

G.A. Movkebayeva*, A.M. Sadvakassova

*Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan
(E-mail: gmovkebaewa@mail.ru, aru_01_05@mail.ru)*

Cooperation between India and Central Asia and its importance for the region

The article examines the main aspects of cooperation between India and Central Asian states, their strategic foundations, the main sectoral areas of relations with the region, the dynamics of the development of bilateral and regional relations. Modern relations between countries such as India and the Central Asian region are characterized by dynamic global processes that significantly affect the world order. India has shown an interest in strengthening its diverse relations with the Central Asian region. In this context the authors examined the foreign policy of India on official statements, speeches, comments and joint statements, as well as programs such as “Look East”, “Gujral Doctrine”, “Extended Neighborhood” and “Connect Central Asia” strategies that prove India's growing interest in the region. An analysis was also made of the agreements signed during official high-level visits to the republics of Central Asia and India. Statistical work was carried out on the trade turnover of India with the countries of Central Asia, and their indicators were compared in the form of a table. The article discusses cooperation that covers various areas, such as security, energy, technology, education, transport, and others. Nowadays, relations are developing both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of various organizations in the field of economy and security. An analysis of India's policy in the Central Asian region is made, and the existing risks and benefits of this cooperation are listed.

Keywords: Central Asia, India, geopolitics, security, economic cooperation, One Belt—One Road, threats, Extended neighborhood, “Connect Central Asia”, strategic interests, soft power.

Introduction

This article is concerned with the heart of Eurasia, a vast area rich with natural resources and geopolitically important, connecting growing powers such as Russia, China and India with five Central Asian countries. The role of Russia and China for Central Asia is undoubtedly high. However, India's tendency of economic growth is worth noticing and the country endeavors to play a greater role in the Central Asian region. The cooperation between India and the Central Asian states is to be widely considered herein. It is multidimensional and covers different aspects of ways of coordination. The article will consider current economic and trade relations, transport links of the states, roles of regional organizations in development of the cooperation, benefits and problems of the cooperation as well as it will try to answer to the question why it is important for the region to be in good relationship with a new emerging power of India.

The links between India and Central Asia have deep historical roots. The Great Silk Road linked India and Central Asia for hundreds of years. Trade and cultural ties had a big impact on both Central and South Asia. With the help of these connections, Central Asia became the place of transmission of India's medical and scientific knowledge (also including our system of counting, wrongly denominated in the West as Arabic) between India, the Middle East and Europe. Thus, it is not by chance that even in current days pharmaceuticals are one of India's largest exports to the Central Asian region [2: 7].

Methodology and research methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was the work of domestic and foreign political scientists, international experts, economists, exploring the issue of cooperation between India and Central Asia, developing mutual beneficial relations and its importance for the region of Central Asia.

The issues of cooperation between India and Central Asia in various spheres are considered in the works of P. Stobdan, G. Kumar, N.R. Khan, A. Wani, S. Aveek, M. Ahmar, N.B. Bhatia, M. Konorovsky, I. Yakubov, V.I. Baronov, G.M. Kostiumina, E.U. Baidarov etc.

To verify the development prospects of the cooperation between India and Central Asia and forecast the certain aspects of its further development the methods of system analysis, structural and functional analysis, content-analysis and event-analysis, the method of expert assessment and prognostic method were used.

*Corresponding author's e-mail: gmovkebaewa@mail.ru (G.A. Movkebayeva).

Discussion

Geopolitics. India places two principal spheres of interest in regard to Central Asia: one is resources of the region and the second is a gateway to Eurasia. Therefore, the Central Asian region is a connecting way for India's strategic purposes to various geographical regions. At this point, India's interests are in potential competition with Russian and especially Chinese impact on the region, particularly regarding the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China. Whereas Central Asia becomes a significant part of BRI, India has brought its reservations about the project particularly after the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a rival to BRI that passes through Kashmir, administered by Pakistan. Taking this into account, India has refused to be part of BRI, and competition from China is an important challenge for India in the Central Asian region [1]. Therefore, India has to come up with its own connectivity projects to develop economic and strategic cooperation with Central Asia.

The collapse of the USSR in the 1990s laid the foundation for the formation of the modern geopolitical configuration in the world. Economic reforms that occurred during this period in India's domestic policy allowed it to formulate a new geostrategic concept of "Extended neighborhood". This concept was based on historical and cultural traditions, considering the Central Asian region as a neighboring region and natural interaction partner was intended to determine the attitude of India to the newly independent states of Central Asia.

