



3rd India-Central Asia Dialogue

For Prelims: International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), Central Asian countries, Chabahar Port, China's Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Financial Action Task Force standards, International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC).

For Mains: Significance of India-Central Asian countries in the restoration of peace in Afghanistan, Support for permanent membership of India in the UN Security Council (UNSC), Relation between Indian and Central Asian countries.

Why in News

Recently, the 3rd meeting of the [India-Central Asia Dialogue](#) was held in New Delhi.

- It is a ministerial-level dialogue between India and the [Central Asian countries](#) namely [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and [Uzbekistan](#).
- India virtually hosted the second meeting of the [India-Central Asia Dialogue in 2020](#).

Key Points

- **International North-South Transport Corridor:**
 - Emphasis on **optimum usage of the [International North-South Transport Corridor \(INSTC\)](#)** as well as [Ashgabat Agreement](#) on International Transport and Transit Corridor to enhance connectivity between India and the Central Asian countries.
 - Stressed on including [Chabahar Port](#) **within the framework of INSTC** and **expressed interest in cooperation** on issues related to the **development and strengthening of regional connectivity** in Central and South Asia.
 - Agreed to **develop the transit and transport potential of their countries**, improve the regional logistics network and promote joint initiatives to create new transport corridors.
 - Agreed to explore the possibility of **establishing joint working groups** to address the **free movements of goods and services** between India and the Central Asian states.
- **Connectivity Projects:**
 - The connectivity initiatives ([China's Belt and Road Initiative](#)) should be based on the principles of transparency, broad participation, local priorities, financial sustainability and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries.
- **Situation of Afghanistan:**
 - Discussed the **current situation in Afghanistan** and its impact on the region, following the [Taliban's occupancy](#).
 - Issues like current humanitarian situation, terrorism, territorial integrity, respect for sovereignty and unity were discussed too.
 - Pushed for concerted action against all terror groups.
 - The Afghanistan's soil must not be used for planning terror attacks, even as they

pledged to provide immediate humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

- Condemned **all forms of terrorism** and opposed “providing safe haven, using terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism, terror financing, arms and drugs trafficking, dissemination of a radical ideology and abuse of cyber space to spread disinformation and incite violence.
- Supported a **peaceful and stable Afghanistan** and emphasised respect for **sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in its internal affairs.**
- Pointed to the importance of [UN Security Council Resolution 2593](#), which “unequivocally demands that Afghan territory not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing terrorist acts and called for concerted action against all terrorist groups”.
- **Counter Terrorism Efforts:**
 - Perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of terror acts must be brought to justice in accordance with principle of “extradite or prosecute”.
 - Called on the world community to implement relevant **UN resolutions**, [global counter-terrorism strategy](#) and [Financial Action Task Force standards](#).
- **Line of Credit:**
 - All the countries are currently discussing the use of a [USD 1 billion line of credit](#) announced by India last year for infrastructure projects in Central Asia.
 - A **line of credit** is a preset borrowing limit that can be tapped into at any time.
 - The borrower can take money out as needed until the limit is reached, and as money is repaid, it can be borrowed again in the case of an open line of credit.
- **Post-pandemic Recovery:**
 - All the countries **stressed the importance of extensive vaccination** and called for **cooperation through sharing of vaccine doses, transfer of technology, development of local production capacities, promotion of supply chains for medical products, and ensuring price transparency.**
- **Restoration of Tourism:**
 - Backed the **gradual restoration of tourism and business** ties between India and the Central Asian countries.
 - The foreign ministers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan welcomed the [mutual recognition of Covid-19 vaccination certificates](#) between India and their countries, while the ministers of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan sought early mutual recognition of certificates.
- **Historical and Cultural Ties:**
 - Need **to build on the historical and cultural ties of their region** with India and highlight the **potential for cooperation** in areas such as connectivity, transport, transit and energy.
- **International Solar Alliance (ISA):**
 - India highlighted the role of ["International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)"](#) initiative in collective, rapid and massive deployment of solar energy for effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.
- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure:**
 - India also underlined the role of ["Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure \(CDRI\)"](#) in promoting disaster resilient infrastructure for reducing economic losses.
- **Permanent membership at UNSC:**
 - Reiterated support of their countries for [permanent membership of India](#) in an expanded and reformed [UN Security Council](#) (UNSC).
 - Welcomed the ongoing [non-permanent tenure of India in the UNSC](#) and its priorities.
- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation:**
 - Appreciated the important role of the [Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation \(ITEC\)](#) Programme in **capacity building and human resource development** of their countries, especially in **Information Technology and Communication Skills** in the **English language.**

India-Central Asia Dialogue



- It is a ministerial-level dialogue between India and the **Central Asian** countries namely **Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**.
 - All five nations became independent states after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, post-**Cold war**.
- All the countries participating in the dialogue, except for Turkmenistan, are also members of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**.
- The dialogue focuses on a number of issues including ways to improve connectivity and stabilise war-ravaged Afghanistan.

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