INDIA’S RELATIONS WITH CENTRAL ASIA

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics collapsed in 1991, fragmenting into ten Commonwealth of Independent States and five Central Asian Republics. The political and economic weaknesses and the reforms occurred under the Perestroika* and Glasnost** were some of the reasons for the disintegration of erstwhile Soviet Russia. An agreement was signed at Alma Ata on 21 December 1991. According to it, the republics namely – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan – were signatories to their independent status. These republics were considered as the founding members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)\(^1\). Among these five are known as Central Asian Republics (CARs). The region is sometimes referred to as Turkestan as it was known during Soviet regime.\(^2\) Many Russian historians affirmed that the foundation of Central Asian republics was the work of various people whom the Russian people aided in the history.\(^3\)

CARs never wanted to be separated completely from the erstwhile U.S.S.R. Many countries including Central Asian states favoured and supported for the preservation of the Soviet Union. That is how independence came to the Central Asians peaceably, almost without their even trying for it.\(^4\) In 1991, the

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* Prestroika was a policy for bringing reforms within the communist party of Soviet Union.
** Glasnost was a policy based on freedom of speech and transparency in activities of all the government institutions.
\(^3\) Ibid, p. 8.

Figure 1.0: Map of USSR in 1991
Nobel Prize Winning author and thinker Solzhenitsyn argued that countries under Soviet Union including Newly Independent States (NIS) of CARs, were heavy burden on the Soviet economy. So the Soviet disintegration was an urgent need of hour at that time. He even called for the break-up of the Soviet Union. He further observed that, “We do not have the strength for the peripheries either economically or morally. Let this burden fall from our shoulders, it is crushing us, sapping our energy and hastening our demise.”

The independence caused serious as well as complicated problems for these newly emerged Central Asian Republics. These republics had suffered an economic collapse and had to overcome many kinds of social and financial problems. “At the dawn of independence, they were confronted by numerous problems of state and nation building in a difficult milieu wherein various groups of elites competed for political power in an economy set on a course of steep decline on account of sudden severance of strong economic ties with Russia and consequent stoppage of union subsidies. The acute problem of rural unemployment and environmental degradation further contributed to aggravation of inter-ethnic relations. A host of analysts and experts in the west fact forecast a bleak future for the newly independent Central Asian states.”

An American scholar Martha Brill Olcott, former CIA analysts struck a most pessimistic note and concluded that, “the Central Asians were left with an independence for which they had not prepared, which they did not want, and which was not likely to bring them any benefit for a long time, if ever.”

Likewise defence analysis Ravi Nanda has said that independence had added to

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5 Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn (11 December 1918 – 3 August 2008) was a Russian and Soviet novelist, dramatist, and historian. Through his often-suppressed writings, he helped to raise global awareness of the Gulag, the Soviet Union's forced labor camp system. Solzhenitsyn was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1970. He was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974, but returned to Russia in 1994 after the Soviet system had collapsed. [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aleksandr_Solzhenitsyn), 03 November 2011.


10 Ibid, p. 3.
the miseries of the people of these states. Firstly to achieve the goal of economic development was the biggest one in nature for them as Central Asian region was not financially strong at that time. On the other hand, there were many other problems waiting for these countries to come across including how to secure their territories and boundaries. The Soviet regime demarcated weak borders between the Central Asian Republics. It made Central Asian Republics vulnerable to border conflicts. It also divided the natural resources poorly which complicated the trade among these states and with the other countries. Boris Rumer in his book *Central Asia: A Gathering Storm*, has made the prediction that at the end of 1993 Central Asia will become one of the most unstable parts of the world over the next decade.

The problem of the people in Central Asia was further aggravated by Islamic resurgence. Islam is a dominated religion in the CARs. It was brought in to Central Asian region by the Arab armies in the 7th century AD. Then, it spread in to these republics in 8th century. It is the most prevalent, penetrating and lasting influence which till now has so far reached Central Asia. These republics are committed to secular and liberal values. Even there had been numerous incidents of inter communal violence across the region. The

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14 Ibid.
16 He wants to give the fact that peace in the Central Asian region is extremely fragile. The socioeconomic situation in Central Asia is different e.g. leaders in CARs have gradually weakened the states. Religious and secular factors have gained strength. This has aroused strong reaction of anger of the common masses. Apart from this, the presence of external major powers meant a radical change in the geo-politics of the region. Rumer, Boris, Op. Cit., 2003, p. x.
prolonged civil war in Tajikistan and other violent incidents indicate the rise of radical Islam. In order to counter Islam’s religious traditionalists during the Soviet times, the religion was preferred to be controlled through the religious establishments – mainly by the officially recognized mosques (there were about 20 such legally recognized mosques in Tajikistan), maintained by officially appointed administration etc. The Islam started becoming strong in the dying years of Soviet rule, especially after Central Asian republics got the independence. The new mosques and madrassas were going up rapidly and often with the large support from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey and Pakistan in the form of finances. These four powers were using religion to gain political influence in this area. So, the Islamic fundamentalism had made this area unstable politically.

The secular regimes in Central Asia (like regimes of former President Akayev and Kurmanbek Bakiyev in Kyrgyzstan, Sapamurat Niyazov in Turkmenistan etc.) use repressive measures to curb violence. The growth in corruption, decline in the standard of living and profound social and economic differentiation of the population has strengthened the Islamic forces. Even the danger of Islamic extremism is likely to threaten the stability of Central Asia where Muslims are mostly of Sunni faith. Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Hizab-ut-Tahrir (HUT) etc, are the examples of organizations operating

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24 Khan, Mohammad Anwar, Islam Karimov’s Uzbekistan, Central Asia Journal, Number 42. Area Study Centre (Central Asia), University of Peshawar, Summer 1998, p. 13.
27 Ibid. p. 247.
Another factor is that the governments are showing their inability to fill social welfare functions that the state used to fulfill during Soviet times. The education, which was at a relatively high level during Soviet times, is now on the decline. Many children and youth are not having an access to education on all levels. Now, there has been a resurgence of conservative values on the official and popular levels that press women to withdraw from these academic spheres. There is a lack of strong linkages between the population and their governments. The widespread corruption undermines the people’s trust. It, further, diminishes the sense of loyalty which is vital if all are to work together to overcome social tensions and other challenges facing the region.

Water issue is a potential source of conflict in Central Asia. Amu Drya river and Syr Drya river have been sources of potable and irrigation water for Central Asia. In countries like Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan the water is used mainly for the generation of electricity whereas in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan it is used for the irrigation purposes. After independence Central Asian Republics started caring for their own national interests.

The Central Asia is a landlocked region of Asia, occupies an area of 3,994,400 square kilometers. It stretches from the Caspian Sea in the west to Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India in the south and from China in the east to southern Russia in the north. The strategists and the geo-political experts

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consider the region as USSR’s hinterland. The political meaning of the geographical concept and the acceptability of the term ‘Central Asia’ was put forward at a meeting of the Heads of the five Central Asian Republics (CARs) in January 1993. They decided not to use the term ‘Middle Asia’ or Srednyaya Aziya (Russian) any more. Instead, the term ‘Central Asia’ or Tsentralnaya Aziya (Russian) would be used for all five states of this region. The states got an identity of being in the centre of the Eurasia, geographically and politically. As a landlocked region, it is difficult for the CARs to open itself to the countries outside the region. The region constitutes an area which has been flooded with the conquerors from the Arab world, Turks, Mongols and Russians since 500 B.C. Although there are five independent nations but due to historical past, each state has ethnic minorities of each other nations. During more than 70 years of rule under the Soviet Union, a large percentage of their population is of Russian origin ranging from 8 percent each in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to 10 percent in Turkmenistan, 22 percent to 33 percent in Kyrgyzstan. In Kazakhstan the Russian population is nearly 23 percent.

KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan was the last republic to declare itself as an independent. The geographical distinctiveness of Kazakhstan, however, has substantially impacted its history. It shares border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and China. It was the second largest republic of the erstwhile Soviet Union. Presently, the republic of Kazakhstan is the largest of

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41 Ibid.
all the Central Asian States. It is the ninth largest country in the world covering an area of 24,2400 square kilometers. It is world’s largest landlocked country. Its population is about 15.4 million (July 2009 est.) in which 57 percent are Kazakhs, 40 percent are Christians and other are 3 percent. At the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, nearly eleven million Russians were settled in Central Asia – eight million in Kazakhstan and about three million in other republics. It has enormous natural resources that include Petroleum, natural gas, uranium, coal, gold, iron ore, nickel, zinc, copper. Major oil and natural gas sources are to be found in vast Tenghiz, Kashagan and Karachagnak fields and at the north east segment of the Caspian Sea.

Moreover, Kazakhstan was home to the Baikonor Space launch facility during Soviet federation which is located at Tyuratam near Syr Darya river. Earlier, the Soviet Union was in search of site for her space programme. Therefore, a commission was formed under the leadership of General Vasily Voznyuk. Furthermore, there were certain conditions for the suitable space site. Like, proper signals were needed as the rocket’s control system was radio controlled. In the plain area, the control system could get signals without any disruption from the operating systems located some 190-320 miles away. Another thing which was important to be kept in mind was that the missile trajectory needed to keep far away from the heavy populated areas in order to

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50 Ibid, p. 16.
51 Ibid.
Figure 1.2 - THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Source: http://www.eurasianet.org/mapkazakhstan
avoid causalities and destruction. The commission under General Vasily I Voznyuk conducted the survey. After discussions, survey and local visits Tyuratam region of Kazakhstan considered suitable and was selected. On February 2, 1955, the USSR Council of Ministers issued the resolution for building of nuclear site here. Since 1961, it is known as Baikonour Cosmodrome or space facility/centre. The first Sputnik was launched from here in October 1957.

After 1991, Kazakhstan disagreed regarding Russia’s lease of Baikonur centre which the later was paying to Kazakhstan. On January 9, 2004, an agreement was signed between Russia and Kazakhstan. Under this, Russia could use the facilities of space centre in the republic. It pays approximately 115 US dollars annually for using it. Keeping this in mind, it has planned to carry out its launches from the space centre Vostochny and to leave Baikonur.

Kazakhstan is one of the four CIS republics which had the status of a nuclear power. Russia, Belarus and Ukraine were the other nuclear republics which came in to being with the Soviet break up. Russia was left with 104 ICBMs and 1, 690 warheads at that time. The republic of Kazakhstan had 1400 nuclear weapons deployed on its territory over which it had taken control. These nuclear weapons consisted of ICBM bases with 104-ss-18, each loaded

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52 Ibid.  
54 Ibid. p. 17.  
55 Ibid.  
56 * Baikonour Cosmodrome has the facility of both manned and unmanned spacecraft launches and Sputnik was the first unmanned artificial satellite. It stayed in orbit nearly for three months. Suvorov, Vladimir, Sabelnikov, Alexander, Op. Cit., 1997, p. 62.  
59 Ibid.  
60 Vostochny Cosmodrome is a newly constructed space centre of Russia located in the Russian Far East. It was built so that the Russian dependence on Baikonour cosmodrome could be decreased. However, the construction has not been completed yet. After its completion, Russia will reduce her launches from Baikonour. Ibid.  
62 Ibid.  
with 10 warheads, 40TU-95 bear bombers and anti-ballistic missile (ABM) radar site. An agreement was to be signed for the transfer of all weapons, but before that USSR’s demise took place. However, the nuclear weapon states of former Soviet signed agreement on December 21, 1991 at Alma Ata and on December 30, 1991, at Minsk. These agreements were based on Joint Measures related to Nuclear Weapons.

In 1993, Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Programme was formed in US in order to prevent the proliferation of materials and technology related to nuclear weapons from the nuclear weapon states of former Soviet Union to the rogue countries and terrorist organisations. The republic of Kazakhstan signaled the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC) in January 1993. It became a member of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the same year. The programme was intended to aid in destroying weapons of mass destruction (WMD) of the states of erstwhile Soviet Union. In 1994, lot of 600 kilogram of HEU (highly enriched uranium) from Kazakhstan to Oak Ridge, Tennessee was agreed to be shifted. Later, Kazakhstan dismantled her nuclear weapons in 1995 and 1996. It is also a participant of nuclear suppliers group.

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70 Ibid.
Kazakhstan has the USSR’s primary nuclear weapon testing site at Semipalatinsk* in its northwest. During Soviet rule, nuclear energy was also used frequently for diverting the rivers channels in Kazakhstan. Bernard Newman in his book Soviet Atomic Spies says – “the atomic energy was being used to blast a channel between the Ural and Kazakh mountains to reverse the flow of two of the Siberian rivers, the Yenisei and the Ob. Instead of flowing uselessly to the Arctic, these were to diverted through the arid deserts of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Soviet Turkestan. It would shortly blossom like the rose and flow with the milk and honey.”

On September 2006, a Treaty on the Central Asia Nuclear weapon Free Zone was signed at Semipalatinsk, the nuclear test site of former Soviet Russia. The treaty came in to force in March 2009.

Presently, it has large number of trained manpower related to nuclear science and nuclear weapons. The republic has ICBMs and aircrafts**, which are more than hundred in numbers.

Currently, Kazakhstan is looking for the sites for its first nuclear power plant. Aktau, Balakshan and Kurchatov are the main sites which are considered by the Kazakhstan National Nuclear Centre.

The Republic of Kazakhstan is blessed with some of the world’s richest oil resources. It occupies the sixth place in the world as far as total mineral value is

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* Semipalatinsk is also known as Semey which is located in the northwest of Kazakhstan.


** No doubt that the republic of Kazakhstan had dismantled her nuclear weapons in 1995 and 1996. But as the republic is having a number of trained scientists, there are large numbers of Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles and aircrafts.


