Chapter II
Central Asia is a vast and a landlocked region in Asia. It is also known as Middle Asia or Inner Asia. The region of Central Asia broadly consists of five erstwhile Soviet Socialist Republics—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Earlier Soviet scholars did not include Kazakhstan in the group of Central Asian countries.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines Central Asia on a wider connotation. The UNESCO's 'History of Civilisations of Central Asia', written just before the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), defines the region based on climate and uses far larger borders for the purpose. According to it, Central Asia includes Mongolia, Western China (including Tibet), northeast Iran, Afghanistan and western Pakistan, central-east Russia south of the Taiga, the former Central Asian Soviet Republics, also even the Punjab, northern India and Pakistan (UNESCO 1989).

The following map on the next page indicates different definitions of Central Asia.

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1 The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, was established in 1946 and its headquarters is in Paris.

2 UNESCO formed an International Association for the Study of Cultures of Central Asia (IASCCA), a non-governmental scholarly organization, was founded on the initiative of the Tajik scholar Babajan Gafurov in 1973, assembling scholars of the area for the co-ordination of interdisciplinary studies of their own cultures and the promotion of regional and international co-operation. The project for writing 'History of Civilisations of Central Asia' began in 1981, published in 1989, it consists of six volumes.
1. Geographical Perspective

Central Asia extends nearly 4,500 kilometers from east to west, and occupies a land area about the size of Europe except Russia. The location of the region is such that it forms a bridge between Europe and Southern Asia. Geographically Central Asian region is very important in many ways. The idea of Central Asia as a distinct region of the world was introduced in 1843 by the geographer Alexander von Humboldt. In ancient world Silk Route passed through this region through which the ancient civilisations exchanged their goods as well as ideas. In the contemporary world scenario this region has gained tremendous importance as it has vast hydrocarbon reserves, connects the energy hungry economies of India and China to the energy surplus regions of the world. Soon after the independence the leaders of the five former Soviet Central Asian Republics, met in Tashkent and declared that the definition of Central Asia should include Kazakhstan, as well as the original four Republics considered by the Soviets. Since then, this has become the most common definition of Central Asia.

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3 Humboldt was born in Berlin. In 1829, he, together with his associates, Gustav Rose and C. G. Ehrenberg, traversed the wide expanse of Central Asia and Russian empire. He died in Berlin in 1918 at the age of 89.
The total population of all these five Central Asian Republics is about 44 million, Uzbekistan is the most populous among them, alone having the population 26 million, more than half of the total population. Kazakhstan is at the second place, having the population of 17.3 million. There are three main population groups in the region, Tajiks (Tajikistan), Turks (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) and Slavs-living in different countries of the region in small numbers.

These republics got independence in 1991 in the following order, first among the five to declare its independence was Uzbekistan on 31st August 1991. It may be mentioned here that it was the first among the present day Central Asian Republics to join the erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, on 27 October 1924. The Republic of Uzbekistan is situated between the two important Central Asian rivers Amu Darya and Syr Darya. Cities

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4 Uzbekistan comprises two words Uzbek and stan, which means place or province of Uzbek people, it is also near to the Hindi word sthan denoting place.

5 Amu Darya or river Amu is the longest river of Central Asia. During the medieval period it was known as Jeyhun river, Greeks called it river Oxus. It has its origin in Aral Mountains and also formed by the confluence of Vaksh and Panj rivers, it flows into Aral Sea. It also forms the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.
of Uzbekistan were important stations on the ancient ‘Silk Route’. It is the only country which is connected with all Central Asian Republics. And apart from this, in the south-east it also shares its border with Afghanistan\(^7\). ‘Tashkent’ meaning ‘Stone City’ in Uzbeki language, is the capital of this Republic. In the ancient times, Tashkent oasis was called Chach; in the transcriptions of some Chinese sources the city also was called Shi; and in the Arabian-Shash. Bukhara and Samarkand, once flourished as trade and cultural centres famed for their architectural opulence, are other important cities of Uzbekistan. There are 26 million people living in the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is the most populous country of Central Asia. More than 60% of its population lives in densely populated rural communities. Uzbeks are the largest group making 80 percent of the total population. Russians 5.5%, Tajik 5% (this is the official figure, but many experts claim it to be around 30 to 35%). According to the religious belief Muslims are 88% (mostly Sunnis), Eastern Orthodox 9%, others 3%. National language of Uzbekistan is Uzbek. The official linguistic policy of the Karimov government (Islam Karimov is the President of the Republic) has been that Uzbek is the language of the state, and Russian is the second language. Residents of Uzbekistan are required to study Uzbek to be eligible for citizenship. Script and alphabets have been changed from Cyrillic to a modified Latin alphabet similar to that used in Turkey. The primary reason for the change is the need to communicate with the outside world using a more universally understood alphabet. The move also has the political significance of signaling Uzbekistan's desire to break away from its past reliance on Russia and to limit the influence of Muslim states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, which use the Arabic alphabet.

Uzbekistan is now the world's second-largest cotton exporter and fifth largest producer; it relies heavily on cotton production as the major source of export earnings. It is among group of countries having precious metal reserves; gold, silver etc., in terms of gold reserves it is the fourth largest in the world. It is also wealthy in terms of natural gas reserves; proven gas reserve is about two trillion cubic meters. In 2006, Uzbekistan took steps to rejoin the

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\(^{6}\) Syr Darya or river Syr is another important river of Central Asia. During the medieval writings, the river was called as Sayhun. Greeks called it river Jaxartes or Yaxartes. It has its origin in Tian Shan Mountains and falls into Aral Sea. The ancient city of Khujand in Tajikistan is situated on the banks of this river.

\(^{7}\) Uzbekistan has the distinction of being the only double landlocked country in the world, that is the country and all of its immediate neighbours are also landlocked.
Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EurASEC).

Kyrgyzstan too declared its independence on August 31, 1991. It is located in the North East of Central Asia. The boarders pass mainly through natural edges – ridges of the high mountain ranges and rivers, only in places they come down to the plains of Chui, Talas and Ferghana valley. The capital of the Kyrgyz Republic is Bishkek, and it is the most important economic, political, scientific, industrial, cultural and transport centre of the country. Osh is another major city, it is an administrative centre of Osh region and the second largest city of Kyrgyzstan, it is also known as the “South capital”. The population of the republic is 5 million people. Kyrgyz make 66.9%, Uzbeks – 14%, Russians – 10.65%. More than 80 percent of the population lives in lowlands, in basins and foothills. According to religious faiths Muslims make 75%, Russian Orthodox 20%, other 5% of the total population of the Republic. The state language is Kyrgyz; although the 1993 constitution designates Kyrgyz as the state language, an amendment to the constitution in 2001 granted official status to the Russian language also. The amended December 30, 2006 constitution reaffirmed the status of the two languages. The republic has abundant hydropower; significant deposits of gold and rare earth metals; locally exploitable coal, oil, and natural gas. The project of the construction of railroad to China is in the study stage by the Chinese side is expected to boost the Kyrgyz economy. It will connect Kashgar in China to Jalalabad in Kyrgyzstan.

On October 27, 1991 Turkmenistan proclaimed its independence from the United Soviet Socialist Republic. In contrast to other former Soviet republics, it has been largely free of inter-ethnic hostilities. The name of its capital, Ashgabat, derived from Tajik/Persian, which may be translated as the “city of love”. Nisa, the ancient capital of the Parthians, is at a short distance from Ashgabat. Population of Turkmenistan is 4,863,169, it is the most ethnically homogeneous of the Central Asian republics, the vast majority of its population consisting of Turkmens, who originally were nomads. There are also Uzbeks, Russians and smaller minorities of Kazakhs, Tatars, Ukrainians, Azerbaijanis and Armenians. Religion

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8 Kyrgyzstan means place of province where Kyrgyz people live.
9 Stan refers to province or place, where Turks live.
Eighty-seven percent of the population is Muslim. Turkmen is the official language of Turkmenistan, though Russian still is widely spoken in cities as a 'language of inter-ethnic communication' (as per the 1992 Constitution). Officially, Turkmen currently is written in the "Taze Elipbiye", or "New Alphabet", which is based on the Latin alphabet. However, the old "Soviet" Cyrillic alphabet is still in wide use. In 2002, the days of the week and the months were renamed according to the ideology of Ruhnama. Ruhnama (The Book of the Soul, from Arabic rūḥ (soul) and Tajik/Persian nāmeh 'book') is a book written by Saparmurat Niyazov, late president-for-life of Turkmenistan, combining spiritual and moral guidance. Turkmenistan ranks 5th in terms of GDP growth rate in the world. One-half of its irrigated land is used for cotton production. It was the world's 10th-largest producer of cotton. It produces roughly 60 billion cubic metres of natural gas each year.

Kazakhstan being the last to come out of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic on 16th December 1991, it was also the last Republic which had joined the USSR on 5th December 1936 (Rahul 1996: 131). The Republic of Kazakhstan with 2.7 million square km, is the largest country in Central Asia, it is also the ninth largest country of the world. A small portion in the west, west of Ural River, lies in European continent. From 10th December 1997 Astana is the capital of Kazakhstan. Before that Almaty was the capital. There are about one hundred and thirty ethnic and racial groups reside in Kazakhstan. Kazakhs are more than fifty percent of the total population. Russians are the second most populous group; they constitute about 26 percent of the population. Religion wise also Kazakhstan is multi religious country. Islam is a dominant religion, 65 percent Kazakhs are Muslims, and Russian Orthodox is the second major group with 30 percent of the population. More than 60 percent of the population use Kazakh language as a medium of communication, it is also the state language of Kazakhstan. Government's language policy is that, one requires speaking Kazakh for many government jobs. This is the most Russified country in Central Asia. Regardless of the inevitable conflict language rights/promotion brings, there is linguistic peace in Kazakhstan. Since independence Kazakhstan has seen tremendous economic development, its GDP had an annual growth rate of about 10 percent. It is very rich in mineral and natural oil and gas.
resources. In the world it has second largest reserves of Uranium, Chromium, Lead and Zinc. It has 12th largest reserve of natural gas and in terms of fossil oil it is 13th in the world.