Currently the significance of the Central Asian countries for India is not only in the civilizational, cultural and historical aspect. More and more attention is paid to the geopolitical and economic context of cooperation.

Even if there is no official foreign policy concept, it is not hard to define India's multi vector foreign policy. With an aim of strengthening its position in the region and to better indicate its intentions the government of the country from time to time takes separate doctrines on specific issues that are announced without special disclosure of their essence. Therefore the foreign policy course of the country can be judged by official statements, speeches, comments and joint statements, as well as slogans such as "Look East", "Gujral Doctrine", "Extended Neighborhood" and "Connect Central Asia" [3] strategies.

Officially conceptual India's program towards the countries of Central Asia — "Connect Central Asia Policy" was announced in June 2012 in Bishkek by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India Edappakat Ahamed during the "First India-Central Asia Dialogue". The main message of this program is that India considers Central Asia through the prism of politics, which involves its proactive participation in the affairs of the region in the political, economic sphere, in the field of public exchanges and communications both individually with each country in the region, and collectively [3].

For India, the development of relations with the countries of Central Asia is associated with the need of making decisions in its own political, strategic, economic tasks such as peace and stability in the "Expanded neighborhood"; joint fight against terrorism and solving the problem of Afghanistan; strengthening its energy security, development of trade and economic ties. The geostrategic concept of "Extended Neighborhood" is based on historical and cultural traditions and considers the Central Asian region as a neighboring region and a partner for interaction.

In turn, understanding the need for the Central Asian countries to develop economic and human potential, transport infrastructure, and deal with radical currents, India thereby has defined its niche at the intersection of mutually beneficial interests that resulted in the occurrence of the program "Connect Central Asia Policy".

The relationship with the outside world of the new government of India is mainly determined by the "6 highest priorities", adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India in May 2014. It includes states such as the USA, China, Japan, Russia, SAARC and Central Asia [4]. From this statement we see the significant role of the Central Asian states that are seen as a priority.

Security interests. India's security is closely tied to the instability in the region between Afghanistan and Pakistan. India's role in Afghanistan is an asset not solely in the country itself but among Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbors. In September, 2019, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander, General Stanley McChrystal, stated in a leaked assessment that Indian policy in Afghanistan is immensely beneficial for the Afghan people. Even if this statement receives a hostile response from Islamabad, it is admitted with approval in all the Central Asian capitals.

Threats to the security emerging in the neighborhood concern India. The dangers coming from non-traditional threats may create serious obstacles both to the coordination of India and the states of Central

Asia and to the democratic regime and open societies. Such powers are well embedded in the shared neighborhood, the Afghan-Pakistan borderlands. The barbaric act of murdering innocent people at Mumbai (2008) reveals the risk and the attackers' barbarism. By forming Joint Working Groups on counterterrorism India has formalized its security relations and has concluded agreements for defense cooperation with some of the states of Central Asia. The compatibility of India-Kazakhstan security interests was evident when the two nations signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership in 2009. Unlike in the past, when it was reactive, the policy of India regarding Central Asia is becoming energized and proactive. The problem of peace and stability in Afghanistan is critical for the region. Critical issues such as drug trafficking, spread of small arms, the fate of Afghan refugees, the settlement of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, the arms culture, and the moderate level of economic activity all have an impact on the security and stability of Afghanistan.

The situation in the border areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan is extremely precarious. The rugged mountains in eastern Tajikistan and the proximity of that area to the borderlands of Afghanistan and Pakistan make it a great hiding place for extremists and terrorist. Such a prospect would only lead to the weakness of Tajikistan and, by extension, of the Fergana Valley, the center of Central Asia. It also means relocation of terrorist and extremist bases from the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan to Central Asia. Ethnic tensions, unsettled boundaries the Fergana Valley, illegal migration, and bad economic conditions could escalate into a conflagration, undermining the desire to create a democratic, modern, and secular political system.

India also demonstrated its interest in strengthening the diverse relations during a six-day integrated tour of Central Asia by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in July 2015 covering all five states — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. The first such visits by an Indian head of government to the region proved not only a symbolic feat for Indian diplomacy but also a smart strategic move that paved the way for overcoming predicaments that have so far stymied India's outreach to an important region lying in its strategic vicinity [6]. Clearly, this has marked the mutual desire of India and the Central Asian states to strengthen their bilateral and trilateral arrangements.

Political cooperation between India and Central Asian countries has developed much since the creation of diplomatic relations between them. High level visits of officials have laid solid foundation for improvement of cooperation in different spheres and for conclusion of many important documents.