83 Ibid.
concerned and ninth place in terms of world oil resources. It was the second largest oil producer in former Soviet Union. Its oil reserves have been estimated at as much as 2, 100 million tons, most of which are in the relatively new fields, that have not been yet exploited. There is some hope that with its tremendous oil resources, the government will have the capacity to ensure the well being of its population, though there is little sign of sharing the wealth so far. Kazakhstan is also a member of organizations like Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). She is the full member of the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), UNESCO, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Finance Organisation and Islamic Development Bank (IDB), besides enjoying an observer status in World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Kazakhstan is also one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The rampant corruption and inequality among people could help in tearing the region apart. The public administration is overwhelmed by bribery. Most of the illegal money has been deposited in the accounts of a few top officials. The Guardian (a British newspaper) has already placed country’s President among the eighth richest persons in the world, which was also collaborated by the Arab Information Agency.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev has ruled Kazakhstan since 1990. He himself and his clan have plundered and stashed away enormous sum in foreign bank accounts. He also increased his powers by concentrating all the authorities/ and

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88 Ibid.
rights under him.\textsuperscript{91} He kept the right to appoint and dismiss all the government officials. Even he could dissolve the Parliament any time.\textsuperscript{92} He launched two constitutions in 1993 and 1995.\textsuperscript{93} On November 16, 2011, he dissolved the parliament and asked for the early elections.\textsuperscript{94} In the last Presidential elections held in 2012, Nazarbayev was again, elected President of Kazakhstan.\textsuperscript{95} Nazarbayev suppressed the mass media during his tenure. It is under the tight control of the government officials. No doubt the laws guarantee the media the right to report on political events, the media continues to be threatened and harassed for criticizing the President or the government.\textsuperscript{96} The government banned social gatherings. These were considered as a threat to the national security. Any disagreeable remark against the President is considered as a criminal offence. All this encouraged the opposition forces to join against the authoritarian regime of President Nursultan Nazarbayev. The political disinterest of the masses, fear of destabilization, the disbelief towards the promises of politicians and the conviction that the rule of President Nazarbayev, whatever its negative aspects are, ensures internal stability goes in his favour.\textsuperscript{97} Any change in leadership will destabilize the situation in the country.\textsuperscript{98}

The relations between India and Kazakhstan were established during his first ever historic visit abroad (in India) by President of Independent Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev in February 1992. Earlier it was late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru visited Kazakhstan in 1955 and marked the beginning of relationship

\textsuperscript{91} Human Rights Watch World Report 2008, Bookwell, New Delhi, 2008, p. 408.
\textsuperscript{92} http://www.europeanforum.net/country/kazakhstan accessed on September 23, 2012.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Firdous, Tabasum, Op. it., 2009, p. 43.
between India and Kazakhstan. His choice of India as the first foreign visit was not unintentional. For President Nazarbayev, India was an appropriate destination to visit as it is a country with a mix of languages, religion, cultures and ethnic groups. Kazakhstan also represents itself as a diversified nation akin to India. In both domestic and foreign policies, without any doubt, this likeness could lead to cohesion of interests. The development of the relationship, since 1992, has demonstrated the validity of these expectations.

India’s former Prime Minister Mr. Narsimha Rao visited Kazakhstan in 1993. During his visit India signed a five years trade protocol. The protocol permitted the transactions of counter-trade, commodity exchange, barter or on freely convertible currency basis. Another significant initiative was taken by Kazakhstan when it offered the use of her Baikonour Consmodrome facilities to India in 1992 for its space programme with the services of its scientists.

India also considered Kazakhstan as an important economic partner, particularly in the area of energy as it has 15 percent of the world's uranium resources. In 2009, it became the world's leading uranium producer, with almost 28 percent of world production. It is the third largest producer of uranium and second largest in terms of reserves. Kazakhstan, with its huge hydrocarbon resources, can become an important energy supplier to India, which is one of the main energy importers in the world. Presently, India ranks

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101 Ibid.
102 Kazakhstan is a country which likes India’s diversity in relation to language, cultures and religion. This kind of like could unite both the countries and could bring unity. Ibid.
105 Ibid.
as fourth largest energy consumer in the world. Earlier in 1992, Kazakhstan offered uranium fuel to India for its nuclear power plants. In January 2009, Kazatomprom signed an agreement with India's Nuclear Power Corporation (NPCIL) to supply 2100 tones of uranium to India. The agreement also includes conducting a possible study on building Indian PHWR reactors in Kazakhstan. Under this agreement, 300 tonnes of natural uranium was supplied by Kazatomprom in the 2010-11 year. It is vital for India to have cooperative relationship with Kazakhstan in the fields of economic cooperation, science and technology, foreign relations etc. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s visit to Kazakhstan in 2012 is a reminder of how high India’s stakes are in Central Asia for its foreign policy priorities.

The republics of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are quite different from each other. The republic of Kazakhstan is relatively rich and peaceful as compared to the republic of Kyrgyzstan which is a poor and an unstable country. Kazakhstan can help in developing Kyrgyz economy by providing sufficient amount of its hydrocarbon resources like oil and gas.

KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan is situated on eastern part of the Central Asian republics, bordering Kazakhstan in the north, China on the east, Tajikistan on the south and Uzbekistan in the west. Kyrgyzstan was annexed by Russia in 1864 and it achieved independence from the former Soviet Union on August 31, 1991. It covers an area of 198,500 sq km. Its population is about 5.4 million (July 1

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Figure 1.3 - THE REPUBLIC OF KYRGYZSTAN

Source: http://www.eurasianet.org/mapkyrgyzstan
In Kyrgyzstan dominant religion is Muslim belonging to 75 percent of the total population. The republic has small amount of oil and natural gas, not enough for substantial exports. Industrial exports in Kyrgyzstan include electricity, uranium, mercury and gold. Kyrgyzstan is a small, poor, landlocked country. The republic is heavily dependent on outer aid and support. It is a mountainous country which is deprived of natural resources except water. It has the hydropower potential. Approximately 2047 rivers originate from Kyrgyzstan. Issy-Kul, Son-Kul and Naryn are the largest rivers which process a sufficient potential of hydro-power production.

Kyrgyzstan was the first Commonwealth of Independent State to be accepted into World Trade Organization and joined it in 1998. The country is highly torn by ethnic conflicts within the region. There is ethnic rivalry between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz population living in Kyrgyzstan. Ethnic tensions in Kyrgyzstan have made necessary militarization of the borders. Issues like water disputes, internal disorder, or disputes over border could lead to more intense armed clashes. Farghana valley, a region in southern Kyrgyzstan, is highly affected area.

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122 Ibid.
Bakyt Beshimov, a Kyrgyz intellectual, describes Kyrgyzstan as a “country of Paradoxes.” He says, “It is the most open country in the region with a strong civil society and freedom of speech. At the same time, it is the most disorganized country with weak government institutions and an inefficient bureaucratic system.”

After independence there were some signs of democratic rule including independence of media and non-governmental organizations. But with the market reforms in the country it flourished and divided the country into two classes – People living in poverty and the wealthy elite class. The republic lacks an influential leader. In 1990, President Askar Akaev was elected first President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. He assumed authoritarian control. He also decreased the powers of judiciary and Parliament. The leaders of the major opposition parties like Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan and Ata-Jurt were regularly faced with criminal charges or thrown in jail preventing them from winning elections. Akaev also placed restrictions on media and NGOs in 1999. All the media outlets, critical of the government, have been shut down. The leaders of some of the most influential NGOs intimidated or beaten up by people widely presumed to be members of the security services. He even changed the country’s constitution many times for the sake of his benefits only. Kyrgyzstan has become the most stratified country in the region where elites enjoy huge wealth and poor remains poorer.