1.b. Historical Perspective

Historically Central Asia had been attached to, what is present day Iran, since ancient times. The ‘Silk Route’ connected all major places in the region with each other. During the medieval period this region was known as Khurasan and eastern Iran was part of it. The erstwhile Khurasan region consisted of the cities and surrounding areas of Nishapur and Tus, presently in Iran; Herat, Balkh, Kabul and Ghazni are the provinces of the present day Afghanistan; Merv and Sanjan, now in Turkmenistan; Samarqand and Bukhara both in the geographical boundaries of Uzbekistan; Khujand and Panjakent in Tajikistan. In many aspects it was associated with Iran (Persia) both; culturally, linguistically. In terms of relations, 15th century was a milestone for Iran and Central Asian relations. This was the period when political links with western Iran were severed. Political and economic independence was linked with a steady separation of the culture and literature of this north eastern region. A gradual differentiation took place, which intensified still further by the ideological split due to the fact that the Safavid dynasty (which ruled Persia from 1502 to 1722, and which was established by Ismail Shah) had adopted Shia\textsuperscript{11} sect of Islam as the state religion. \textit{Mavaraunnahar}\textsuperscript{12} (across the stream) or \textit{Transoxiana}, the Sunni\textsuperscript{13} bastion in the east, sought its alliance with the Ottomans\textsuperscript{14} of Turkey; with Afghanistan; and with northern India which at that time was ruled by the Mughals. It was especially with India that Central Asia maintained close cultural and economic contacts in the 16th and 17th centuries. However, the influence of the split on the continued development of Persian and Tajik literatures has thus far been overestimated. The two continued to influence each other, especially as regards the influence exerted by the classical writers of western Iran on Central Asian including Tajik/Persian poetry; \textit{tazkiras} (anthologies) on both sides of Amu Darya,

\textsuperscript{11} Shia is a branch of Islam which has its origin in Caliphate period. The route word is from the Arabic word \textit{tashia} meaning formation of a separate group outside of an existing group.

\textsuperscript{12} Mavaraunnahar is an Arabic term used by the Arabs when they reached this land during the Islamic period.

\textsuperscript{13} Sunni is derived from an Arabic word ‘\textit{sunna}’ which means path or the path of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), and Sunni is a person who follows that path. For the first time it was used by Abul Hassan al Ashri. Sunnis are the largest sect of Islam.

\textsuperscript{14} Ottomans or Uthman rulers who ruled after the decline of Ummayids till the end of the First World War
often listing authors from both banks of the river and history shows that there had also been personal contacts between the poets of both the regions.

However, as Central Asia became politically independent of Western Iran (Persia), it was affected by the growing cultural, political and economic influence of nomadic Turkic tribes coming from the North. The Uzbeks who had fought among themselves eventually formed a union under the leadership of the member of Changez Khan dynasty, Abdullah Khan of Shaibanid family. Turkic speaking tribes had already previously been living in Central Asia side by side with the Tajiks, but when Uzbeks seized power many additional Turkic nomads settled down and the Uzbeks finally penetrated into all the strata of the population, eventually gaining predominance. As early as in the 14th century we find the appearance of the first authors, who wrote in Chagatai language, and in the 15th century, the foundations were laid down for the ethnic formation and division in Central Asia, a division which has survived till this day. The 15th century was characterized by the decline of the Timurid Empire, it split into smaller units including the Central Asian parts. Finding of the direct sea route15 led to the decline of trade and subsequently the region, as international trade was a big source of income for the empire at that time. Invention and use of gun-powder in wars also contributed to the decline of the region, because the nomad herds were skilled fighters with horses, and numerical strength was no more the factor affecting the decision of the battle. In the 18th century Nadir Shah16 of Iran tried to reunite the region, but soon after his death British and Russian Empires captured Central Asia, which led to the Great Game of Central Asia. The British left Indian subcontinent in 1947 but Russian ruled Central Asia till the beginning of the last decade of the previous century.

After this, the region gained independence in 1990s, since then there have been great changes in the offing, new nations on the basis of language, race and culture have come into existence, and Central Asia is no more a homogenous entity under single unifying power.

15 In 1498, Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese and the first European reached Kalikat in Kerala, India, by the sea route through the Cape of Good Hope in Africa.
16 Nadir Shah reunited the Tajik/Persian realm and tried to remove the invaders. He deposed the last ruler of the Safavid dynasty of Iran (Persia), the dynasty which had ruled over Persia for more than 200 years, and became the Shah himself in 1736. His campaigns created a great Persian Empire that briefly encompassed what is now Iran, Afghanistan, northern India, and parts of Central Asia.
The recently liberated countries are trying to establish themselves, consolidating their separate national identities by laying their claim over the culture, literature and political developments of the ancient and the medieval periods, simply for the reason that presently those areas are lying in their respective territories, specially Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are trying to define their cultures and identities which are different from the present day Iranian or Persian culture and language.
The official name of the Republic of Tajikistan is Jumhuri i Tojikiston. It declared its independence on 9th September 1991; it was the third country among the Central Asian Republics to have become independent. Under the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Republic of Tajikistan was established in 1929 on the Autonomous Region of Tajikistan (Djalili: 1998), which was created in 1924 as a part of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan. The capital of the Republic of Tajikistan is Dushanbe, which is situated in the west of the country. Other major cities include Khujand, Kulyab, Qughanteppa.

The Republic of Tajikistan is situated west of China between 36.40° to 39.40° north latitudes and 67.20° to 75° east longitudes. It is 351 km north to south and 700 km west to east, with the total area of 1,43,103 sq. kms. It is the smallest country of Central Asia at the same time it is also one of the most inaccessible countries of Asia (area of Tajikistan is nearly equivalent to the area of the state of Orissa in India). Tajikistan is situated between north of Amu Darya and south of Syr Darya. It is a landlocked country and also called as
‘Heart of Central Asia’ – its shape is also somewhat similar to the human heart. The very location of Tajikistan indicates that geographically and historically the Tajiks resided at the centre of the vast Eurasian area. Sharing its borders with Uzbekistan (1,161 kms) and Kyrgyzstan (871 kms) lie to north and west, China (406 kms) and Afghanistan (1,206 kms) to the east and south. The republic of Tajikistan is very close to India, in the south east of this country a strip of Afghan land separates it from India and Pakistan which is just 15 to 65 kilometers wide.

Tajikistan is the country of mountains with Pamir and Altai mountains dominating the landscape. Geographically Pamir Mountains are situated in Central Asia and in the Republic of Tajikistan it occupies 93% of its total territorial area. In the deep valley there is much semi desert steppe landscape, which is being reclaimed. Cotton plantation is done on a large scale in this area. Some of the mountainsides are bare but others in the lower zones are covered with almond, hazel, and pistachio. In the middle zones deciduous trees and extensive pasturelands are found.

CLIMATE

The climate of Tajikistan is shaped by its central location and proximity to several mountain ranges. Despite its relatively small land area, the climate in Tajikistan varies widely, due to the country's mountainous topography. It is mid-latitude continental, hot summers, mild winters; semi-arid to polar in Pamir Mountains. It varies according to the altitude. In January the average temperature in lowland in winter is about -0.9°C (30°F) and in summer, July, which can be ferociously hot in the cities (daytime maximum temperature often exceeds 40°C). The southern cities of Qurghonteppa and Kulob are noticeably hotter than Dushanbe. In the southern lowlands the temperature variation is much more. Winters is usually quite mild, but expect some snowfall in the valleys between December and February. In the mountains, however, conditions are harsh and the higher mountain passes are closed. In mountain areas winter temperature can fall below -45°C (-51°F). Snow and ice make many parts of the country inaccessible for many months each year. Precipitation is high in the hills and low in the valleys, ranging from 150-250 mm per year.
Tajikistan is divided into four administrative divisions including the Autonomous Region of Badakhshan. Dushanbe is the capital and this region is directly administered by the government of the Republic.

**Dushanbe**

Dushanbe is the capital of Tajikistan situated on the confluence of the two rivers Varzob and Kafernihon, it was once famous for its boisterous Monday market, hence it got the name “Dushanbe” that means “Monday” in Tajik. The population of Dushanbe is 550,000 which is 8% percent of the total population in Tajikistan.

Historically settlements were there around Dushanbe beginning from 5th century BC, there is little to suggest that Dushanbe was more than a small village until around 80 years ago. In 1920, the last Emir of Bukhara briefly took refuge in Dushanbe after being overthrown by the Bolshevik revolution. He fled to Afghanistan after the Red Army conquered the area the next year. The city was briefly captured by Enver Pasha and his basmachi fighters in 1922 and served as the headquarters for Ibrahim Bek, a Tajik leader who fought the Bolsheviks.
With the Red Army victory and coming of the railroad from 1929, the city became the capital of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. Up until this time the city was named "Dyushambe", but in 1929 it was renamed "Stalinabad", after Joseph Stalin; as part of Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization initiative, the city was renamed "Dushanbe" in 1961. The Soviets transformed the area into a centre for cotton and silk production, and relocated tens of thousands of people to the city from around the Soviet Union. The population also increased with thousands of ethnic Tajiks migrating to Tajikistan following the transfer of Bukhara and Samarkand to the Uzbek SSR. A peaceful and relatively prosperous city under Soviet rule, Dushanbe was home to a university and the Tajik Academy of Sciences. Severe rioting occurred in 1990, after it was rumored that Moscow planned to relocate tens of thousands of Armenian refugees to Tajikistan, which spurred local nationalist sentiment.

