



Uzbekistan's President Visit to India

President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev was on a 2-day maiden visit to India.

- Both India and Uzbekistan signed 17 agreements which include holding a joint military training exercise in the area of counter-terrorism.
- to cooperate in the field of military education and military medicine
- setting up Joint Working Group to support and sustain enhanced, mutually-beneficial defense-related activities.
- They agreed to set up a defense wing at the Uzbekistan embassy in Delhi.
- The two countries have also decided to institute a regular dialogue on Afghanistan and reiterated support for Afghan-owned, Afghan-led, and Afghan-controlled peace.
- **The two sides have agreed to scale up bilateral trade from \$300 million to \$1 billion by 2020.**
- **The cities of Samarkand and Agra are named as sister cities.**

History of India-Uzbekistan Relations

- There are frequent references to Kamboja in Sanskrit and Pali literature, which is stated to include parts of present-day Uzbekistan.
- Ancient trade route uttarpath passed through Uzbekistan.
- The eminent Uzbek scholar **Al-Beruni visited India in the 11th century.**
- Babur, the founder of the Mughal empire in India, is believed to have come to India from the Fergana valley in Uzbekistan.
- Mirza Ghalib and Amir Khusro are notable Indians of Uzbek parentage. Indian movies have traditionally been popular in Uzbekistan.
- India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru had visited Uzbekistan in 1955 and 1961 when it was part of the erstwhile Soviet Union.
- India had close interaction with the Uzbek Soviet Republic during the Soviet times. Indian leaders often visited Tashkent and other places. Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri passed away in Tashkent on 11 January 1966 after signing the Tashkent declaration with Pakistan.
- Uzbekistan's independence in August 1991 has led to the expansion and strengthening of bilateral ties between New Delhi and Tashkent in the political, economic and cultural spheres.
- India was the first country visited officially by President Karimov in August 1991. This was a historic visit outlining the framework for mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

Importance of India-Uzbekistan Relationship

- **Energy Needs**
 - India's need for energy can be fulfilled by gaining access to the natural resource of Uzbekistan, at the same time India can also prove to be a viable market for Uzbek oil and gas resources.
 - India has signed a pact on the import of over 2,000 tonnes of uranium with Uzbekistan.
- **Military and Security Interest**
 - India views itself as a stabilizer and security provider in Central Asia.
 - India has long wanted to play a larger role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Uzbekistan being the largest military power among central Asian Countries, cooperating with it can help us achieve our objective.

- Military Cooperation with Uzbekistan is of utmost importance for our strategic interest and protection of our assets in Afghanistan.

- **Afghanistan**

- Both Uzbekistan and India have a shared goal of peace and prosperity in Afghanistan as any turmoil in Afghanistan can adversely impact both the countries.
- India is also exploring with Uzbekistan the possibility of extending the Friendship Railway Bridge to Herat in western Afghanistan.
- The rail route to Herat, if extended to Kabul, would also link to India's "air corridor", allowing trade, especially dry fruits, and agricultural produce to travel along the routes from India to Central Asia and back in much shorter time.

- **Economic and Trade Relations**

- At the same time, growing economies of Central Asia are a big market for Indian exports like pharmaceuticals with a lot of potential for improvement.

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