129 Ibid.

135 Schoeberlein, John, OP. Cit., p. 73
Kyrgyzstan is the only country in the region that had experienced a Tulip Revolution in 2005. It overthrew Askar Akaev who was the first President of Independent Kyrgyzstan. The name ‘Tulip’ used for the revolution was coined by Askar Akaev himself. The parliamentary elections held in February and March 2005 were fixed and mismanaged. The Kyrgyz people were hoping for a western style democracy after Soviet communism. But then they realized that the political positions and advantages and benefits were meant for high officials only who were close to the President. The judiciary also came under the authoritarian control. As a result of this, keen hopes of the people for democracy vanished. Their faith in the refurbished communist institutions was weak and apprehensions of the repressions were not lessened.

The February and March 2005 Parliamentary elections led to the victory of pro-government candidates. They won over 90 percent of seats in the new parliament. This resulted in to a split between the rulers and the ruled and between the haves and the have-nots. Thousands of protestors threw rocks and waved clubs in the compound of the White House in Kyrgyzstan. They took over the main TV station. The demonstrators also freed Felix Kulov, a key opposition leader who had been in prison since 2000. In a TV statement, Kulov urged Akaev to hand over his presidential power peacefully to the opposition leaders. President Askar Akaev fled from the country.

Kurmanbek Bakiyev was selected as the Prime Minister and later appointed as

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143 Ibid.
144 The common masses were not given their share profits. They were not appointed in the higher ranks and offices.
145 Ibid. p. 69.
148 Kyrgyz Prez flees as Opn Wrests Power, Times of India, March 25, 2005, p. 8
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid.
interim President. Akaev formally resigned as President on April 4, 2005. The new leadership tried to control the widespread disorder and looting in Bishkek. However, an Afghan connection was also been shown in the Tulip Revolution. The Kyrgyz militants formed a nexus with the criminals, drug dealers and militant groups based in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The weak structures in Kyrgyzstan had worked to their advantage.

In July 2005 again proper elections were held and Bakiev was elected as the President of Kyrgyzstan. The political and constitutional crisis revealed a clear need for constitutional reform. Therefore, one of the major issues debated during and after the revolution was the constitution. The country’s new leadership has been locked in the old and familiar debate on dividing power between President, Government and Parliament; and, amendments to the constitution have concentrated on finding a balance between central and state institutions. This remained a complicated process, particularly since the quest for constitutionalism presents numerous alternatives.

After Tulip Revolution in 2005, hope was that after Akayev, Kurmanbek Bakiyev would be a different kind of leader but it didn't work. People were not happy with the new President. He won a second term by an overwhelming margin in July 2009. But he came under fire for failing to improve the fate of the nation’s 5.3 million inhabitants, a third of whom were living below the

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152 Oppn Figures Claim Control in Kyrgyzstan, Times of India, March 26, 2005, p. 5.
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
157 Ibid.
158 Ibid.
poverty line. On April 6, 2010, a demonstration was held by the opposition leaders namely Almabek Atambayev and Roza Otunbayev. They protested against government corruption and its lavish life style. Later, protests turned violent and spread nationwide. The clashes occurred between the two main ethnic groups, the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, in Osh. On April 7, Kyrgyz President Bakiyev imposed a state of emergency. Many people were killed and hospitalized in the clash in Kyrgyzstan. On the other side, President Bakiyev left the country and flew to neighboring Kazakhstan.

In such condition the opposition seized the power and demanded Bakiyev's resignation. Roza Otunbayev, the interim President of Kyrgyzstan, told the reporter during her first news conference that the opposition insists that he (Kurmanbek Bakiyev) stands down. But Bakiyev the ousted President dismissed the reports about his resignation to the media. Meanwhile Kyrgyz opposition leader Roza Otunbayeva took the charge of the country and became President. The violent protests took place in many Kyrgyz towns. The clashes between the Uzbek minority and the Kyrgyz majority, which started in city of Osh, spread to regional center Jalal-Abad. According to the United Nations sources some 75,000 Uzbek people have fled their homes. Half of these people had taken refuge in neighbourhood, where they were being housed in about 75 refugee camps. The Kyrgyz-Uzbek border was closed for a short period of time, but then was re-opened and the flow of refugees continued to cross the border. The violence displaced nearly 30,000 people. Opposition

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162 Ibid.
164 Ibid.
165 40 Dead in Kyrgyzstan Protests: PM Flees to Kazakhstan, The Tribune, April 8, 2010, p. 15.
167 Ibid.
173 Ibid.
leaders led by President Otunbayev, decided that the Kyrgyz political system was not liberal enough. They wrote a new constitution to devolve authority from the President to Parliament and the Prime Minister. It was the eighth time the constitution was re-written.

On June 10 & 11, 2010, tensions between the ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks erupted in Southern Kyrgyzstan. There were perceptions among ethnic Kyrgyz in the south that Uzbeks controlled most of the commerce and Uzbeks dissatisfied with the thought that they were excluded from the political processes. There were also some views regarding Uzbeks that they were supporting the opponents of Bakiyev. Allegedly, a fight began between Uzbek and Kyrgyz ethnic groups in the city of Osh and became more intense. Nearly 176 people died and 1600 person got injuries in the clashes. Violence resulted in displacing 1, 00, 000 persons. Kyrgyz interim President Otunbayev sought the help of Russian forces to quell the unrest, but Russia declined saying, it was an internal conflict of the country. However, later, Russia sent nearly 150 Para troopers to Kyrgyzstan on June 13, 2010, to protect its military facilities like its bases and representatives of Moscow led security bloc of ex-Soviet republics known as Collective Security Treaty Organisation.

The elected President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev after resuming office in November 2011, is now healing the wounds of divided nation. Within the space of one year, 2010 to 2011, it has endured the bloody revolution which ousted Bakiyev with horrific inter-communal violence. However, the 2011
Presidential elections were peaceful and it confirmed the status of Kyrgyzstan as an “Island of Democracy” in Central Asia. 181

Kyrgyzstan embraced democracy with fervour. It was the first country in the region to allow US to lease the Manas airbase for overthrowing the Taliban and sustaining pro-US government of Hamid Karzai in Afghanistan. 182 The military presence of the US and NATO in the region and their attempts to include Central Asia into their zone of strategic interests have changed the geopolitics of the area. As one Kyrgyz Parliamentary Deputy describes it, “As if it was not enough that Central Asia is squeezed by China, Russia and the Muslim World, now we also have an American eagle flying over it.” 183 However, the relations with Russia, the European Union, China and other neighbouring countries near to Central Asian region are continued to being developed by Kyrgyz republic. 184 Kyrgyzstan presents itself as a democratic republic in Central Asia, and as compared to Russia and many other former Soviet states, has more democratic political system. 185

The relations between India and Kyrgyzstan have been traditionally warm and friendly. According to former Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Aitmatov, they are based on “the spirit of tolerance, secularism and liberalism that are the hallmark of both societies.” 186 India was among the first to recognize Kyrgyz independence in December 1991. In March 1992, immediately after independence, the President of Kyrgyzstan visited India. During his banquet speech, he said that Kyrgyzstan is looking to India as an example as it sets about restructuring its economy and socio-political system. 187 During his visit,

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six agreements related to Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation were signed between India and Kyrgyzstan.\footnote{Nanda, Ravi, Op. Cit., 1994, p. 248.} The agreements also dealt with the training of the people from Kyrgyzstan by India in the fields of foreign services, management, banking, education etc.\footnote{Ibid.} Kyrgyzstan also offered to supply uranium to India with the approval of IAEA.\footnote{International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) deals with the peaceful use of nuclear power. It is an international organisation. It promotes safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy.}