It is estimated that around one million to one and half million people live in the capital including its suburbs. The city was badly damaged as a result of the Civil War in Tajikistan (1992–1997) that sprang up in the nation shortly after its independence.
Sughd (Sogdiana) is located in the north and northwest of Tajikistan. It is one of the four administrative divisions of the country having an area of some 26,100 square kilometers, and the population is 1,870,000 according to the 2000 census. This administrative division shares border with the Jizakh, Namangan, Samarkand and Fergana regions of Uzbekistan, and the Osh region of Kyrgyzstan. The river Syr Darya flows through it. Earlier it was known as Leninabad. The capital is Khujand (formerly Leninabad), it is the second largest city of Tajikistan. Tajik historians claim that Khujand is one of the oldest cities in Central Asia. It was an important trading post, Alexander of Macedonia captured in 329 B.C as mentioned in the Greek sources. Other major towns include: Chkalov, Gafurov, Isfara.
Khatlan is the most populous of the four administrative divisions of Tajikistan. It is situated in the southwest of the country, between the Hissar range in the north and the Panj River in the south and borders Afghanistan in the southeast and with Uzbekistan in the west. The capital of this region is the city of Qurghonteppa, formerly known as Kurgan-Tyube. Khatlon is informally divided into the Qurghonteppa region (Western Khatlon) – with the Kofarnihon and Vakhsh river valleys – and the Kulyab region (Eastern Khatlon). Both regions were merged in November 1992 into the Khatlon oblast. It has an area of 24,600 square kilometres and consists of 25 districts – 14 in Western Khatlon and 11 in Eastern Khatlon. Other important towns are Kulyab, Beshkent, Bokhtar, Vakhsh, Kolkhozobod. The population in Khatlon is mainly engaged with agricultural activities, especially cotton growing and cattle rearing. During the Soviet period, Khatlon became one of the main cotton producing regions in Tajikistan. Only two or three percent of the population is working in the industrial sector.

Since the conflicts leading to the civil war were never really resolved, tensions in the region still exist. The eastern part – Kulyab – is home to the president and his clan and has thus gained a lot of political influence. During Soviet times, the region cooperated with the then ruling elite from Leninabad, and was responsible for the militia, the army and the security forces. Kulyab is regarded as a very conservative region. In the capital Qurghanteppa and parts of Kulyab, the Islamic opposition has a lot of support among the Garmis.
Region of Republican Subordination

Region of Republican Subordination, formerly it was known as Karotegin Province, a region in Tajikistan, consisting of districts which are directly under the central government rule. Karotegin is the historic name of the Rasht Valley and a historic political region in pre-Soviet Central Asia that is today part of Tajikistan. The Karategin consisted of a highland district bounded on the north by Samarkand and Khokand, on the east by Ferghana, on the south by Darvaz, and on the west by Hissar and other Bokharian provinces. This region was also named Garm, though Garm is also the name of a city and the Garmi ethnic group. Karotegin was an independent region in Central Asia for many centuries. The native princes, who claimed to be descended from Alexander the Great, were till 1868 independent, though their allegiance was claimed by Kokand. The Emirate of Bukhara conquered the region, along with Darvaz, in 1877.

Traditionally rough woollen cloth and mohair\textsuperscript{17} were woven by the natives, who also made excellent firearms and other weapons. Gold was mined in various places and there were salt-pits in the mountains. The main town, Garm is situated on a hill on the right bank

\textsuperscript{17} Mohair is a silk-like fabric or yarn made from the hair of the ‘Angora’ goats.
Chapter II

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of the Vakhsh River, a right-hand tributary of the Amu Darya. Other important towns of the region are Darband, Gharm, Tavildara etc. Historically it was difficult for the people of the Karotegin to communicate with neighboring lands except during the summer, from May to September. During the warmer months, however, the mountainsides are richly clothed with the foliage of maple, mountain ash, apple, pear and walnut trees; the orchards furnish, not only apples and pears, but peaches, cherries, mulberries and apricots. Both cattle and horses are of a small and hardy breed.

Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province

Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (GBAP) is a mountainous province of Tajikistan. It makes up 40% of the land area of the country. Khorog is the capital of the region. The name Gorno-Badakhshan comes from Russian language, which means Mountainous Badakhshan. During the Soviet period the GBAP was known as the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, or the GBAO. In English oblast is frequently translated as region and thus the name Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, or the GBAR, frequently appears in present day literature. The GBAO was created in January 1925. The GBAO was attached to the republic of Tajikistan after the latter was created in 1929. During the 1950s many of the local inhabitants of Gorno-Badakhshan, known as Pamiris, were forcibly
relocated to south-western Tajikistan. After Tajikistan gained independence in 1991 the region was renamed the "Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province." When civil war broke out in Tajikistan in 1992 the local government in the GBAP declared independence from the republic of Tajikistan. During the civil war many Pamiris were targeted for killings by rival groups and the GBAP became a bastion for the opposition. Later the GBAP local government backed down from their calls for independence.

**POPULATION**

According to Census of 2000, there were 61,27,000 Tajiks and as on 01.01.2008 the population of Tajikistan is 72,15,700 (Tajikistan in Figures: 2008). Tajiks are the largest group consisting 65\(^{18}\) percent of the population, about 25 per cent are Uzbeks. There is a declining population of Russians due to emigration, presently it is 3.5 percent. Kyrgyzs are 0.1 percent. Others consist of 6.5 percent of the total population. In all, there are many nationalities in Tajikistan. About 70% of the population in Tajikistan live in rural areas and are engaged in agriculture. The rate of population growth is very high. In 1929, the population of the country was about 1 million; in 1979, it reached 3.8 million people; in 2000, it exceeded 6.1 million. Thus, by the end of the 20\(^{th}\) century, the population of Tajikistan has increased whopping six times. But during the civil period the population declined as over 300 thousand people abandoned the country because of civil war and the long socio-economic crises.

The habitations have grown according to historical geographical conditions. Valleys and inter-mountain depressions are the main areas where population resides and conduct business activities. The density of population in the valleys reaches 200 people per 1 sq.km (Gissar and Vakhsh valleys, northern regions). In mountainous regions, the density of population makes 4-10 people per 1 sq.km. Eastern Pamir is considered a less populated area of Tajikistan. The density of population here is less than 1 person per 1 sq.km. At present, the average density of the population is 47 people per 1 sq.km. Over 85% of the population

\(^{18}\) There is no accurate data available on the exact number of Tajiks, the definition of ‘Tajik’ is still being discussed. During the census many ethnic Uzbeks were also considered as Tajiks.
dwell in the areas located from 300 to 1,500 m above sea level. Men comprise 49.5% and women 50.5% of the population. Over 30% are children 9 years old. As per religious considerations there are 85 percent Sunnis, Ismailis consist of 5 percent, Christians 3.9 percent and others 6.1 percent.

The flag for the independent Tajikistan was adopted on November 24, 1992. It contains three horizontal stripes; red at the top over white stripe and green being below the white, a gold crown with seven stars is there at the centre of the flag. Those colors represent sunshine and health, chastity, the journey on the right path of life, peace and stability, agriculture, the mountains, and the spring. The white symbolized country's purity and cotton production – the basis of Tajikistani agriculture, and it is also the color of snow and ice in high mountains, the green for the other agricultural produce and green valleys. The red color represents Tajikistan's independence and the land of itself and it is also a color of unification of the republic and brotherhood with other nations of the world. The ensemble represents state sovereignty; unbreakable unity of workers, peasants and intellectuals; and friendship and brotherhood among all nationalities class, unity, and Islam.

The colours are the same as there in the Iranian flag (albeit in reverse order), one thing should be mentioned here that Tajiks are the only one of the former Soviet Central
Asian peoples who speak Tajik which is very close to Persian, the language of Iran, and there live largest number of Ismailis in Tajikistan which a sub sect of Shiaism, the state religion of Iran.

NATIONAL EMBLEM

![The Coat of Arm of Tajikistan](image)

Figure 1.11: The Coat of Arm of Tajikistan

The National Emblem of the Republic of Tajikistan's represents the image of stylized crown and semicircle from seven stars on it in the beams of sun arising behind of the mountains, covered with snow and framed by wreath which is made on the right from ears of wheat and on the left from branches of cotton. From above a wreath is interlaced by a three-striped tape and in the bottom there is placed a book on the support (rehal)\textsuperscript{19}.

National emblem of Tajikistan has been designed keeping in consideration its culture, geography, economy and religion. The rising sun might be indicating the rise of a new nation on the world horizon, its economic strength is represented by cotton and wheat which proportionately covers a large space in emblem, its geography can be seen through ice capped mountains and green colours indicating valleys. Religion, identity and knowledge source can be deduced from the book on the rehal (lectern) which seems to be the Holy Quran, which is the most important religious book of Muslims, who constitute more than 80\% of the total population.

\textsuperscript{19} Lectern on which the Holy books are read, generally they are made of wood.
Chapter II Tajikistan

NATIONAL ANTHEM

A new Tajik national anthem was adopted after the independence in 1991. It has been composed by Gulnazar Keldi replacing the anthem of Soviet era. Its music has been composed by Sulaiman Yudakov.

Our beloved country,
We are happy to see your pride.
Let your happiness and prosperity be forever.
We have reached this day since ancient times,
We stand under your flag.

CHORUS
Long live my Homeland, my free Tajikistan!

English Translation

Dobar aсрунд ма
йе бехт ма сир гузир но йелд ид
сомайд но, дульт но йигорд ид
з дори йамано расеидма
йе бир бержу но сиф куштебма
куштебма
занде паш, ай велн
нагижканан арзан ман
берай танг нама
ин аз амид ризканд ма шаанан
но нор варакан манхан жаванан
хдван тимурдэн йе ноибов ба
кэ мэкъо йе бо оддова но
кар бо
занде паш, ай велн
нагижканан арзан ман
но мадар бэкандан
йе гери но боод беъдай нажддан ма
мерам но боод мерам жамса ва жан ма
з во соаманд айд бисеб майст
но гиби ва йо манхан жебив маист
жебив маист
занде паш, ай велн
нагижканан арзан ман

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Chapter II

Your are a symbol of our ancestors' hope
Our honour and dignity,
Your are an eternal world for your sons,
Your spring will never end,
We remain loyal to you.