In 2019, Delhi initiated the creation of a new format of dialogue with the countries of the Central Asian region: the Council of Foreign Ministers of the countries participating in the Central Asia-India Dialogue. On January 12–13, the first meeting of the new format was held in the city of Samarkand (Republic of Uzbekistan) [7]. During this event the issues of strengthening economic and humanitarian contacts between the states of Central Asia and India as well as the implementation of regional projects with the participation of Afghanistan were discussed.

Table 1

India–Central Asian Republics High-Level Official Visits and Agreements Consequently Signed [13]

1	Who visited 2	Country 3	Agreements 4	Year 5
1	Prime Minister of India	Kazakhstan	Defence and military technology Railways Uranium supply to India Sports Transfer of sentenced prisoners	2015
2	Prime Minister of India	Uzbekistan	Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism Uranium supply to India Uzbekistan-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism	2015
3	Prime Minister of India	Kyrgyzstan	Agreement on Defense Cooperation MoU and Cooperation in the field of elections Culture	2015
4	Prime Minister of India	Turkmenistan	MoU on Supply of Chemical Products Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology MoU on Cooperation in the field of Tourism Defense agreement	2015

Continuation of table 1

1	2	3	4	5
5	Prime Minister of India	Tajikistan	Exchange of Note Verbale (NV) on setting up of computer labs in 37 schools in Tajikistan	2015
6	President of India	Tajikistan	MoU on "Cooperation on Peaceful Use of Space Technology for Development" MoU for Renewable Energy Cooperation	2018
7	External Affairs Minister of India	Uzbekistan	Inauguration of India-Central Asia Dialogue	2019
8	President of Tajikistan	India	Agreement to prevent financing of terrorism and money laundering	2016
9	President of Kyrgyzstan	India	MoU for youth exchange programmes MoU on agriculture and food security	2016
10	President of Uzbekistan	India	MoUs on Tourism, Agriculture & Allied Sectors, Health & Medical Sciences, Pharmaceutical Industry, Science & Technology and Innovation, Military Education	2018
11	President of Uzbekistan	India	Agreement on importing uranium from Uzbekistan MoU on cooperation between Gujarat and Andaman region of Uzbekistan	2019
12	Defence Minister of India	Uzbekistan	Military medicine Military education	2019
13	Internal Affairs Minister of Uzbekistan	India	Security cooperation Counterterrorism Human Trafficking	2019

Trade and economic relations between the states are growing. Economy is the main driving factor in India's interests towards Central Asia. India is in a good position to assist the Central Asian states to develop in the spheres of information technology, science and technology, knowledge industries and soft power. Conversely, Central Asia's rich energy resources can help satisfy the energy needs of India. The leader among the Central Asia states in trade is Kazakhstan, its trade with India counts more than \$1 billion [8]. The rest of the states of the Central Asian region are significantly lagging behind, the numbers vary from tens of millions of dollars in the case of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to almost 300 million dollars in the case of Uzbekistan. These numbers are considerably lower than the trade indicators with China or Russia, or even than intra regional trade between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

From 2015 India has invested in different projects. One of them is the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This project made substantial progress after India joined the Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under the cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention). The cargo transported through INSTC has increased to 287,000 tonnes in 2018 from 27,000 tonnes in 2017, an increase of 963 %. Trade figures of the first two months of 2019 suggest that the volume of cargo will be 600,000 tonnes in the year [9]. In February 2019 Kazakhstan's ambassador to India, Bulat Sarsenbayev, said, "Our trade is growing but the potential is much more. Chabahar and Bandar Abbas are part of one project in reality. Chabahar will be completed, they (Kazakhstan) will construct a railway from Chabahar to the Iranian railway network, it will later go to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan" [10]. The opening of Chabahar port and agreements signed between Central Asian countries and India showed positive results in trade.

Table 2

Trade turnover of India with Central Asian Countries, 2015–2016 to 2019–2020
(value in millions of US Dollars) (Source by: Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce (accessed on 17 December, 2020) [11])

Country	2016–17		2017–18		2018–19		2019–20	
	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kyrgyzstan	1.48	30.44	30.94	28.59	2.59	30.02	1.33	29.13
Tajikistan	21.82	20.44	50.29	23.94	4.24	22.28	0.29	23.50
Turkmenistan	21.32	57.60	26.15	54.31	20.63	45.64	3.99	33.90

Continuation of table 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Uzbekistan	46.54	108.97	101.67	132.72	126.73	201.41	66.85	180.21
Kazakhstan	521.29	120.88	907.43	125.37	708.78	143.13	2,255.7	202.59
Total	612.45	338.33	1116.49	364.93	862.97	442.49	2328.16	469.33

India's desire to provide grants and loans for the Central Asian states shows India's intentions and rising capabilities. Specifically a \$1 billion soft loan for infrastructure development was proposed to Uzbekistan. Agreement on provision of credit line in the amount of \$200 million to Uzbekistan came into force in January 2019 [12].