Kyrgyzstan has sixteen hydel power plants having a total capacity of 14 billion-kilowatt hours per year out of which only 10 percent is being utilized.\footnote{Pandey, Sanjay Kumar, Op. Cit., 2008, p. 11.} It is very much interested in inviting foreign countries to invest in and develop its hydel potential.\footnote{Ibid.} There lies an opportunity for India in the maintenance of nearly 24 mega hydel power stations in Kyrgyzstan. India’s National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) has decades of experience in the construction and operation of hydel stations in mountainous terrain. India could explore the possibility of setting up hydel stations as joint ventures projects with Kyrgyz entities.\footnote{Mahalingam, Sudha, India-Central Asia Energy Cooperation, in Shanthanam, K. and Dwivedi, Ramakant (ed.), India and Central Asia: Advancing the Common Interests, Anamaya Publishers, New Delhi, 2004, p. 140.} Apart from this, officers of the Ministry of Kyrgyzstan are undergoing training and higher training in the Indian Defence Academies under the programme of cooperation on training existing between India and Kyrgyzstan. Both India and Kyrgyzstan are threatened by cross-border terrorism too. Bishkek is emerging as an international centre for antiterrorist institutions.\footnote{Kumar, Satish, India’s Strategic neighbourhood, in Kumar, Satish, India’s National Security Annual Review 2001, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 2002, p. 125.}

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have number of commonalities. Both are the poorest republics of the Central Asian region. In spite of this, both have a huge potential of hydropower.
TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan shares borders with Kyrgyzstan in the north, Afghanistan in the south, China in the east, and Uzbekistan in the west.\textsuperscript{195} It has an area of 143,100 sq kms.\textsuperscript{196} It has a population of about 7 million (July 2009 est.). Tajiks constitute about 79.9 percent and Uzbeks 15.3 percent, Kyrgyz 1.1 percent, other 2.6 percent of the total population.\textsuperscript{197} Independence came to Tajikistan (on September 9, 1991)\textsuperscript{198} at a time when the communist leadership was weak and the opposition had gained considerable organizational strength and popular support.\textsuperscript{*}

The republic of Tajikistan is the poorest amongst other CARs.\textsuperscript{199} According to United Nation Development Programme Human Development Report 2013, since 1997, the government has attained certain economic growth as well as an improvement in the well being of the people of Kyrgyzstan.\textsuperscript{200} However, Tajikistan still remains the poorest country in the CIS, with lowest income per capita and more than 80 percent of population living in poverty.\textsuperscript{201} There is a gap in access to justice. The people are deprived of communicating with government. They kept on detaining and also get ill treatment in imprisonment.\textsuperscript{202}

There is huge water potential in Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{203} It has a great potential for the generation of hydro-electricity.\textsuperscript{204} Almost all rivers are fed by the glaciers.\textsuperscript{205} The republic holds more than 60 per cent of the glaciers in the Central Asian

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{*} Tajikistan is the smallest nation in the Central Asia by area.
\textsuperscript{197} Padmanabhan, S., Opt. Cit. 2010, p. 396.
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid.
Figure 1.4 - THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

Source: http://www.eurasianet.org/map/tajikistan

region. It is one of the leading countries in the world in terms of hydro potential. After Russia, it is the second largest hydroelectricity producer in the Commonwealth of Independent states. But it uses only 5 to 10 percent of its total potential. The annual potential of the republic is 527 billion kilowatt hours. Due to lack of proper infrastructure and regional electricity market it finds difficult to export its hydropower. There are nine operating and planned power stations. These are: Sangtuda I (670 Megawatt) (operating), Sangtuda II (220 Megawatt) (planned), Shurab (750 Megawatt) (Planned), Central (15 Megawatt) (operating), Nurek (3,000 Megawatt) (operating), Golovnaya (240 Megawatt) (operating), Rogun hydro electric power station (3,600 Megawatt) (planned), Transitive (30 Megawatt) (operating), Bajpanzin (600 Megawatt) (operating).

The small rivers on which the smaller hydro-electric power stations built are - river Surhob (5 hydro stations), river Varzob (3 hydro stations), Zarafshon (6 hydro stations), Gunt (13 hydro stations), Bartang (5 hydro stations), Kofarnogon (5 hydro stations), Ob-Hingou (5 hydro stations). The dependence of Tajikistan on Uzbekistan is quite apparent. Uzbek republic exports electricity to both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan during winter. The republic of Tajikistan is also dependent on Turkmenistan for electricity.

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209 Ibid
210 Ibid.
211 Out of the total nine power stations, six are operating power stations while another three are the planned power stations.

However, Uzbekistan is a major supplier of electric power to Tajik aluminum smelting plant Tadaz in Tursunzade.\textsuperscript{215} It consumes 40 percent of the country’s electric power.\textsuperscript{216} Furthermore, natural gas from Turkmenistan comes to Tajikistan through Uzbek territory whereas 20 percent of Tajik energy needs are met by Uzbekistan’s energy.\textsuperscript{217} Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan being downstream countries are critically dependent on Tajikistan for water.\textsuperscript{218}

Tajikistan is a major conduit of narcotics produced in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{219} The illegal drug trade is undermining Tajikistan’s moral fabric, pushing its youth into criminal activities.\textsuperscript{220} The republic is facing an uncontrolled presence of small arms and weapons. Some of these weapons are inherited from the civil war and other through the illegal proliferation.\textsuperscript{221} This hampers the security in Tajikistan as well as in its neighbouring countries.\textsuperscript{222} A number of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (3000 to 5000) militants along with Chechan and Uighur militants have established themselves in Tajikistan and the parts of Farghana Valley.\textsuperscript{223}

Tajikistan is the only republic in Central Asia which involved herself into a Civil War (1992-97) after independence\textsuperscript{224}. The war was based on ethnic

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tursunzoda accessed on 03 November 2011.
\item This is the largest aluminum manufacturing plant in Central Asian region and possibly in the world. Being country’s chief industrial asset, its construction was begun in 1972. The first pouring of aluminum smelting plant Tadaz in Tursunzada took place on March 31, 1975.
\item Ibid.
\item The civil war in Tajikistan ended in 1997, with the signing of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord. See Annexure II
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
rivalry and religion-based destruction. Tajikistan recovered from civil war in 1997 and started reforms for further development and progress.

The Civil War in Tajikistan started immediately after Tajikistan got independence in 1990s. The weak state structure had encouraged democracy which led to struggle for power and national identity. And later the setting up of an authoritarian regimes run by former members of the Communist Party of Tajikistan. Rakhmov Nabiev won the election and became the President of independent Tajikistan in March 1990. In 1992, Nabiev resigned as a President of Tajikistan and Emomali Rahmonov became the head of state. Rahmonov banned all opposition parties and their newspapers. His government continued to tighten control over independent media activities. He won 1994 presidential elections and became the president of Tajikistan. The elections were not considered fair. After becoming President, he took harsh measures to prevent the opposition parties’ participation in the governing structure. He also distributed weapons to a crowd of his supporters in order to create a presidential guard.