CHORUS
You are a Mother for all of us,
Your future is our future,
Your meaning is the meaning of our souls and bodies,
You give us happiness forever,
Because of you, we love the world!

CHORUS

The national anthem of Tajikistan is also indicative of its history, language, culture and identity. People of Tajikistan have been identified with the homeland it has also been referred to as motherland. People have been asked not to forget their past. It also shows respect towards elderly people – which is an integral part of the Tajik society, and affection towards young people.
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

History of Tajikistan is long and continued, it is defined by the area's climate and geography and has connections with the history of many peoples and regions, like with India, Afghanistan, Iran (Persia), the Arab countries and some other countries of the regions. This region has been the original home of Aryans. Aryans were the people who fanned in different directions from here and established the distinct civilisations. The earliest evidence of the civilized part, in this region, we have is the Sughdiana region (Wheeler 1964: 19). Here earliest evidence of human settlement is found.

The aridness of the region made agriculture difficult, which led to the nomadic lifestyle of the people. They were also sturdy warriors with excellent use of horses. They dominated the region for a long time, up to sixteenth century, till the development of firearms. In the nineteenth Tsarist Russia was well entrenched in the region and was controlling bulk of the area. After the Russian Revolution this region saw rapid progress in every field. The Soviet areas of Central Asia saw much industrialization and construction of infrastructure. With the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic in the beginning of 1990s, five Central Asian countries gained independence. Since then these nation are trying to tread the path of development which has been painfully slow. The history of Tajikistan can be divided into two parts, which are distinct from one another. One is pre-Islamic period and another is period after the Islamic conquests.

- Pre-Islamic Period,
- Islamic Conquest and Rule of Samanids (A.D. 700-999),
- The Turkish Period of Karkhanids,
- Seljuqs and Khwarizmi (A.D. 999-1200),
- The Mongols and Timurids (1200-1500),
- The Uzbek Empire of Shaiabanids,
- The Safavid Dynasty of Persia,
- Formation of Khanates,
- Tsars Conquest of the Region,
- Soviet Rule,
- Independence in the early 1990s.
Chapter II Tajikistan

PRE-ISLAMIC PERIOD

The pre-Islamic Period of Tajikistan implies the time span between the 600 BC up to 651 AD. In fact, the pre-Islamic Period of Tajikistan is divided into Achaemenid Period, Hellenistic Period, Kushan Empire, The Hephthalites and the Gortuk Rule. Whereas earlier records are exclusively Chinese, from the later part of the seventh century onwards, there is an abundance of Arabic materials. The importance of Arab conquest and of the subsequent establishment of Islam can hardly be overestimated. It checked what might have been the gradual assimilation of Transoxiana by the Chinese; it outlasted the invasions of the Mongols, who were eventually assimilated by the civilisation, which they had come to destroy.

Aryans

The word ‘Aryan’ has Indo-Iranian root which means ‘noble’, the term formerly used to designate the Indo-European race or language family or its Indo-Iranian subgroup. In the present day this word indicates race rather than language. Aryans are said to be the original inhabitants of the Central Asian Steppes. Originally a group of nomadic tribes, they were part of a great migratory movement that spread in successive waves from Central Asia and Turkistan during the 2d millennium B.C. They migrated from there to India, Iran and Tajikistan. Earlier the Aryans were nomads, gradually started the sedentary life.

Scholars, political activists, students and the Tajik civil society in general are very enthusiastic about their land being the place of the origination of the ancient race of the Aryans. According to Tajik historians and researchers, the Aryans in the hoary past dispersed to various parts of Eurasia from their land — the ancient Sogd or Sogdiana and Tukhara or Tukharistan, which includes later on the Greek settlement of Bactria. In recent times many books have come up on the related topics, even the President of the republic himself has written a book ‘From Aryans to Samanids’, which deals with the theme and includes his own scientific investigations of Tajik history. Rahmonov’s new book, From Aryans to Samanids, represents the cornerstone of his national ideology. In the book, Rahmonov recounts the
history of the Tajik people and its meaning for Tajikistan’s present and future. The president calls on all Tajiks to be proud of being associated with Aryan civilisation.

The records related to the history of Tajikistan during this period are scanty. The most civilised part of the whole region about which there is any coherent information was Soghd or Soghdiana roughly corresponding to what is Transoxiana (Soucek 2000: 5). This was the area lying between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya. The people of Soghd were of Aryan origin. Other documents were discovered in proper Sogdiana at the archaeological sites excavated in the Soviet period and inscriptions appeared along the routes of the so-called Silk Route. There development continued till the Achaemenid period, which ranges from 550 BC to 329 BC., when Sogdiana entered history with the conquest of the region by Persian armies. The inscription of the Darius I the Great (522-486 B.C) at Bihisutun (dated 6th century B.C) counts Sogdians among the subjects of the kingdom. Sogdiana comprised Khorasmia, Parthia and Aria in the 16th Imperial Satrapy. This was the situation till Alexander of Macedonia reached Central Asia.

Alexander’s Campaign

Alexander reached the Central Asian region and in Tajikistan in about 330 BC. His three-year campaign against first Bessus and then the satrap of Sughdiana, Spitamenes, took him through Media, Parthia, Aria (West Afghanistan), Drangiana, Arachosia (South and Central Afghanistan), Bactria (North and Central Afghanistan), and Scythia. In the process, he captured and refounded Herat and Maracanda. Moreover, he founded a series of new cities, all called Alexandria, including modern Kandahar in Afghanistan, and Alexandria Eschate (The Furthest) in modern Tajikistan. In the end, both of his opponents were betrayed by their men, Bessus in 329 BC and Spitamenes the year after.

A new era under the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom began. The Greco-Bactrian kingdom, according to the Tajikistan Pre Islamic Period, ruled over Tajikistan for about 200 hundred years. The Greek contact influenced the life of the region in many ways and was influenced by it too. This can be felt in the field of art. A new art form emerged which is known as the Gandhara art. Although, Alexander was a powerful king, yet he could not have held the
power of Tajikistan till eternity. Soon after his death in June, 323 BC, his empire in Central Asia also melted away. Alexander died in the palace of Nebuchandrezzar of Babylon. Thus, after the Greco-Bactrians, we find the emergence of the Kushana Empire in the history of the Pre Islamic Period in Tajikistan.

Kushanas

The Kushans were one among the five tribes of Yuechi. They were the nomadic people from the Central Asia. The Kushan kingdom was established in the area nearby Tajikistan in the 1st century AD. They built an extensive empire stretching from river Oxus to the Ganges in India. The Kushans created for the first time a unique opportunity for cultural exchanges between Indian and Central Asian civilisations. Prushpur (Peshawar) was their capital, and Mathura in India is considered to be their second capital. Tajikistan saw the emergence of international trade and commerce, along with the growth of agriculture.

In the 5th and the 6th centuries AD, Tajikistan saw the emergence of many nomadic tribes, as well as the Chionites and the Ephthalites. Towards the end of the 6th century AD, the Ephthalites lost control over the area including the present day Tajikistan, and the Eastern Turkic Khanate emerged in the political scenario of this region. Finally, with the rise of the Arabs, Tajikistan went under the domain of an Islamic Empire.

THE ISLAMIC ERA

Islam is the predominant religion of Central Asia including Tajikistan. The Islamic period begins with the conquest of Central Asia and Tajikistan by the Arabs in the middle of the seventh century A.D. The Battle of Talas in 751 between the Abbasid Caliphate and the Chinese Tang Dynasty for control of Central Asia was the turning point in initiating Islam in the region. The Battle of Talas in 751 was a conflict between the Arab Abbasid Caliphate and the Chinese Tang Dynasty for control over the Syr Darya. The Chinese army was defeated following the routing of their troops by the Abbasids on the bank of the Talas River. The defeat was partly a result of the defection of Karluk mercenaries and the retreat of Ferghana allies who originally supported the Chinese. Ferghana forces inadvertently cut the Chinese troops off from the rest of their army and their route of retreat.
After that, the Islamisation of the region has had profound impact on the native cultures in the region, moulding them as a part of Islamic civilisation. Islamisation in the region has also had the effect of blending Islam into native cultures, creating new forms of Islamic practices. Until the Mongol invasion of Central Asia in 13th century, Samarkand, Bukhara and Urgench flourished as centres of Islamic learning, culture and art and architecture in the region. This invasion devastated the then Islamic world and halted the process of Islamisation for a half century, but later on they (Mongols) themselves accepted Islam and became its forbearer, Mongol attack led to the rise of Sufism in central Asia, which later on reached to India. Two Sufi Silsilas, Yasaviya and Naqshbandia were born under the turmoil and uncertainty created by Mongol invasions. Gradually this notion seeped into the very core of the Tajik society. Since that time, Islam has become an integral part of Tajik culture. Soviet efforts to secularise the society were largely unsuccessful and the post-Soviet era has seen a marked increase in religious practice among the Central Asians in general and specially among Tajiks.

