov

Dr. Umarov Rustam Usmanaliyevich is a Vice Rector of academic affairs, Ala-Too International University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. His main research and teaching interest include digital marketing, consumer behavior, neuroscience, management of educational organizations, quality of education and internationalization of education. Having finished his doctoral degree from Eylul university, Izmir, Turkey, he began working with a private company as a marketing specialist and international business developer. He provides training courses at the

Institute of Innovation and Qualification of Ala-Too International University on creative and critical thinking, persuasion methods, soft skills for managers. His engagements lie with various professional educational bodies and aspirants across Kyrgyzstan.



Dr. Ulugbeck Khasanov,

Faculty Member, International Relations, University of world economy and diplomacy. His research interest lies in field of Regional Security, Contemporary Conflicts Studies. His main academic focused is to conduct research on certain aspects of regional development such as Water / Water supply & distribution, Food Security, Rural Development, Social development and business activity in Rural and Regional context, Government Policy on Taxation and Banking regulation for private and public sectors, Preparing analytical reports and releases for related round table discussions and international seminars / conferences. Preparation and publication of analysis on different Regional and Domestic issues in international review and research magazines.

Abstracts from Speakers

Dr. Aizada Nuriddenova,

Title: India-Central Asia Cooperation: Constraints and Prospects

The cooperation between the Central Asian countries and India has been constrained by geography and political insecurities in the territories that lie in between over the years. Meanwhile, Central Asian states cooperated with their immediate neighbors such as Russia and China in various aspects such as economic, political, cultural, and diplomatic spheres. However, India's gradual presence in the Central Asian region that was manifest in its joining to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and first India-Central Asia Summit of January 2022 mark the increased interaction between the parties. This raises the question of India's role in Central Asia considering the already established presence and influence of Russia and China in the region. The conventional wisdom states that these two regional powers maintain a division of labor in Central Asia, where Russia is quite present in the security realm, while China takes the economic niche. Will India's new presence in Central Asia change this already established division of labor or will the status quo persist. This study argues that the status quo will persist in the near future as the regional powers' configuration in certain regions tend to evolve over the extended periods. Moreover, the traditional obstacles between India and Central Asia – geography, unstable Afghanistan, cultural distance – will continue to play a constraining role in the near future thus leaving more room for discussion regarding the cooperation in the long-term perspective.

Prof. Anwar Alam

Title: Challenges and Rebooting the Framework of Cooperation between India and Central Asian Republics.

The region of Central Asia has traditionally been seen through the prism of 'discourse of Great Game.' Countries such as USA, Russia, China, EU, Turkey, and Iran have huge economic and security stake in the region. However, this approach somehow denies the autonomy of these central Asian countries in conducting their own foreign policy. Despite the significant presence and influence of Russia and of late China as well as limited influence of Turkey and Iran on account of their historical religio-cultural connect, the CARS are gradually developing their autonomy and maneuvering capacity to deal with regional and global powers. This is partly due to onset of process of 'regionalisation' and 'multipolarity' of international affairs, which has somehow de-capacitated the role of single global power and has turned middle powers into powerful drivers in the region. How does India approach the CARS amidst the dynamics of interplay of global and regional players

in the region? This presentation would reflect on the broad contour of evolving Indian approach towards region of Central Asia.

Dr. Assylzat Karabayeva

Title: Indo-Central Asia Partnership as a path for new opportunities

India is the largest democratic country in the world. India has importantly good socio-economic and political relationships with developed countries like the US, Australia, and Japan. The Quad, which is an informal strategic forum, organized by the US, India, Japan, and Australia seems to become a permissive global project in the future. India might play an important strategic role by allowing access for the Central Asian countries to Quad's initiatives. Therefore, Central Asian countries might save access to investment projects of both China (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative) and the Quads. The Quad's economic opportunities might play a significant role to balance the power of other big powers (China and Russia) in the Central Asian region. Moreover, the establishment of tight relations with the democratic countries might entail some democratic norms and practices diffusion in Central Asia.

Key words: India, Central Asia, Quads initiatives, socio-economic and political transformations

Dr. Beruniy Alimov

Relations between India and Uzbekistan have a thousand-year history. However, it cannot be said that it is developing now well in line with modern requirements. In our view, one of the crucial areas is security. India has been a strategic partner of Uzbekistan since 2011. If we look at the text of the Strategic Partnership Agreement, we can see that the security clauses and goals are clearly stated in a number of areas. In particular, the idea of combating religious extremism and terrorism is enshrined in the same strategic partnership agreement. This means that we have common interests and consistent cooperation in this area. It is also necessary to expand economic cooperation, especially in the field of ICT and pharmaceuticals.

Dr. Dariga Kokeyeva

Title: Kazakhstan-India Relations: Past and Future (on the example of cultural and educational ties)

After gaining independence, Kazakhstan has strengthened politically. Economic and cultural ties with a number of countries in the world arena began to develop comprehensively. India is one of the first states to establish strong friendly relations with

Kazakhstan. Which continues to this day. Undoubtedly, the basis of political and economic ties between two countries originates from the time of the «Silk way». Historically, the two regions interacted through the great «Silk Road» and reached the peak of cooperation during the reign of the Great Mughals. It can be seen in such works as «Tarihi Rashidi» and «Jahan name», which describe the historical and cultural ties between the Kazakh and Indian peoples of the Middle Ages.