The opposition organized a 52 days rally in the same year in Shahidon Square, Dushanbe, in front of President’s palace. The demonstrations were held

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226 Ibid, p. 61.
229 In the first parliamentary election held in March 1990, the opposition parties were banned to participate. This led to the victory of Rakhmov Nabiev. Slim, Randa, M., Hodizoda, Faredun, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 171. Also see Schoebenlein, John, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 72.
233 The Presidential Guard was a special force unit which took part in to Tajik Civil war. It is also known as Presidential National Guard. It is under the direct command of President of Tajikistan. Schoebenlein, John, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 72.

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which resulted in violent clashes. The violence spread across the whole country. Mass killing was started and many villages were burnt.\textsuperscript{235} Only after the end of the year, government forces could control the situation. A large number of people (approximately 20,000 to 40,000)\textsuperscript{236} were killed in Tajik civil war. And up to 8,000 persons were displaced.\textsuperscript{237}

The war resulted in disaster and thousands of deaths. Many thousands of Tajik ran away from to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Russia and took refuge there.\textsuperscript{238} In this conflict, the government and its allies were confronted by a loosely united Tajik opposition including Islamists, democrats, and nationalists. In April 1994, a United Nations mediation effort was made for the purpose of bringing a lasting peaceful settlement of the conflict.\textsuperscript{239} This mediation effort lasted three years and ended on 27 June 1997\textsuperscript{240} in Moscow with the signing ‘the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan’ and Moscow Protocol.\textsuperscript{241} Tajikistan is now in the midst of a post conflict peace building phase that will determine the future sustainability of the 1997 general agreement.\textsuperscript{242}

The causes of the Tajik civil war were many. Many of these are rooted in the history of Tajikistan, others in the breakdown of the Soviet Union, some in the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{237} Schoeberlein, John, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 72.
\item \textsuperscript{238} Approximately 80, 000 Tajik refugees moved in to Afghanistan. Rasanayagam, Angelo, Afghanistan – A Modern History, I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London, 2003, p. 163.
\item \textsuperscript{239} Rasanayagam, Angelo, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 163.
\item \textsuperscript{240} ‘The General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan’ and Moscow Protocol.
\item \textsuperscript{242} See Annexure II
\end{itemize}
regional politics and a few in the historical events that led to the establishment of today’s Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{243} As Oliver Roy puts it, “Most of the difficulties of today’s Tajikistan are linked to the very definitions of what is a Tajik.”\textsuperscript{244}

One of the significant factors which led to civil war was that the Russian army sent weapons in the Tajik republic both to the government and the protestors by illegal trade.\textsuperscript{245} Another important reason was the previous existence of tensions between the regional groups in the republic, which supported\textsuperscript{9} the conflict.\textsuperscript{246}

Rahmonov, once again, won presidential elections in the year 1999\textsuperscript{247} and in 2006 respectively which gave him absolute hold over the administration. Many of the supporters of Rahmonov, whom he appointed as high officials, held all the powers in Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{248} In the Presidential elections held on November 6, 2013, he again won for the fourth time.\textsuperscript{249}

Since ancient times, India and Tajikistan enjoys good relations. Tajikistan, during the first decade of twentieth century, was the centre for the study of two main languages of India i.e. Hindi and Urdu.\textsuperscript{250} After independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, Radio Tashkent started its first broadcast to India and Pakistan in Urdu.\textsuperscript{251} Tajikistan Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdullajanov visited

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{243} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{244} Roy, Oliver, \textit{The Civil War in Tajikistan: Causes and Implications}. United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC, 1993, p. 13.
\item \textsuperscript{245} Schoeberlein, John, Op. Cit., 2003, p. 72.
\item \textsuperscript{9} There was an existence of rivalry and tensions amongst the regional group in Tajikistan, which further encouraged the violence and assisted the conflict
\item \textsuperscript{246} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{247} Kaushik, Devendra, Op. Cit., 2004, p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{249} http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/11/tajikistan-rakhmon-re-elected-president-20131175383909186.html accessed on November 25, 2013
\item \textsuperscript{241} Gopal, Sureendra, \textit{Dialogue and Understanding: Central Asia and India, The Soviet and Post-Soviet Era}. Shipra Publications, Delhi, 2005, p. 93.
\item \textsuperscript{250} Ibid, p. 101.
\end{itemize}
India in February 1993 followed by many exchange of visits. President Emomali Rakhmov visited India in May 2001. India and Tajikistan signed Indo-Tajik Declaration during his visit which covered the bilateral ties as well as regional and international issues of concerns. Five agreements were also signed regarding economic cooperation, terrorism and drug trafficking.

Both the countries have number of commonalities like cross border terrorism, illegal drug trade etc. This makes a closure relationship. Tajikistan is an established smuggling route for Afghan opium to the West. The republic has been important for India’s secret support to the United Front. Tajikistan fully supported India’s stand to join Security Council seat in United Nations. Many Tajik defence personnel’s are being trained in India. Joint exercises to share intelligence are also being conducted. India has also been involved in 10 megawatts hydro-electric station project in Tajikistan i.e. Varsob I hydropower project.

India made her presence in Tajikistan by opening an airbase at Ayni in 2002, which was launched by the analogy of USA (Manas airbase) and Russian

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* Two agreements were related to economic cooperation and three dealt with the joint action against terrorism and drug trafficking.
261 Manas airbase was opened in 2001 to support US military operations which were going on in Afghanistan. Kant airbase was opened in 2003 to host Russian air force units.
It is the first military airbase of India in a foreign country to guard against growing instability in the region. It could help India to establish a strategic foothold in Tajikistan and other republics of Central Asia.

Apart from this, in October 2003 Tajikistan has opened its mission in Delhi and commenced the flights like East air and Tajik air between India and Tajikistan. India had set up a medical mission in Tajikistan to extend medical assistance to Tajiks fighting Talibans in Afghanistan.

On July 2, 2012, former External Affairs Minister Mr. S. M. Krishna visited Tajikistan to deepen the country’s engagement with the strategically located Central Asian republics. In September 2012, President Emomali Rahmon visited India in which India-Tajikistan relations received a fresh impetus by signing six agreements related to education, health, energy, textile, culture, art and training etc.

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264 Operating from the Ayni airbase, India’s C5I network will strengthen its operations in Afghanistan. Sharma, Rajeev, India’s Ayni Military in Tajikistan is Russia Locked, October 26, 2012, http://indrus.in/articles/2012/10/26/indias_ayni_military_base_in_tajikistan_is_russia-locked 18661.html March 25, 2013


* India and Tajikistan inked six agreements related to the education (which could encourage the strong contacts between the educational institutions of the both countries), sports (through which the players of both countries could participate and cooperate with each other), health (the exchange of experts & information related to health, providing each other training and attending health related meetings to be held in both countries), culture (promotion of the cultural heritage of both countries by exchange of material in culture and art), labour (cooperation in the field of labour relations), textiles (a memorandum of understanding was also signed by the Ministry of Textiles in India and Ministry of Energy and industry in order to improve the relations in he filed of textiles and energy).
The Republic of Turkmenistan declared independence on October 26, 1991. The sand desert in Turkmenistan covers 80 percent of the republic. It has large territory covering an area of 488,100 square kilometers. It has smallest population of 5.1 million of the five former Soviet republics constituting Turkmen 85 percent, Uzbek 5 percent, Russian 4 percent and other 6 percent of the total population. The republic is rich in natural gas reserves. It is important to world energy with an estimate of the country's total gas resource base ranging as high as 535 trillion cubic feet. It is also the second largest natural gas-producing country of the erstwhile Soviet Union. The country ranks fourth in the world after Russian Federation, United States and Iran with proven natural gas reserves totaling nearly 100 trillion cubic feet (Tcf). Turkmenistan possessed 6.5 billion tones of possible hydrocarbon reserves and about one billion tones of proven reserves. It was even projected that Turkmenistan would be the Kuwait of the 21st century. Though Central Asian republics are landlocked countries, this factor has put various proposals for the best pipeline routes. Gas pipeline 270-1464 kilometers long from Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan with a possible extension to New Delhi could be an ideal example. Turkmenistan is a member of the UN, the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP), OSCE, CIS, Asian Development Bank, ECO and