Samanids

The Samanids ruled Tajikistan and central Asia from 819 to 999 A.D. The first known Samanid was Saman Khuda (Saman Khoda, Saman-khudat, the name ‘Saman-khoda’ is actually a title that means ‘owner of the settlement of Saman’) was a Tajik from Central Asia, and the subsequent dynasty is named after him. Saman lived in the first half of the 8th century, he was supposedly descended from the Sasanian general Bahram Chobin, a noble of the ancient Persian Mehran feudal family, who played an important role in the history of the later Sasanian rule in Persia. Saman was a noble with Zoroastrian faith, he attended the court of the Caliph of Baghdad’s Khurasan governor, Asad ibn 'Abd-Allah al-Qasri (723-727). Impressed with Asad's piety Saman reverted to Islam. He had a son Asad who was named by his father in honour of the governor of Khurasan Asad ibn 'Abd-Allah. The Caliph appointed Asad's sons to be rulers of Samarqand, Ferghana, Shash, Ustrushan and Herat, and thus the foundation for the Samanid dynasty rule was laid.
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Samanid Rulers

- Saman Khuda
- Asad ibn Saman
- Yahya ibn Asad (819-855)
- Nasr I (864 - 892) (Effectively independent 875)
- Ismail (892 - 907)
- Ahmad II (907 - 914)
- Nasr II (914 - 943)
- Hamid Nuh I (943 - 954)
- Abdul Malik I (954 - 961)
- Mansur I (961 - 976)
- Nuh II (976 - 997)
- Mansur II (997 - 999)
- 'Abd al-Malik II (999)

Samanid Dynasty Tree

[Diagram of the Samanid Dynasty Tree]

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The Samanid period is considered as the most important period in the history of Tajikistan, it is seen by the Tajik scholars as the beginning of a Tajik nation. Their rule lasted for 180 years, and their territory encompassed Khurasan, Ray, Transoxiania, Tabaristan, Kerman, Gurgan, and the area west of these provinces up to Isfahan. Samanids who were the native rulers of Tajikistan became the master of Central Asia.

The Samanids promoted the arts, giving rise to the advancement of science and literature, and thus attracted scholars from far and wide. Due to the patronage to science, arts and culture, soon Bukhara became a rival to Baghdad in its glory. Scholars note that the Samanids revived Persian language and literature more than the Buyids and the Saffarids, while continuing to patronize Arabic to a significant degree. Tajik language and culture scaled new heights. Samanid courts were filled with the Tajik/Persian writers, poets and scholars. State gave huge grants to them. Many important literary works were produced during this period like the world genius Rudaki and Firdausi and the scientist-encyclopaedist Abu-Ali-Inb-Sina, whom the Western world know as Avicenna. Another lasting contribution of the Samanids to the history of Islamic art, is the pottery known as Samanid Epigraphic Ware: plates, bowls, and pitchers fired in a white slip and decorated only with calligraphy, often elegantly and rhythmically written. The Arabic phrases used in this calligraphy are generally more or less generic well wishes, or Islamic admonitions to good table manners. Due to these reasons this period in the history of Tajikistan is called the Golden period. Later, in the 10th century, Turkish people began to spread their roots in Tajikistan. The Samanid state was invaded and split by invading Turkic tribes. In the northern part of the present Tajikistan, the Karakhanid's state was formed and in the south Ghaznevid state was established.

**Turks (The Karakhanids or the Ilkhanids)**

Ilkhanids were a Turkic tribe whose original place was in Turkistan, who later migrated towards Tajikistan. The Kara-Khanids claimed descent from the legendary Afrasiab dynasty, they ruled over Tajikistan and Central Asia from the beginning of the 10th century to the first quarter of the 13th century. The nomadic elements of the Kara-Khanid and Kara-Khitan states, the Karluk and Naiman hordes, laid the foundation for the modern Kypchak
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Turkic-speaking cultures of the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Tatars. Over the years of their domination in Tajikistan, the Turks transformed drastically: they changed from pastoral nomads, and adopted a sedentary way of life. The Muslim, Persianized, sedentary elements of the Kara-Khanid culture are preserved today among the Tajik, Uzbek, Afghan, Hui and Uyghur people, two of which speak Chagatai Turkic languages. The transformation of the Turks, brought them closer to the sedentary Tajik speakers. This intermingling of the Turkish culture with the Tajik/Persian culture paved the way for the formation of a better and an even richer culture in the territory of Tajikistan.

Early in the 11th century the unity of the Kara-Khanid dynasty was fractured by constant internal warfare. In 1041 Muhammad 'Ayn ad-Dawlah (reigned 1041–52) took over the administration of the western branch of the family, centred at Bukhara. After the rise of the Seljuks at the end of the 11th century in Persia, the Kara-Khanids became nominal vassals of the Seljuks. Later they would serve the dual suzerainty of both the Kara-Khitans to the north and the Seljuks to the south. With a decline in Seljuk power, the Kara-Khanids in 1140 fell under domination of the rival Turkic Karakitai confederation, centred in northern China. 'Uthman’ (reign 1204–11) briefly re-established the independence of the dynasty, but in 1211 the Karakhanids were defeated by the Khwarizm-Shah 'Ala’ ad-Din Muhammad and the dynasty was extinguished.

Kara-Khanid legacy is arguably the most enduring cultural heritage among coexisting cultures in Central Asia from the 9th to the 13th century. The Karluk-Uyghur dialect spoken by the nomadic tribes and Turkified sedentary populations under Kara-Khanid rule branched out into two major branches of the Turkic linguistic family, the Chagatai and the Kypchak. The Kara-Khanid cultural model that combined nomadic Turkic culture with Islamic, sedentary institutions spread east into former Kara-Khoja and Tangut territories and west and south into the subcontinent, Khorasan (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Northern Iran), Golden Horde territories (Tataristan) and Turkey. The Mongol Chagatai, Timurid and Uzbek states and societies inherited most of the cultures of the Kara-Khanids and the Khwarizmians without much interruption.
Mongols

Mongol Empire is said to have been a great blow on the sedentary life of the Tajik/Turks, who came to power after the Arabs. The Mongol Empire in Tajikistan started from 1219 and continued till 1370. Talking about the Mongol Empire of Tajikistan, it can be said that Changez Khan occupied the area of the present day Tajikistan between 1219-1221. Changez Khan's conquest of Tajikistan ruined the entire territory. During the Mongol attacks the two important centres of the Tajik culture namely Samarkand and Bukhara were completely sacked. In the early days looting and massacre became common in the Tajikistan cities. In fact, during the dominion of Mongol at Tajikistan, agriculture came to a standstill. The history of the Mongol Empire at Tajikistan bears witness to the degeneration of trade and commerce in Tajikistan.

But once when the Mongols settled down they established peace on a large area of the land. They built one of the largest empires in the history of human kind, this gave growth to trade and commerce and also contact with other civilisations were established. The region of Central Asia and Tajikistan once again flourished. Later on, the Mongols who were pagans accepted Islam, it gave a new energy for the propagation of this religion. Further, the Mongols under Amir Timur, Timur-e Lang (in Tajik) or Timur the Lame, corrupted in the West to Tamerlane as he is popularly called, because he received an arrow-wound in the leg and limped, established a large empire in the 14th century, with Samarkand, which was the centre of Tajik culture, as his capital. Though the last Timurid ruler of Herat, Badi uz Zaman finally fell to the armies of the Uzbek Muhammad Shaibani Khan in 1506, another Timurid ruler of Ferghana, Zahir-ud-Din Babur, survived the collapse of the dynasty and re-established the Timurid dynasty in India in 1526 which lasted for about three hundred years. They are known as the Mughals of India.

The Mongol period contributed little other than Mongolian to the culture of the peoples of the region. But the Pax Mongolica, which came to an end with the Timurid dynasty, gave fillip to urban culture and the flourishing of the arts. After the overthrowing of the Turkicised Mongol Timurid dynasty by the Uzbeks, the peoples of Tajikistan were not subjected to any further foreign cultural influences until the coming of the Russians.
Shaibanids

At the beginning of the 16th century the nomadic Uzbeks under Shaibani Khan conquered the two Timurid states of Central Asia and Khorasan. The Shaibanid state was divided into appendages between all male members of the dynasty, who would designate the supreme ruler (Khan), the oldest member of clan. The seat of Khan was first at Samarkand, the capital of the Timurids, but some of the Khans preferred to remain in their former places. Thus Bukhara became the seat of the khan for the first time under Ubaidullah Khan (r.1533-1539). During the internal feuds of the middle of the 16th century, one of the Shaibanid sultans, Abdullah, took possessions of Bukhara in 1557; there in 1561, he proclaimed his father Iskandar as the supreme khan of the Uzbeks. Thereafter, Bukhara remained the Transoxonian capital of the Uzbek khanate and that of the later dynasties. The nomadic Uzbeks who conquered the country seized the pastures and some of the best-irrigated lands on the plains, pushing both the old sedentary and pre-Uzbek nomadic population out toward the mountainous areas in the eastern parts of the khanate. In many places, however, the old Tajik rural population remained, interspersed with the Uzbeks. The sedentarisation of the Uzbeks by the 19th century was accompanied by the Turkicisation of the Tajiks, especially in the countryside on the plains. But the population of the main urban centres, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, remained predominantly Tajik; Tajik was language of literature and chancery in the khanate until the end of it existence. Until the 19th century, the Uzbek nobility formed the ruling elite in the khanate, as military commanders, court officials, and provincial governors; civil and especially financial affairs remained in the hands of the Tajik bureaucracy. Abdullah Khan ibn Iskandar united the khanate in the course of long wars with the other members of the Shaibanid dynasty. During his reign, Khorasan and Khwarizm were conquered and the khan's military campaigns were extended as far as the central parts of the Kazakh steppes in the north and Kashgar in the east. The strengthening of the central government was accompanied by new economic measures; the construction of irrigation canals and numerous public buildings, the improvement of roads, and monetary reforms that contributed to the development of commerce.
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Janid or Ashtarkhanid dynasty

Soon after the death of Abullah Khan the Shaibanid dynasty melted away. It was replaced by the Janid dynasty, another branch of the descendants of Jochi, whose founder was related through marriage to Abdullah Khan. The Janids depended more than the Shaibanids on the support of the tribal chiefs; thus the power of the latter greatly increased during the 17th century. The Janid state was divided between the khans sitting in Bukhara and his heir (brother or son), often also bearing the title khan, who ruled the provinces to the south of Amu Darya, with his capital in Balkh. The ruler of Balkh was sometimes independent from Bukhara, and they were at odds with one another and often in war. The first half of the 17th century, especially the reign of Imam Quli Khan (1611-1642), was a period of relative political and economical stability for the Janids. Although they could not regain Khorasan, finally lost to Persia by the beginning of the 17th century, and although Khwarazm again became independent, the Janids were able to maintain their possessions against the attacks of the Kazakhs and Dzungars in the north and the Mughals in the south. However, already in the second half of the 17th century the signs of decline were obvious. Continuing sedentarisation of the Uzbeks negatively affected the military prowess of the tribal troops of the khanate, and from the 1650s on Bukhara suffered from the recurrent raids of the Uzbeks of Khwarizm. The central government was unable to check the growing regionalism and tribal feuds. By the end of the 17th century the khanate lost Ferghana and Badakhshan. An attempt by Khan Ubaidullah II (r.1702-1711) to suppress the tribal nobility and restore some degree of centralisation failed, after which the khanate disintegrated into a number of tribal principalities. From 1723 to 1729 the country suffered from devastations caused by the Kazakhs, who, fleeing from Dzungars, invaded the Zeravshan valley. In 1740 the khanate was conquered by Nadir Shah, the ruler of Persia. The Janid khan Abual Faiz retained his throne by becoming Nadir's vassal.

