

India-Kyrgyz Republic bilateral relations

Historically, India has had close contacts with Central Asia, especially countries which were part of the Ancient Silk Route, including Kyrgyzstan. During the Soviet era, India and the then Kyrgyz Republic had limited political, economic and cultural contacts. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Bishkek and Issyk-Kul Lake in 1985. Since the independence of Kyrgyz Republic on 31st August, 1991, India was among the first to establish diplomatic relations on 18 March 1992; the resident Mission of India was set up on 23 May 1994.

Political relations

Political ties with the Kyrgyz Republic have been traditionally warm and friendly. Kyrgyzstan also supports India's bid for permanent seat at UNSC and India's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Both countries share common concerns on threat of terrorism, extremism and drug-trafficking. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, the two countries have signed several framework agreements, including on Culture, Trade and Economic Cooperation, Civil Aviation, Investment Promotion and Protection, Avoidance of Double Taxation, Consular Convention etc.

At the institutional level, the 8th round of Foreign Office Consultation was held in Bishkek on 27 April 2016. The Indian delegation was led by Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (West) and Kyrgyz side was headed by Mr. Azamat Usenov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. An Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was set up in 1992. The 8th Session of India-Kyrgyz Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held in Bishkek on 28 November 2016. The Indian side was led by Ms. Rita Teatota, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Kyrgyz side was headed by Deputy Minister for Health Mr. Amangeldy Murzaliev.

India announced its Connect Central Asia Policy during the visit Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed to Kyrgyzstan on 10-13 June 2012 with the first India-Central Asia Track-II Dialogue held in Bishkek. In his inaugural address, MoS EA declared India's intention to establish e-Network in Central Asia to promote tele-medicine and tele-education. During the visit, he met Kyrgyz Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov and held bilateral talks with the Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Ruslan Kazakbaev.

EAM visited Kyrgyzstan on 12-13 September 2013. On 12th September EAM met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Erlan Abdyldaev and called on President Atambaev as bilateral component of his visit and thereafter he participated in the SCO Summit. On the sidelines of the SCO Summit, EAM had bilateral meetings with the Iranian

President Hassan Rouhani, Mongolian President Elbegdorg and SCO Secretary General Mazentsev.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Kyrgyzstan on 11-12 July 2015. The visit by an Indian Prime Minister took place after a gap of 20 years. PM held meetings with the Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev, Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov and Prime Minister Temir Sariyev. During his visit PM laid wreath at Victory Square; gifted medical equipment to Field Hospital; visited Kyrgyz India Mountain Bio Medical Research Center; inaugurated Tele-medicine links between hospitals in Kyrgyzstan with super specialty hospitals in India and unveiled Mahatma Gandhi statue. Four MOUs/Agreements in the field of Defence Cooperation, Culture, Election and Standardisation were signed. A joint statement by Prime Minister and President Atambayev was issued.

EAM Smt Sushma Swaraj and Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Erlan Abdyldaev met on the sidelines of Heart of Asia Conference held in Islamabad on 08-09 December 2015 and discussed bilateral relations.

MOS for External Affairs Sh. M.J Akbar visited Kyrgyzstan to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) Meeting held in Bishkek on 2-3 November 2016. He called on the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic. He also held bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister of Tajikistan and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran on the sidelines of the SCO summit meeting. MOS MJ Akbar again paid a working visit to Kyrgyzstan on 17 April 2017 and met with the Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Erlan Abdyldaev. He also met with the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

President of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Almazbek Atambaev paid a state visit to India from 18-21 December, 2016. This was his first visit to India in his capacity as President. He also led a high level delegation comprising of Ministers, senior officials and business leaders from the Kyrgyz Republic. He held meetings with President of India, Vice President of India and the Prime Minister. The Kyrgyz President also participated in the India-Kyrgyz Republic Business Forum. Seven Agreements/MoUs in the field of tourism, agriculture, youth development, cooperation between diplomatic academies, broadcasting, exchange of cadets, and investment promotion were signed.

Home Minister Sh. Rajnath Singh led the Indian delegation for meeting of the Heads of Emergency Departments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization member States. The meeting was held in Cholpon Ata, Kyrgyzstan on 24-25 August 2017.

Our close bilateral ties were reinforced by several high-level visits as under:

From India:

VVIP visits:

- i) Home Minister Rajnath Singh (24-25 August 2017)
- ii) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (11-12 July 2015)
- iii) Vice President Krishan Kant (August 1999)

- iv) Vice President K.R. Narayanan (September 1996)
- v) Prime Minister Narasimha Rao (September 1995)

Other Visits:

- i) Working visit by MOS for External Affairs Shri M.J. Akbar (17 April 2017)
MOS for External Affairs
- ii) Shri M.J. Akbar (2-3 November, 2016) to participate in SCO Heads of Government Meeting
- iii) A 17-member delegation from National Defence College led by Rear Admiral D.M. Sudan (21to 24 August 2016)
- iv) A 5-member delegation headed by Shri Avinash Chander, Secretary (Defence R&D), DG(DRDO) and SA to RM (25 to 28 October 2014)
- v) EAM Shri Salman Khurshid (September 2013)
MoS, Minister for Commerce and Industry Smt. Daggubati Purandeswari (July 2013)
- vi) EAM Shri Salman Khurshid (September 2013)
MoS, Minister for Commerce and Industry Smt. Daggubati Purandeswari (July 2013)
- vii) MoS, MEA Shri E. Ahmed, (June, 2012)
- viii) Raksha Mantri Shri A.K. Antony (July 2011)
- ix) Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Murli S. Deora (August 2007)
- x) Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes (November 2003)
- xi) EAM Shri Yashwant Sinha (January 2003)