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272 Turkmen Oil and Natural Gas: The Viability of Delivering Prosperity to Global Markets, http://www.lanerican.edu/ted/turkmen.htm , accessed on November 03, 2011
273 Ibid
274 Ibid.
Figure 1.5 – THE REPUBLIC OF TURKMENISTAN

Source: http://www.eurasianet.org/mapturkmenistan
Saparmurat Niyazov, popularly known as Turkmenbashi or head of Turkmenistan, was elected as a President of the Republic of Turkmenistan. He was elected President and founded the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, the country’s legal party. In the year 1999, the People’s Council declared him the President for life.

Niyazov’s rule was based on authoritarianism. The whole power was concentrated in the hands of President. No one could dare to oppose him and his powers. He fully controlled the power of media. Even he had forbidden any kind of group meetings or social gatherings in the country. The hard punishments were made for the people who disobeyed his orders. Niyazov kept on changing his officials after some time so that they could not made union against the President. Niyazov also kept tossing out his ministers all the time to prevent them from building power base of their own and put many of them in jail.

The country has pursued a policy of positive neutrality. According to its military doctrine Turkmenistan does not view any country as its enemy. President Niyazov’s statesmanship reflect the welfare of his country by remaining neutral as he stated, “Having today over 30 percent of the world reserves of natural gas, up to 12 billion tons of oil in the caspian shelf alone, owning a large territory and a population of almost 5 million, it is impossible to

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278 Ibid.
279 People’s Council was the hand picked supreme representative body of the people.
281 Niyazov was holding the high positions of President, Prime Minister and Supreme Commander. Therefore, no one could go against him as he was holding all the major powers in the republic. Firdous, Tabasum, Op. Cit., 2009, p. 38.
do without neutrality. It is impossible to join any group of countries, for that would lead to the creation of blocs and weaken neutrality.”

Niyazov died on December 21, 2006. After his death, Gurbanguly Berymukhamedov was selected as President of Turkmenistan. But he was declared President in 2007 after the proper elections. It is said that the election process was unfair. After assuming the office, Gurbanguly took many steps to bring reforms in to the republic. He tried to reverse some of most ruinous social policies of Niyazov’s rule. He also wanted to end the republic’s international isolation. However, the situation remained the same and the government continued to harass people and independent media. In the Presidential election held in February 2012, he was again elected President for another term.

Turkmenistan has 600 million barrels of proven oil reserves. This makes it the major energy rich country along with Kazakhstan which holds 30 billion barrels of oil reserves. Turkmenistan is important for India for its hydrocarbon reserves laying on the Caspian shores, especially gas reserves. India looks forward to participate in the Turkmen hydrocarbon sector. Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) is a step to explore opportunities for cooperation in energy sector in Turkmenistan.

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287 Ibid.
288 Ibid.
289 Ibid.
290 Radyuhin, Vladimir. Turkmenistan President’s re-election almost certain. The Hindu, February 12, 2012.
292 Ibid.
293 Ibid.

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India has made remarkable progress in the sector of science and technology like computers and information technology. It wishes to share its experience with friendly countries like Turkmenistan. India and Turkmenistan enjoy very warm and friendly relations. Cooperation in areas like terrorism, money laundering, arms smuggling and narcotics have brought both countries together. Turkmenistan remains important for India as an important transit route to rest of the Central Asian Republics. India can be a good energy market for Turkmen gas.

Turkmenistan has trade links with China. Uzbekistan provides a shortest passage route to reach China. Uzbekistan holds a key position, owing to its centrality and strategic position. It is the only country in the CARs which has borders with the other four republics in the region. Therefore, Uzbekistan is an important republic for Turkmenistan.

UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan is the centrally located republic of Central Asia. It declared independence on August 31, 1991. It shares borders with Kazakhstan in the north-west, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the east, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan in the south. With its location as the physical centre of Central Asia and a population higher than that of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan combined (more than 24 million), it is considered as “anchor state”. Its territory covers the 447, 400 square kilometers of area. It is the most populous republic in Central Asia with a population of 27,606,007 (July 2009 est.). The ethnic groups in Uzbekistan include 80 percent Uzbeks, Russian 5.5

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295 Turkmenistan is a country of importance in India’s near abroad. The republic has natural gas resources which could meet India’s future gas demands. Ibid.
296 Ibid.
299 Emergence of Central Asia and its Relevance to India, Mainstream, Vol. xxx, No. 24, April 1992, p. 17.
percent, Tajik 5 percent, Kazakh 3 percent, Tatar 1.5 percent and other 2.5 percent\textsuperscript{303}.

Uzbekistan has a great natural resource potential. These include petroleum, gas, oil, coal, uranium. Uzbekistan is the fifth largest producer of cotton in the world. After gaining independence, the main objective of country’s policy was to develop its domestic oil and natural gas branches. Bukharo Khiva, Usturt, Farghana, Southwest Gissar and Surkandarya are the main oil and gas regions in the republic.\textsuperscript{304} With the assistance of foreign investors, Uzbekistan has opened a petroleum refinery in Bukhara\textsuperscript{305} and a natural gas compressor station at Kokdumalak.\textsuperscript{306} The Fergana refinery is the oldest oil refinery constructed at Fergana valley in Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{307}

The collapse of communism has revived the Islamic extremism in the state. For instance, Hizb-ut-Tahrir and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan are active organizations in Uzbekistan. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has forged with the Taliban and ISI.\textsuperscript{308} After being militarily hounded out of Uzbekistan in 1998, IMU cadres found a safe heaven and training ground in the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. IMU had also managed linkages with the ISI and the Al-Qaeda. The three republics of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are suffering heavily due to international drug trade which is largely based on opium from Afghanistan. Drug trafficking potentially poses a major security threat to the region\textsuperscript{309} As it also helps in financing the groups like Taliban in Afghanistan and IMU in Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{310}

\textsuperscript{303} Padmanabhan, S., Opt. Cit., 2010, p. 400
\textsuperscript{305} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{308} Sharma, Raghav, India in Central Asia: The Road Ahead, IPCS Special Report, No. 62, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi, December 2008, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{309} Ibid, p 8.
\textsuperscript{310} Joshi, Nirmala, Op. Cit., p. 75.
Figure 1.6 – THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