Manghit dynasty

After the death of Nadir Shah in 1747, the chief of the Manghit tribe, Muhammad Rahim Biy Aaliq, overcame his rivals from other tribes with the support of the urban population, consolidated his rule in the khanate, and was proclaimed khan in 1756. His successors, however, ruled in the name of puppet khans of Janid origin. The third Manghit
ruler, Shah Murad (r.1785-1800), finally deposed the Janids and acceded to the throne himself. He did not assume the title of khan, preferring the title Amir, as did subsequent Manghit rulers. The khanate was smaller under Manghits than under their predecessors; it lost important provinces to the south of Amu Darya and the Syr Darya basins, and Merv, conquered by Shah Murad in 1785 -1789, was lost in 1823. For half of the century, the Amirs were unable to subdue the small principality of Shahrisabz (about 50 miles south of Samarkand), ruled by the chieftains of the Uzbek tribe of Keneges, hostile to Manghits. Another small principality, Ura-Tube, between Bukhara and Khokand was a bone of contention between the two khanates, but mostly remained independent.

Under the Manghits, the administration of the country was more centralized. The khanate became a despotic monarchy in which the Amir enjoyed almost unlimited authority and ruled through a ramified bureaucratic apparatus. The country was divided into more than 20 provinces, each administrated by an appointed governor to whom all authority in the province was delegated. The First Minister (qoshbegi) was always a Persian slave or a descendant of slaves; this status ensured his personal loyalty to the Amir. Besides frequent diplomatic exchanges with its Central Asia neighbours, the khanate perennially maintained limited relations with other states of the Islamic world; Persia, the Ottoman empire, the Mughal empire in India and Afghanistan. Diplomatic relations with Europe were practically non-existent, but trade was of a significant scale, and the country did not experience any Western influence before the Russian conquest.

TSARIST RUSSIAN RULE IN TAJIKISTAN (1867-1917)

The Russian conquest and settlements in Central Asia began in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although some armed resistance occurred, Tajik society remained largely unchanged during this initial colonial period. By 1860 the Central Asian principalities were ripe for conquest by the much more powerful Russian Empire. Imperial policy makers believed that these principalities had to be subdued because of their armed opposition to Russian expansion into the Kazak steppe, which already was underway to the north of Tajikistan. Some proponents of Russian expansion saw it as a way to compensate for losses
elsewhere and to pressure Britain, Russia's perennial nemesis in the region, by playing on British concerns about threats to its position in India. The Russian military supported campaigns in Central Asia as a means of advancing careers and building personal fortunes. The region assumed much greater economic importance in the second half of the nineteenth century because of its potential to be a supplier of cotton. An important step in the Russian conquest was the capture of Tashkent from the Khokand Khanate, part of which was annexed in 1866. The following year, Tashkent became the capital of the new Guberniya (Governorate General) of Turkestan, which included the districts of Khujand and Uroteppa (later part of Tajikistan). After a domestic uprising and Russian military occupation, Russia annexed the remainder of the Khokand Khanate in 1876.

The Bukhara Khanate fought Russian invaders during the same period, losing the Samarkand area in 1868. Russia chose not to annex the rest of Bukhara, fearing repercussions in the Muslim world and from Britain because Bukhara was a bastion of Islam and a place of strategic significance to British India. Instead, the Tsar's government made a treaty with Bukhara, recognizing its existence but in effect subordinating it to Russia. Bukhara actually gained territory by this agreement, when the Russian administration granted the Amir of Bukhara a district that included Dushanbe, now the capital of Tajikistan, in compensation for the territory that had been ceded to Russia. In the 1880s, the principality of Shughnan-Rushan in the western Pamir Mountains became a new object of contention between Britain and Russia when Afghanistan and Russia disputed the territory there. An 1895 treaty assigned the disputed territory to Bukhara, and at the same time put the eastern Pamirs under Russian rule.

Russian rule brought important changes in the area, what is present day Tajikistan, but many elements of the traditional way of life scarcely changed. Rural administration there resembled the system that governed peasants in the European part of the Russian Empire after the abolition of serfdom in 1861. Local administration in villages continued to follow long-established traditions, and prior to 1917 few Russians lived in the area of present-day Tajikistan. Russian authorities also left education in the region substantially the same between the period from 1870s to 1917.
An important event of the 1870s was Russia's initial expansion of cotton cultivation in the region, including the areas of the Ferghana Valley and the Bukhara Khanate. The pattern of switching land from grain cultivation to cotton cultivation, which intensified during the Soviet period, was established at this time. The first cotton-processing plant was established in eastern Bukhara during World War I.

Some elements of opposition to Russian hegemony appeared in the late nineteenth century. By 1900 a novel educational approach was being offered by reformers known as Jadidists (jadid is the Arabic word for "new"). The Jadidists, who received support from Tajiks, Tatars, and Uzbeks, were modernizers and nationalists who viewed Central Asia as a whole. Their position was that the religious and cultural greatness of Islamic civilisation had been degraded in the Central Asia of their day. The Tatars and Central Asians who shared these views established Jadidist schools in several cities in the Guberniya of Turkestan. Although the Jadidists were not necessarily anti-Russian, tsarist officials in Turkestan found their kind of education even more threatening than traditional Islamic teaching. By World War I, several cities in present-day Tajikistan had underground Jadidist organizations.

Between 1869 and 1913, uprisings against the Amir of Bukhara erupted under local rulers in the eastern part of the khanate. The uprisings of 1910 and 1913 required Russian troops to restore order. A peasant revolt also occurred in eastern Bukhara in 1886. The failed Russian revolution of 1905 resonated very little among the indigenous populations of Central Asia. In the Duma (legislature) that was established in St. Petersburg as a consequence of the events of 1905, the indigenous inhabitants of Turkestan were allotted only six representatives. Subsequent to the second Duma in 1907, Central Asians were denied all representation.

By 1916 discontent with the effects of Russian rule had grown substantially, Central Asians complained especially of discriminatory taxation and price gouging by Russian merchants. A flashpoint was Russia's revocation that year of Central Asians' traditional exemption from military service. In July 1916, the first violent reaction to the impending draft occurred when demonstrators attacked Russian soldiers in Khujand. Although clashes
continued in various parts of Central Asia through the end of the year, Russian troops quickly brought the Khujand region back under control. The following year, the Russian Revolution ended Tsarist rule in Central Asia.

**SOVIET PERIOD**

In 1924, Stalinabad (Dushanbe) became the capital of Tajikistan. Between 1929, and 1970, Tajikistan underwent intensive Sovietisation, which by necessity accompanied the type of education compatible with carrying out collectivization and industrialization. As was the case in the other republics of the Soviet Union, the individuals with nationalistic tendencies were purged. By the early 1930's, there was no question in anyone's mind that Tajikistan was on the way to becoming a modern republic with a growing industrial base in the north and a burgeoning agricultural enterprise in the south. The combination of ideology and hard work paid off. The net income of the inhabitants rose from 65 million sums [soms] to 112 million sums within a short time. These concrete gains were further rewarded by Moscow with the granting of independence from Uzbekistan in 1929. Furthermore, with assistance from the Centre, Tajikistan entered an actual production phase, i.e., it could produce fuel, foodstuffs, textiles, and construction materials. The construction of a major brick factory in the city of Dushanbe in 1932 was the Tajiks' first taste of partial economic independence. They had built, and, therefore, owned, the republic's first construction materials centre.

During the 1930's, Tajikistan underwent a profound transformation. It gradually changed, from a collection of medieval cities, rural towns, and qishlaqs (villages) into a republic with a considerable industrial and agricultural economy. The people, too, changed from a predominantly rural mindset to a more urban mindset. Many left their ancestral lands in the qishlaqs for jobs in the towns and cities. The Tajik government that orchestrated the change had also created the means by which to build the infrastructure required to accommodate the new changes.
Chapter II

The post-World War II period saw the expansion of irrigated agriculture, the further development of industry, and a rise in the level of education in Tajikistan. Like the rest of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan felt the effects of the Party and government reorganisation projects of Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev (1953-64). Especially in 1957 and 1958, Tajikistan's population and economy were manipulated as part of Khrushchev's overly ambitious Virgin Lands project, a campaign to aggressively increase the extent of arable land in the Soviet Union. Under Khrushchev and his successor, Leonid I. Brezhnev (1964-82), Tajikistan's borders were periodically redrawn as districts and provinces were recombined, abolished, and restored, while small amounts of territory were acquired from or ceded to neighbouring republics.

During the Soviet period, the only Tajikistani politician to become important outside his region was Babajan Ghafurov (1908-77), a Tajik who became prominent as the Stalinist first secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan in the late 1940s. After Stalin's death in 1953, Ghafurov, a historian by training, established himself as a prominent Asian scholar and magazine editor, injecting notes of Tajik nationalism into some of his historical writings. His most famous book is 'Tajikan'.