During an official visit to India in 2002, First President Nursultan Nazarbayev said on the theme of friendly relations between two independent countries: «I see a bright future for Kazakhstan and India, whose common purpose and promises, as well as friendship, are strong». This appeal was a guarantee the growth and strengthening of strong friendly relations between the two countries and will continue to develop in the future.

Kazakhstan needed specialists with a profound knowledge of the Indian language, culture, history, and literature, to strengthen the strong bridge of friendship between the two countries. Because of that in 1992, the faculty of Oriental Studies of the al-Farabi Kazakh National University opened Indology Department, and in February 2004, the Kazakh Indian Center for Information Technology. Al-Farabi KazNU is one of the links between Kazakhstan and India in the field of science, education, and technology. Today, Al-Farabi KazNU, the only university in the country that trains Indian scholars, including the Department of Indology, is actively working to continue the bridge of friendship between the two countries.

Key words: Kazakhstan, India, history, culture, relation, education.

Gulmira Shukurova

It is a time to expand the cooperation in education and science sectors between India and Central Asian countries. Today only three branches of Indian universities have operating in Uzbekistan, where thousands of students are currently studying. However, the potential in this area has not been fully realized. In addition, many Uzbek students in India are pursuing master's and Doctoral degrees. In particular, our young people are studying at the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University. This shows that the prospects for cooperation between India and Uzbekistan are multifaceted.

Dr. Kenzhebek Gabdullin

Title: Kazakhstan`s Energy Sector in Covid-19 period: Prospects for India

This report will consider several aspects: the impact of Covid-19 on the energy sector of Kazakhstan, the energy policy of Kazakhstan in the Covid-19 periods, the current state of



Kazakh Indian energy relations, the problems of expanding energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and India and the promising directions of Kazakh Indian cooperation in the energy sector.

Dr. Kashif Hasan Khan

Title: INSTC and Its Significance for Strengthening Relations between India and Central Asia

The INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor) was founded by India, Russia, and Iran. It is envisioned as a 7,200-kilometer multimodal interchange corridor connecting the Indian Sea and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Ocean, spanning the immense distance from India to Russia and Europe. It will export and import numerous items using ships, railroads, and public transportation. Ships will transport the commodities from Western India's Jawaharlal Nehru and Kandla ports to Iran's Bandar Abbas harbor, then by road and train north through Baku (Azerbaijan) to Moscow and St. Petersburg, and eventually into Europe. When fully implemented, the INSTC will cut the cost of shipping and the time it takes to carry goods from India to Europe, Russia, and Central Asia. According to some reports, the INSTC course was 30% less expensive and 40% shorter than conventional shipping techniques. Other countries have joined the effort, which offers a faster trade path to Iran, Russia, and other parts of Eurasia. The goal is to establish a commerce network that connects Central Asia and Eurasia with West Asia and Africa.

India joined Ashgabat agreement in 2018 which establishes a multimodal transport and trade agreement between Persian Gulf and Central Asia. For the success of the Chabahar agreement, it was important for India to join a transport system led by Central Asian countries. The Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan (ITK) is the main rail link in this agreement and has been included in India's INSTC. The Ashgabat agreement seeks to deepen connectivity in Central Asia and would synchronize it with other regional transport initiatives like the INSTC. The agreement complements India's efforts for regional integration through Chabahar and INSTC. The Double-landlocked state of Uzbekistan plays a key role in India's connectivity efforts in Central Asia. Although the INSTC is a large topic to cover, this presentation will, specifically, deal with how it is significant for India from its extended neighborhood: Central Asia.

Prof. Muzaffar Olimov

Title: Perceptions of India in Central Asia: Bollywood vs. Geopolitics (the Case of Tajikistan)

The report is devoted to a study of the perception of India by the population of the Republic of Tajikistan in the context of geopolitical orientations and preferences in the period from

2015 to 2022. Based on materials from two surveys (1,000 respondents) conducted in 2015 and 2020, interviews and focus group discussions in 2022, we examine the attitude of Tajikistan's population toward India in an era of global transformation and regional change. To do this, we asked how Tajikistan's citizens view various aspects of life in India - its political system, economy, international politics, culture, and the arts. We focused on the following questions: What connects and what separates Tajikistan and India? Do Tajiks view India as an enemy, a friend, or a partner? What sources of information about India do they draw from, and how do they view the prospects for Tajik-Indian relations? How has Tajikistan's involvement in China's "One Belt, One Road" integration project, as well as changes related to the events in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Ukraine, affected Tajikistanis' perception of India?