“New Central Asia” [13] of five Central Asian states after its political changes sees India as a rapidly growing economy, a potential investor and a increasingly influential actor in the region, as shown by the new format of the India-Central Asia ministerial dialogue. The first meeting of the ministerial dialogue took place in Samarkand in January 2019. The second ministerial meeting was initially supposed to take place in New Delhi on October 28, 2020. But, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown restrictions, the meeting was held online [14]. This dialogue mechanism has given a boost to the India-Central Asia strategic partnership.

Transport is another main aspect of cooperation between India and the Central Asian states. A number of transport corridors connecting India with Central Asia will be given below. Currently, India is interested in an access to Afghanistan and Central Asia, and is actively developing a transport project.

The Agreement on the Establishment of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) was first signed by Russia, India and Iran on May 16, 2002. Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Belarus are other members of the Agreement who signed later. This agreement is aimed at the provision of goods from the ports of India to the port Bender Abbas of Iran which is in the Persian Gulf, then from the Caspian port of Bender-i-Azali to Astrakhan and finally with Russian railways to the city of St. Petersburg. Mumbai and Chabahar were chosen as the main ports in India and Iran respectively.

The lifting of international sanctions from Iran in 2016 rapidly increased the realization of this project. The abovementioned international transport corridor from Mumbai to St. Petersburg allowed to decrease the time of cargo delivery from 45 to 25 days [15].

Proposing an idea alternative to the Chinese “One Belt and One Road” project India is accelerating the development of its ground-based rail and road network to ASAN countries. At this point, it is worth mentioning that the network of ground-based roads from Southeast Asia to India could get a natural extension through the territory of Pakistan and Afghanistan and further to Central Asia. The same ideas also exist in rehabilitation projects for pre-existing Afghanistan-Pakistan-India-Bangladesh-Myanmar and Pakistan-India-Nepal transport routes.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is the main tool of the deepened cooperation between Central Asia and India. The observer status was given to India in 2005. In 2015, there was a decision about the start of the joining process of India and Pakistan to the SCO. In 2016, at the SCO summit held in Tashkent, both states signed commitment memorandum with an aim of achieving the status of a SCO member state. And later in 2017, they received the status of full members of SCO.

It seems that as it became a full member of the SCO, India had more chances to be heard. According to some publications, India's voice has become louder, its interests and positions are clearer. India sometimes expresses a particular opinion, refusing to support as well as positions that are not in its interests, while at the same time not being to provide an alternative vision.

Finally, SCO is also influenced by the inconsistencies between India and China. Specifically, all states, excepting India, endorsed the PRC's “Belt and Road” initiative, following the results of the Qingdao summit in 2018 [16]. Refusing to endorse China's project, India informed that this initiative will not compromise on its basic interests [17].

Energy cooperation. Regarding the energy cooperation between India and Central Asia both are important participants in the energy market. Central Asia's energy resources are highly demanded in the markets of India. However, as of now, cooperation is carried out to a greater extent on the supply of uranium from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to India.

To that point, on July 2015, during the official visit of the India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Kazakhstan, a major contract for a renewed long-term supply of 5,000 metric tonnes (MT) of uranium to India was signed. The contract was achieved between Kazakh uranium mining company KazAtomProm and In-

dia's Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). It was the most significant takeaway of the Prime Minister's visit [18].

During his visit to Uzbekistan, Modi sought to operationalize the deal for supplying 2,000 MT of uranium signed between the two countries in 2014. The contract with Uzbekistan is highly significant as Tashkent has put the least number of riders allowing the access to its nuclear material.

India's focus on developing relations with Central Asian countries is directly related to solving the problem of the country's energy security. The largest oil and gas corporation in India, ONGC, has been increasingly investing Kazakhstan's oil fields over the past decade [19].

One of the largest energy projects to link Central and South Asia is the TAPI project, with the length of 1680 km. Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India signed an intergovernmental agreement in 2010. Turkmenistan plans to export 33 billion cubic meters of gas per year, 14 billion (42 %) of which will be delivered to Pakistan and India, 5.11 billion (16 %) to Afghanistan, which will also be capable to receive payment for transit through its territory approximately in the amount of 400 million US dollars every year. The cost of this project is estimated in \$ 7.5 billion [20].