Figure 2: Statue of Babajan Ghafurov, installed outside the Academy of Sciences building, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
The fate of Ghafurov's successors illustrates important trends in the politics of Soviet Central Asia in the second half of the twentieth century. The next first secretary, Tursunbai Uljabayev (1956-61), was ousted amid accusations that he had falsified reports to exaggerate the success of cotton production in the republic (charges also levelled in the 1980s against Uzbekistan's leadership); apparently the Central government also objected to Uljabayev's preferential appointments of his cronies from Leninabad Province to party positions. Uljabaev's replacement as first secretary, Jabbor Rasulov, was a veteran of the prestigious agricultural bureaucracy of the republic. Like first secretaries in the other Central Asian republics, Rasulov benefited from Brezhnev's policy of "stability of cadres" and remained in office until Brezhnev's death in 1982.

Rasulov's successor, Rahmon Nabiyev, was a man of the Brezhnevite political school, who, like his predecessor, had spent much of his career in the agricultural bureaucracy. Nabiyev held office until ousted in 1985 as Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev (1985-91) removed the republic's old-guard party leaders. Nabiyev's 1991 installation as President of independent Tajikistan exacerbated the political tensions in the republic and was an important step toward the civil war that broke out in 1992.

All the post-Stalin party First Secretaries came from Leninabad, in keeping with a broader phenomenon of Tajikistani politics from the post-war period to the collapse of the Soviet Union--the linkage between regional cliques, especially from Leninabad Province, and political power. Although certain cliques from Leninabad were dominant, they allowed allies from other provinces a lesser share of power. As the conflict in the early1990s showed, supporters of opposing camps could be found in all the country's provinces.

The forces of fragmentation in the Soviet Union eventually affected Tajikistan, whose government strongly supported continued unity. Bowing to Tajik nationalism, Tajikistan's Supreme Soviet adopted a declaration of sovereignty in August 1990, but in March 1991, the people of Tajikistan voted overwhelmingly for preservation of the union in a national referendum. That August the Moscow coup against the Gorbachev government brought mass demonstrations by opposition groups in Dushanbe, forcing the resignation of President Kahar
Mahkamov. Nabiye assumed the position of acting president. The following month, the Supreme Soviet proclaimed Tajikistan an independent state, following the examples of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. In November, Nabiye was elected president of the new republic, and in December, representatives of Tajikistan signed the agreement forming the Commonwealth of Independent States to succeed the Soviet Union.

Anti-government demonstrations began in Dushanbe in March 1992. In April 1992, tensions mounted as pro-government, groups opposing the reforms staged counter-demonstrations. By May, small armed clashes had occurred, causing Nabiye to break off negotiations with the reformist demonstrators and go into hiding. After eight anti-government demonstrators were killed in Dushanbe, the commander of the Russian garrison brokered a compromise agreement creating a coalition government in which one-third of the cabinet positions would go to members of the opposition. The collapse of that government heralded the outbreak of a civil war that plagued Tajikistan for the next five years.

ERA OF INDEPENDENCE (1991-2009)

Tajikistan became an independent country on 9th September 1991. In 1992, the growing discontent among its population, mainly Muslims, against the Communist rule erupted into a bloody civil war in the south. The war, which resulted in 40,000 casualties, over 50,000 refugees, and 500,000 displaced people, ended after the UN intervened and after the Opposition members were allowed to participate in the governance of the republic. Today, Tajikistan is on the way to a hard won peace brokered by the United Nations in 1997, which brought an end to hostilities and began the process of reconstruction. Scant attention has been paid to how the country overcame insurmountable divisions between the Government and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) and laid the foundations of political pluralism. Tajikistan deserves acclaim for its little known achievements in containing internal conflict and building bridges with its neighbours in a fairly unstable part of the world.
Chapter II

Civil War in Tajikistan

Soon after gaining independence from Soviet Union, tensions began which further increased in the spring of 1992 after opposition members took to the streets in demonstrations against the 1991 presidential election. President Rahmon Nabiyev and Speaker of the Supreme Soviet Safarali Kenjayev orchestrated the dispersal of weapons to pro-government militias while the Opposition got help from their Tajik brethren in Afghanistan. Fighting broke out in May 1992 between old guard supporters of the government, backed by Moscow, and a loosely organized opposition composed of disenfranchised groups from the regions Gharm and Gorno-Badakhshan, democratic liberal reformists, and Islamists. With the aid of the Russian military and Uzbekistan, pro-government forces routed the opposition in early and late 1992. Finally Nabiyev resigned his presidency on 7 September 1992. In December 1992 a new government was formed under the leadership of Emomali Rahmonov, representing a shift in power from the old power based in Leninabad to the militias from Kulyab, from which region Rahmonov came.

The height of hostilities occurred between 1992 and 1993 and pitted Kulyabi militias against an array of groups, including militants from the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) and ethnic minority of Pamiris from the Gorno-Badakhshan. In large part due to the foreign support they received, the Kulyabi militias were able to soundly defeat opposition forces and went on what has been described by Human Rights Watch as an ethnic cleansing campaign against Pamiris and Gharmis. The campaign was concentrated in areas south of the capital and included the murder of prominent individuals, mass killings, burning of villages, and the expulsion of the Pamiri and Gharmi population into Afghanistan. The violence was particularly concentrated in Qurghanteppa, the powerbase of the IRP and home to many Gharmis.

The civil war ended with the signing of ‘General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan’ and the ‘Moscow Protocol’ on 27 June 1997 in Moscow, Russia, between President Imamoli Rahmonov, UTO leader Said Abdullah Nuri, and Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General Gerd Merrem. According to this agreement, the government of Imamoli Rahmoniv made a commitment to
give 30% government posts to the opposition parties and prevents the Parliamentary election. The Islamic Movement of Tajikistan having a claim on 14 ministerial posts acquired 11 of them, including the post of the Deputy Prime Minister. Haji Akbar Turjanzadeh, second leader of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan, who is considered a spiritual person assumed this post.

CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION

Tajikistan has the Presidential form of government. A bicameral parliament consisting of a 63-seat lower house, the Council of Representatives, Majlis i Nomaindegan and a 34-seat upper chamber, Mojlis i Oli. There is the universal adult suffrage over the age of 18.

Imomali Consolidates his Position

The President, Imomali Rahmon (formerly Rahmonov), continues to consolidate his rule, following his overwhelming victory in the presidential election in November 2006. The regime has restricted opposition activities usually through bureaucratic methods, and personnel changes following the 2006 presidential election represent the culmination of a process by which former UTO members have been gradually excluded from government. The presence in government of officials from the President's home region of Kulyab, meanwhile, has increased. This risks increasing regional tensions one of the main causes of the civil war.

Imomali Rahmon, who has been president since 1994, undoubtedly commands a degree of genuine popularity, because many Tajiks credit him with restoring stability after the civil war. Moreover, Tajikistan's population is generally unwilling to risk undermining the status quo, wary of a returning to instability. Nevertheless, open public criticism over social and economic problems such as energy shortages is increasing, and is often focused on corruption and mismanagement, although such grievances lack an outlet. People generally start become nostalgic, they often say the Soviet period was good, there was no economic problem, electricity was in abundance, salaries of the employees were sufficient.
Pressure on Opposition Continues

The real opposition parties have been facing difficulties. In April 2007 the Ministry of Justice announced that from the Supreme Court it was seeking a six-month suspension of the opposition Social Democratic Party (SDP), on the grounds that it had failed to submit its obligatory annual report. The SDP has become something of an irritant to the authorities: the party boycotted the November 2006 presidential election, and its leader, Rahmatullo Zoirov, claimed that Mr Rahmon's candidacy was illegal, in that he had already exceeded his term limit. However, the justice ministry swiftly withdrew its suit against the party, possibly owing to a combination of international criticism and a weak case.

In May 2007 a district court in Dushanbe, the capital, recognised the branch of the Democratic Party (DP) headed by Masud Sobirov as the legitimate DP. The party had earlier split—a development widely considered to have been engineered by the regime, since Mr Sobirov has refused to criticise the government. The court's decision confirms an original decision that was made in April 2007 and appealed against by the other wing of the party, and, in effect, denies registration to the original DP, once Tajikistan's most popular opposition party.

President approves a restrictive law

President Rahmon gave final approval to a new restrictive Law on Public Associations on May 14th 2007. Many consider the law to be a threat to free speech and a possible tool for the government to silence criticism. An earlier draft of the legislation, which was approved by parliament in February, attracted strong criticism, including from the OSCE. One positive change is that international or foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will not have to reregister with the authorities; however, local NGOs must do so, and will face a host of other restrictions as well. Muhiddin Kabiri, the leader of the IRP, said in May that the law would worsen the state of civil society, and he gave credit to the international community for its partial success in protecting the interests of international NGOs, whereas local NGOs had remained mostly passive during the passage of the legislation.
Human Rights

On May 26th 2009 President Rahmon appointed Zarif Alizoda to the post of the human rights ombudsman, near about an year after the passage of the law for the setting up of the office. Although most observers have welcomed the appointment of Mr Alizoda, some, including the head of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Rahmatillo Zoyirov, have expressed scepticism about his independence, and questioned his political will to promote human rights, because he is considered to be close with the Establishment.

A further sign of the government's half-measures with regard to human rights is that, despite the requirement that the state must provide the budget for the office of the ombudsman, the 2009 budget has no expenditure allocated for this purpose. Mr Alizoda has already been forced to appeal to international donors for financial support.