From Kyrgyzstan:

VVIP visits:

- i) President Almazbek Atambaev (December 2016)
- ii) First Deputy Prime Minister, Djoomart Otorbaev (May 2013)
- iii) President Akaev visited India four times (March 1992, April 1999, August 2002, and November 2003)
- iv) Mr. Apas Jumagulov, Prime Minister (May, 1997)

Other visits:

- i) Minister for Energy and Industry Mr Kubanychbek Turdubaev (March 2015)
- ii) Central Election Commission Chairman Mr Tuigunaly Abdraimov (October 2014)
- iii) Foreign Minister Mr Erlan Abdyldaev (February 2014)
- iv) Defence Minister Maj. Gen. Taalaibek B. Omuraliev (September 2013)
- v) Defence Minister Kudaiberdiev Abibilla Alymovich (September, 2011)
- vi) Foreign Minister Mr. Ednan Karabaev Oskonovich (February, 2008)
- vii) Defence Minister Lt. General I. Isakov (November 2005)
- viii) Ms. Mira Jangavacheva, Vice-Prime Minister (March, 1997)

Commercial Relations:

India-Kyrgyz trade was US\$ 24.98 million in 2016-17. India's exports to Kyrgyzstan was US\$ 22.66 million whereas Kyrgyz exports to India was US\$2.32 million. Apparel and clothing, leather goods, drugs & pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, and tea are some of the important items in our export basket to Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz exports to India consist of raw hides, metaliferous ores & metal scrap etc.

The fifth and sixth session of India-Kyrgyz Joint Business Council meeting between Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Kyrgyz Chamber of Commerce and Industry took place in Bishkek on 19 March 2014 and in New Delhi on 02-03 December 2014 respectively.

In 1995, India had extended a US\$ 5 million line of credit to Kyrgyzstan; out of this, US\$ 2.78 million were disbursed for four projects – a plant for manufacturing toothbrushes, a polythene bag manufacturing plant, a toothpaste production plant and a pharmaceutical plant. Kyrgyz Republic repaid US\$ 1.66 million and the balance amount was converted to grant.

During the visit of President Akaev to India in August 2002, Government of India had offered setting up an IT development centre and a potato processing plant in Kyrgyzstan. An MoU for setting up of a IT Development Centre was signed in Bishkek on March 20, 2006. HMT (I), the Indian implementing agency, set up the Indo-Kyrgyz Centre for Information Technology in Bishkek and the Centre was formally inaugurated by Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Murli S. Deora on 15th August, 2007. Presently, this Centre is imparting short duration IT courses and has trained over 1000 professionals from Kyrgyzstan by now.

An MoU was signed in May, 2009 for setting up a potato processing plant (for production of Potato chips and potato flakes) at Talas, Kyrgyzstan. The project was undertaken under India's Aid to Central Asia. The plant was inaugurated by Shri E. Ahmed, MoS for External Affairs on 12th June, 2012. GOI provided assistance for setting up a mountain bio-medical research centre in Kyrgyzstan at Too Ashu Pass. The Centre was inaugurated on 05 July, 2011 by Rakhsa Mantri Shri A. K. Antony.

Eighth session of India-Kyrgyzstan Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held in Bishkek on 28th November 2016. The Indian side was led by Ms. Rita Teatota, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Commerce Secretary also held meeting with Kyrgyz Minister of Economy and discussed ways and means to improve trade and investment relations between the two countries.

A ten member Business delegation from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) visited Bishkek on 6-9 December 2016 and participated in Bishkek Investment Forum. A Road Show was organized by the Mission on October 7, 2016 to promote tourism and particularly tourism. Five members of Congress of Women entrepreneurs visited India and

took part in Surajkund Handicrafts Mela in Faridabad, Haryana from Jan 31 to Feb 14, 2017. In agriculture sector, three delegations visited Kyrgyzstan, namely, National Horticulture Board delegation led by Dr. A.K. Singh, CMD, National Horticulture Board visited Kyrgyzstan from 25-29 July 2016 (ii) Delegation led by Dr. S.Patanayak, Secretary (AC&FW) visited Kyrgyzstan from 11-14 November, 2016; and (iii) Delegation led by Sh. R.K. Rai, director, Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises visited Bishkek in connection with installation of demonstration unit for extraction of essential oil/aroma water.

Technical assistance under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program, particularly in terms of human resources development, is the cornerstone of India's economic involvement in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan has utilized 58 slots for 2016-17. More than 1040 professionals from Kyrgyzstan have received training in India since 1992. 80 ITEC slots have been sanctioned for 2017-18.

Cultural Relations:

In general, there is appreciation of Indian culture. The Centre for Indian Studies set up in Osh State University in 1997 has been useful in providing an exposure to Indian culture and civilization to academicians and intelligentsia in this country. The Chair has been discontinued since 2010 unrests in Osh. However, in Bishkek, the mission on its own established an India Study Centre in the prestigious National Library of Kyrgyzstan in Bishkek on 14 November 2014. The Center is running with help of volunteers and imparts training in English and Hindi languages, Yoga and Kathak dance. Another center has been opened in Kara Balta a city at the distance of 80 km from Bishkek.

Indian Community

About 4500 Indian students are studying medicine in various medical institutions in Kyrgyzstan. A few businessmen are engaged in trade and services in Kyrgyzstan.

30 August 2017

Useful Resources:

Missions website: www.embassyofindia.kg

Facebook: www.facebook.com/IndiaInKyrgyzstan