The collected materials have shown that the long history of relations between Tajiks and Indians and cultural ties is a stable dominant factor in the perception of India in Tajikistan. The antiquity, sustainability and diversity of cultural contacts ensure that the population of Tajikistan has an exceptionally benevolent attitude toward India. The population of Tajikistan values above all the culture and art of India, i.e., that which is familiar and historically highly valued. At the same time, polls show a profound difference in political cultures and especially in religious differences. The perception of India has become particularly complex in the context of geopolitics and security (relations with China, the Afghan problem, events in Ukraine). Nevertheless, in general, Tajikistan's public opinion views India as an ally and friend, just as before.

Nigori Fazliddin

Title: India and Tajikistan: ambitions, challenges, and barriers in bilateral relations

Tajikistan has the closest historical and cultural ties with India in comparison with other Central Asian countries. Tajik and Hindi are derived from the same Indo-European language family. For example, the current Native American ambassador to Tajikistan as well as his predecessors speak excellent Persian because of this linguistic similarity. Many generations in Tajikistan grew up watching Indian movies, which often explore themes such as honesty, justice, and friendship through a lens of shared values.

During the Soviet era, Indian and Tajik interactions were limited and controlled by Moscow. After Tajikistan gained its independence, India was one of the first countries to establish bilateral relations with Tajikistan by recognizing its sovereignty.

Tajikistan and India have always maintained a similar political stance in terms of Afghanistan. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, India operated a military hospital at the Farkhor Air Base near the Afghan border and also provided care to Northern Alliance fighters. Even after the most recent Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, both countries have adopted a shared political outlook.



Oskar Schortz

Title: The Opportunities and Challenges for India and Central Asia’s security co-operation in the evolving 21st century world order

According to Sir Harold McKinder’s 1904 Heartland Theory, “whoever controls the heartland, controls the world”. This heartland region of Central Asia has for a long time held a significant strategic geographical position in international affairs — from the 19th century “Great Game” to the contemporary ‘Belt and Road Initiative’. But while much of 19th and 20th century strategy focused on military domination and control, countries in the evolving 21st century world order are increasingly relying on alliances and partnerships to alleviate their security concerns.

The recent Delhi Statement, an outcome of the landmark first India-Central Asia summit in January 2022, heralded a new era of heightened cooperation on a range of topics of mutual concern between the five Central Asian Republics and India. Of significance was the heightened level of co-operation on security and defence. Two high-level international conferences on Afghanistan and terrorism financing in July 2022 and October 2022, respectively, show the importance and urgency being placed on this partnership.

This presentation will address the pressing security context that has led to the need for a more permanent and sustained focus on security relations between India and Central Asia. With the recent Western withdrawal from Afghanistan, the impact of the war in Ukraine, and concerns arising from Chinese foreign policy — I will outline just how urgent security collaboration is for the Central Asian region (and for the world). Furthermore, I will also look ahead towards future security partnership opportunities and challenges, and what steps may need to be taken to ensure more effective co-operation.

Dr. Rustam Umarov

Title: Indian Medical Students in Central Asia: A way of Cooperation Between Two Regions

The emergence of new international actors put an end to the previous monopoly of national educational systems in Central Asia, which retained significant elements from the old Soviet, as a result the region has seen a rapid growth in the number of students attending medical education since the end of the Soviet period. Three central Asian countries: Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have attracted several thousand students from India for several reasons including low fees, cheaper standard of living and nearness. India’s state governments are active partners in growing cooperation with the region, while there is an active partnership with them in education and high-altitude research. In



Kyrgyzstan alone, there are more than fifty thousand Indian students pursuing medical education.

However, while Central Asia is becoming a hotbed for the Indian students, there a number of challenges which need to be overcome by the region. Amongst the underlying challenges some are as follows: Language sufficiency of academic staff, Mobility of staff between two countries, medical practicing of foreign students, Cultural adaptation, Cultural exchange, Medical and educational investments in Kyrgyzstan.

This presentation will shed light on the mobility of Indian students to Central Asia for studying medical science. Points such as how this mobility can contribute to strengthening the relations between two regions, challenges - as mentioned above - will be discussed at length.

Keywords: Medical education, international staff, internationalization of higher education, Kyrgyzstan

Dr. Ulugbeck A. Khasanov

The Central Asian States share common tasks of the transition period, which consist in reforming political and economic structures. The Central Asian region is characterized by the fact that in the conditions of the crisis of national states in other regions of the world, the construction of statehood and the strengthening of sovereignty continues here. According to leading foreign experts, state and public construction in Central Asia has its own specific features that should be considered more carefully.

The formation of a completely new system of relations in Central Asia essentially leads to the transformation of the national interests of the states of the region to new realities, their practical adaptation and possible consolidation of approaches is achievable only on the basis of collective actions of two or more states with joint coordination of actions. It is thanks to the new quality of Uzbekistan's bilateral relations with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan that close regional cooperation is beginning to form in the region.

The principles of mutual respect and pragmatism between the Central Asian States, which have prevailed in their relations in recent years, contribute to the search for constructive approaches to solving emerging difficulties. The moral and ethical category of good-neighborly relations in the region is much higher, and historically reflects the level of relations between these countries and peoples more deeply than just the academic term "trust-building", popular in the West.



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