Economic Situation

Tajikistan was the fastest growing republic during the 1980s. Tajiks have the highest birth rate (32.78 births/1,000 population as per 2003 estimates) of all the Central Asian republics. The Tajik proportion of the republics’ population grew by more than 3 percentage points between 1979 and 1989. It is one of the poorest countries of the region where according to an estimate 60% population lives below poverty line (Twaing 1993: 163-169). Tajikistan has the lowest per-Capita GDP among the 15 former Soviet Republics. Only about 8% to 10% of the land area is arable and cotton is the most important crop. Mineral resources, varied but limited in amount, include silver, gold, uranium, and tungsten. Industry consists only of a large aluminium plant, hydropower facilities, and small obsolete factories mostly in light industry and food processing. Tajikistan has one of the highest rates of literacy in Asia at 99.4%.

The civil war (1992-97) severely damaged the already weak economic infrastructure and caused a sharp decline in industrial and agricultural production. In 2007, about 53 percent of the population was living below the poverty line of US$41 per month, and 17 percent were below the extreme poverty line of US$26 per month (World Bank: Online
Tajikistan has experienced steady economic growth since 1997. Tajikistan's economic situation, however, remains fragile due to uneven structural reforms, and the external debt burden. The recession has added the woes since a large number of Tajik immigrants work in Russia and send remittances to their home, which constitutes a sizeable part of the economy.

**Somoni, the new currency**

Recently Government of Tajikistan has introduced a new currency, *Somoni* to replace the Tajik rouble (TR). One US$ being equivalent to about 4 *somonis*. They have named their currency after the first native dynasty of Samanids who ruled the region in the 10th century A.D.

**Somoni stabilises against the US dollar**

The national currency, the *somoni*, has shown the signs of stabilisation against the US dollar in nominal terms since January 2007. The stabilisation is partly the result of a slight weakening of the US dollar. US$, Euro etc. can be exchanged freely.

**GDP**

According to the State Committee on Statistics, real GDP growth slowed to 3.5% year on year in the first quarter of 2009, compared with 10% growth in the final quarter of 2008. Despite recession, the continued growth of the Tajik economy was primarily the result of an increase of 8.3% in agricultural food production, and a 4.5% rise in the services sector.

**Agriculture**

Cultivation in Tajikistan is difficult, more than one half of the country is above 3000 meters, but it is an important sector of the economy, employing near about 45 percent of the total work force. Agriculture is mechanized in Tajikistan's and its agribusiness has contributed immensely to the republic's economic recovery after the fall of the Soviet Union. Rivers, taking source in the Turkistan, Zarafshan, and Hissar Alai ranges, create favourable ground for agriculture, especially cotton; it is the most important agriculture produce of Tajikistan, half of this comes from the southern Kulyab and Qurghanteppa regions. Other
agricultural products are grain, fruits, grapes, vegetables, as well as rearing of cattle, are also practiced on a wider scale.

Industry

Tajikistan is rich with mineral deposits, as of now there are more than 400 deposits which have identified, 100 of which are in use. This country has the largest reserves of coal in Central Asia estimated to be four billion tonnes (Tajikistan in Figures: 2008). Discoveries of zinc, lead, bismuth, molybdenum, and tungsten as well gas and petroleum have also been made.

After gaining independence there was a serious setback to the industries in Tajikistan. Most of the people have had no specialised skills; most specialists were from the Russian-speaking groups and left this country after its independence. This resulted in the closing of most factories. But the end of the civil war, economy is stabilised and industries are back on track.

Major Industries

After the damming of the Vakhsh River in the 1930s, Tajikistan became the third largest producer of hydroelectric power in the world. The dams also enhanced agricultural production through irrigation and provided energy for industries. The aluminium-processing plant at Regar has the largest smelter in the world. Other industries include mining, chemicals, metal processing, and building materials. All industries are constrained by outmoded equipment, low world prices, emigration of the skilled labour force, and civil war. But in recent times there has been reverse trend and economy in Tajikistan is gradually picking up.

Shortage of Electricity

The country's two hydroelectric power stations, Nurek and Kairakum, have been functioning well below capacity in late 2006 and early 2007, owing to lower than usual snow- and rainfall. Nurek, for example, has been generating about 25m kwh per day of electricity instead of the usual 40m kwh per day. Tajikistan has been importing about 5.7m kwh per day of electricity from Uzbekistan and 1.8m kwh per day from the Kyrgyz Republic,
which, given that those countries are also affected by worsening climatic conditions, creates considerable uncertainty over supply. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in energy shortages across the country. Despite huge water resources in the winter there is the shortage of electricity – when it is more required to home heating and hot water supply – because water gets frozen.

As a long-term solution, and to generate revenue from the export of electricity, the government plans to build several large new hydroelectricity plants, at Sangtuda and Rogun. The construction of two hydroelectric plants at Sangtuda is pressing ahead, with Russian and Iranian participation. In addition, China agreed in January 2007 to provide US$400m for the construction of new hydroelectric plants, and Iran is further planning for the investment in two plants.

**Developing the coal reserves**

Tajikistan has 35 known coal deposits, with estimated total reserves of 4bn tonnes. However, annual output is only around 70,000 tonnes. The government is now planning to develop the country's coal reserves. In May 2007 the US's AES, Russia's Unified Energy System (UES), Kazakhstan's KiTaKa and a Chinese machinery company expressed interest in a project to develop the Fan Yaghnob deposit in Sughd province—believed to be the country's largest field—and to construct a coal-fired power station there, at an estimated cost of US$180m. The project will also involve the renovation of coal-fired power stations in Dushanbe and in Yovon, in the south of the country.

**The Banking Sector**

In April 2007 the National Bank of Tajikistan (NBT, the central bank of the country) announced that it intended to open up the banking sector to foreign banks, which will now be able to set up branches in the country, rather than merely purchasing shares in Tajik banks. This represents another important step in the development of the sector. The authorities have succeeded during the past few years in generating a degree of trust in Tajikistan's banks. This has not been easy, as the population had lost much of its meagre capital savings twice: first, in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, because of the devaluation of
the rouble; and, second, in the late 1990s, because of the effects of the Russian financial crisis. However, a sharp fall in inflation since 2001, in conjunction with reforms of the banking sector, led to a rapid rise in banking deposits and money transfers through the system. Since 2002 banking sector assets have grown by 80%, capital by 320%, and deposits by 290%. Total credit to the private sector was US$1.5bn in the first quarter of 2007, up by 32% from the same period a year earlier.

Reforms designed to bolster the sector continue. The capital requirement, which includes charter capital, subordinated debt, and net profit for the previous two years, was increased in 2006, to S150m (US$44m) for the two largest banks (Orien bank and Agro-invest-bank), and to $80m for others. The NBT is currently undertaking a US government-funded project to develop tighter banking regulations, with the aim of meeting the Basel requirements.

Although the entry of foreign competition should further boost the financial sector, some significant problems are likely to constrain the deepening of financial intermediation. As a large segment of the population lives in the countryside and depends on agriculture, micro-loans for small farmers would be a critical element of growth for the financial sector. Given the ongoing problems of agriculture, including the lack of clear ownership of land (which could otherwise be used as collateral), penetration of rural areas by the financial sector has been extremely limited.

New Investments from China

China has invested heavily in Tajikistan, particularly in the infrastructure sector. It has built the road from Dushanbe to Khujand, and at present developing the railway network in Tajikistan. Through the Kulma pass huge quantities of Chinese goods come into Tajikistan which are very much evident in the markets all across the country.

New Investments from Iran

The President of Tajikistan made state visits to Iran in May 2007, mainly in the hope of negotiating investment. Agreements reached on Iranian investment included US$60m in a
car production line in Tajikistan by Iran's Khodro company and US$140m in a cement plant. Iran also agreed to lend Tajikistan US$55m for the construction of a tunnel under the Chormaghzak pass in the south-east of the country. Visits by Iranian energy sector officials to Tajikistan involved discussion of Iranian participation in constructing two hydroelectric plants in northern Tajikistan; Iran is already involved in the construction of the Sangtuda-2 hydroelectric station.

**New Investments from India**

India and Tajikistan are working together on a few projects. India is restored the Aini airfield which had been in disuse after the Soviet period. Companies from India have also helped repairing the Khujand air strip. There is increased co-operation between them in the field of IT, India has established an IT training centre in Dushanbe and provides training to the Tajik professionals. Many Tajik students are also studying in Indian institutions and Government of India provides scholarships to them through various funding agencies.

KEC International Ltd (KEC) and RPG Transmission, the Indian companies, have won the ADB funded contract for the construction and commissioning of the 118 km Regional Power Interconnection line connecting Tajikistan to Afghanistan on a turnkey basis. (See Appendix-4)

**Hydroelectric Power in Tajikistan**

The republic of Tajikistan has an abundance of lakes and rivers, there are more that 940 rivers longer than 10 kilometres, totalling the length of more than 28,500 kilometres. These rivers account for near about 60% of all hydro-resources of Central Asia (Tajikistan in Figures: 2008). Tajikistan has 8th place in the world stocks of hydropower resources, from which only between 10-15% are utilized. Orientation of power supply system in Tajikistan towards hydro resources, which can provide high profitability, has essentially been lacking. First of all, there is an incomplete regulation of river drain, because of this Hydroelectric power station in off seasons and days with high water availability are compelled to work according to natural drain of the river. It leads to seasonal non-uniformity of development of the electric power, reduction of the guaranteed capacity and, as consequence, to mass
switching-off of the electric power in the winter due to freezing of water and to huge dumps of water from water basins in the summer. Winter deficiency of the electric power hinders the economic development in Tajikistan, therefore construction of new Hydro Power Stations and transformation of the electric supply system is in urgent need for the revival of national economy.

Being a new country Tajikistan, it is trying to develop close relationship with neighbours and other countries to achieve economic and political stability. In comparison to relations with China and relations with India, during interactions with the people of Tajikistan, it was clear that they are looking towards India since both of them share long historical and cultural traditions. They want India to be more active in IT Sector, Medicines, Energy generation and other areas of economic development, on the other from Tajikistan India can get the much needed Uranium, which Tajikistan claims to have deposits.