Source: http://www.eurasianet.org/mapuzbekistan
The first proof of real terrorist capabilities carried out by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) came on February 16, 1999, when seven bomb explosions were reported in Tashkent.\textsuperscript{311} At least 16 people were killed in the explosions, and about 150 people were injured. Moreover, in August 1999, a group of IMU gunman came into Kyrgyzstan by crossing the territory of Tajikistan.\textsuperscript{312} They occupied many places which included villages and valleys in the Batken district of the Osh region.\textsuperscript{313} It was assumed that the gunmen were trying to open the corridor through Uzbekistan, with the plan of infuriating an uprising and staging a terrorist attack and cross-border incursions.\textsuperscript{314} There were series of bombing and armed attacks launched in Uzbekistan between March 28 and April 1, 2004, by Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{315}

Uzbekistan had faced heavy violence in Andijan in the Farghana Valley which occurred on May 13, 2005. The violence began when a military garrison was raided for weapons by 60 to 100 armed men.\textsuperscript{316} The National Security Service troops of Uzbekistan fired on the protesters who raided jail and released 2000 prisoners. They also took over the government building. The people were demonstrating against Karimov government. Nearly 300 people were died in the violence.\textsuperscript{317} But despite mass killing, the next day protesters appeared again in Andijan. They burnt many of the official buildings. Clashes were resumed on May 14, 2005 with the Uzbek army troops firing by using automatic weapons against the protestors.\textsuperscript{318} The arrested protestors were charged with...
extremism, fundamentalism and separatism.\footnote{19}

India’s relations with Uzbekistan are deeply rooted in the ancient history. President Islam Karimov’s visits to India in the years of 1991, 1994 and 2000, seemed to offer vistas of friendship and cooperation in various spheres. Both countries have signed numerous agreements during the last many years based on the cooperation in various sectors. India’s Tata and Larsen & Tourbo (L&T) group of companies constructed hotels in 1990 in Tashkent and Samarkand.\footnote{20} Uzbekistan President Karimov’s on various occasions signed a number of agreements related to economic trade.\footnote{21} Apart from this, India and Uzbekistan have declared that both have faith in secularism. These have also pledged to fight against Islamic fundamentalism.\footnote{22}

In May 1993, former Prime Minister of India Mr. P. V. Narshimha Rao visited Uzbekistan and signed agreements on issues such as interstate relations and cooperation with the President of Uzbekistan Islam Krimov.\footnote{23} At the same time India and Uzbekistan vowed to fight jointly against the danger of terrorism and religious fundamentalism.\footnote{24} In 1999, former Minister of External Affairs, Jaswant Singh visited Uzbekistan and signed an agreement to share intelligence for counter insurgency operations against terrorism.\footnote{25} In April 2006, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Uzbekistan and signed agreements related to India’s role in Uzbekistan’s energy sector.\footnote{26} The agreement provided exploration acreages (area in acres) to Indian companies without bidding, in return for an equal share in the revenue from any discovery

\footnote{20} Apart from constructing hotels in Uzbekistan, India has also started pharmaceutical companies in the republic. Ibid.
\footnote{22} Ibid.
\footnote{24} Ibid, p. 185.
The old linkages provided a unique basis for India to have effective relations with the republics of Central Asia which she considers as near abroad with geo-strategic interests. Even the historical record discloses the incessant swap of visits by many Indians and Central Asians to each other’s regions at least for the last eight centuries. Visitors came from a large spectrum: they included traders, artists, scholars, artisans, job seekers, soldiers, adventurers, common men etc. India’s initiatives during the last few years have been directed towards strengthening of mutual relations with each of these countries through high-level visits and by developing further economic and trade relations.

While looking in to the past, much of India’s political history was shaped by events in Central Asia. India was a part of Silk Route dynamics which has been ignored in the history. Former President of USSR Mikhail Gorbachyov during a dinner in honour of Rajiv Gandhi, at Moscow on May 22, 1985, had said, “Years and decades pass, generations of people in our countries come and go, but the relations of friendship and cooperation between USSR and India continue developing in the ascending order. This is happening because the relations are built on a basis of equality and mutual respect, on coincidence or

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327 Ibid
329 These agreements were related that both countries will invest in each other’s pharmaceutical companies and hydrocarbon sector.
332 Utegenova, A. R., Between Kazakhstan and India, in Shanthanam, K., Baizakova, Kuralay and Dwivedi, Ramakant, India-Kazakhstan Perspectives: Regional and International Interactions, Anamaya Publishers, New Delhi, 2007, p. 22.
similarity in the positions of two countries in the essential problems of the time.”

In the 1990s, India had the four main aims like-

- the establishment of political and economic presence in Central Asia,
- the maintenance of the secular nature of the political regimes in the newly independent states;
- making efforts and taking initiatives to gain access to the energy resources of the republics;
- and to control the role of Pakistan in the region.

However, the importance of Central Asia changed completely in the world politics after September 9/11. It duly came into light when the United States of America entered into the region. Thereafter, many countries e. g. Russia, China, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan etc., moved towards Central Asian republics for seeking and securing their interests in the region.

In the present context, India’s new facet has come into light in a new form. Earlier the security mechanism in immediate neighbourhood was not a cause of concern for India. But today, the security of Central Asian republics has a great influence on the security and stability of India. In fact, India wants to magnify her influence in the region of Central Asia, especially to curb the increasing threat of Pakistan influence. Pakistan also desires to maintain relations with CARs on the basis of religious outlook. On February 14, 2012, Lok Sabha Speaker Mrs. Meira Kumar at Pakistan’s Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani’s House pointed out that, “war is no solution to any problem and the two countries must shun the path of violence.” However, cooperation in various

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333 Ibid., p. 23.
sectors between India and Central Asian republics can help in increase India’s influence in these republics. It can also maintain peace and harmony in both the regions of India and CARs.

Being world’s fourth largest energy consumer, India is in dire need of energy resources for its economy and security. As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said in his speech at India Economic Summit, New Delhi held on November 29, 2005, “The Indian economy has now become more open, more globally integrated and more competitive……our industries are far more confident, competitive and ambitious about heir future and they feel that they are second to none.” It spends over $ 400 million each day on oil imports. It is currently importing crude oil from 30 countries spread across different continents. The republics of Central Asia have natural resources in abundance by which India’s requirements can be accomplished. The problem arises when India could not access these resources due to the absence of direct land route to the region.

India and the republics of Central Asia are the victims of Islamic fundamentalist forces. The rising Islamic fundamentalism in the Central Asia is linked to the spread of Islamic extremism in India. Hence, to curb the menace of threat of Islamic fundamentalism in both the region is one of the interests of India into Central Asian republics.

India is establishing a bilateral relationship with each of the republics of Central Asia at highest level to increase her influence and to hold her position in the region. It should not accept the position wherein China and Pakistan, both the acquaintances, are standing in the region. There is great scope for India to cooperate in various fields with the CARs. The Central Asian natural

\[\text{Govt Trains Eyes on Shale Gas, The Tribune, Chandigarh, April 01, 2013, p.11.}\]
\[\text{Kapila, Raj, To the Nation, For the Nation, Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2006, p. 60.}\]
\[\text{Zorawar, Daulet Singh, Pipeline Geopolitics: India needs to get it Right, The Tribune, June 4, 2012, p. 8.}\]
\[\text{India announces Cuts in oil Imports from Iran, The Tribune, May 16, 2012, p. 18.}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]
resources could prove to be a boon for India. India’s cooperation with these countries may involve inclusive strategy with the ultimate goal of serving India’s long-standing interests in the region.