It is hoped that TAPI will enable the neighboring states, namely Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, to be jointly seen as a "peace pipeline" and also to serve as a great example for development of other joint projects. However, some hindering factors to the project's realization, such as security issues, geopolitical factors and economic challenges, still put doubt on its implementation or at minimum in the planned period.

Another one is the CASA-1000 project, currently at the construction stage, will provide infrastructure to export summer excess electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan through Afghanistan. In winter months the facilities will provide open access to other interested countries. In the long term India can connect to the system as buyer of power. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan demonstrate their willingness to sell electricity.

The CASA-1000 project approved the P145054 Project on March 27, 2014 with the total project cost \$997.00 million. The project's closing date is March 23, 2023. It covers the themes of Private Sector Development, Urban and Rural Development, Environment and Natural Resource Management [21].

Conclusion

India's interests in Central Asia are very different from the interests of two big powers neighboring the region — China and Russia. Being authoritarian states, both China and Russia have an intention to develop their policies regarding Central Asia as part of big initiatives and widely promoted programs. Develop the West and Strike Hard Maximum Pressure campaigns of China and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) of Russia and its common market, the Eurasian Economic Union that consists of five members, play a great role in defining the role of Russia in the Central Asian region. To the contrast, as a democratic state, India has no intention to take up or develop such unions based on central administration. Instead, India proposes to develop the projects with more democratic pursuance of supporting private sector development, and other activities in the pursuit of economic raise of the states.

One of the main points considered in this article is the importance of India for Central Asia. There are several advantages of the cooperation between Central Asia and India. Firstly, it is the proximity of India to the Central Asia. To compare, it takes eight hours by air from Astana to Beijing, and it is about five hours from Dushanbe to Moscow. Conversely, it takes only two hours from Delhi to Bishkek by plane. honeymooners from India already fly from Amritsar to the shores of Issyk-Kul.

Secondly, trade, education sphere, healthcare, technology, and transport play a greater role in Indian policy than other activities such as anti-terrorism or use of natural resources of Central Asia which have become important for some other states. In other words, India tries to connect its policy more with ordinary people in Central Asia and Afghanistan, not only with official members of the government.

Thirdly, India does not pose any security, economic or demographic threat to the region. Democratically developed Indian government does not intend to pose any threat to the land and people of Central Asia, rather it endeavors to build friendly relations with the region as well as to have a positive impact on further development of democratic ties in the region.

Fourthly, the level of knowledge of India about Central Asia and its cultural literacy regarding the region far outweigh that of other nations', including Russia, Europe, or America. Indian journals issued in Delhi, Calcutta, Srinagar and Chandigarh mention Central Asia more accurately than many other states. It is solid that the knowledge of India about the region is still growing.

Thus, the defining mechanisms for promoting Indian geopolitical projects in Central Asia are the tools of “soft power”, the use of which is determined by the regional and international situation, but so far the Republic of India has not shown itself to be a strong player in the region due to the serious competition with such players as Russia and China.

Nevertheless, as the analysis of India’s policy in the Central Asian region has shown above, the development of cooperation in various areas will greatly contribute to deepening cooperation between the Republic of India and the countries of Central Asia through the expansion of mutual trade and investment, joint projects in various fields, especially in the field of software development, provision and information technology, pharmaceuticals, strengthening stability and security in the region in the context of the joint fight against terrorism and religious extremism.

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Г.А. Мовкебаева, А.М. Садвакасова

Үндістан мен Орталық Азия арасындағы ынтымақтастық және оның аймақ үшін маңызы

Мақалада Үндістан мен Орталық Азия елдері арасындағы ынтымақтастықтың негізгі аспектілері қарастырылды, олардың стратегиялық негіздері, қарым-қатынастың негізгі салалық бағыттары, екіжақты және аймақтық қатынастардың даму серпіні зерттелген. Мемлекеттер арасындағы, сондай-ақ Үндістан мен Орталық Азия өңірі сияқты елдер арасындағы қазіргі заманғы халықаралық қатынастар әлемдік тәртіпке елеулі әсер ететін серпінді жаһандық процестермен сипатталды. Үндістан Орталық Азия өңірімен түрлі қатынастарды нығайтуға қызығушылық танытқан. Осы тұрғыда авторлар Үндістанның сыртқы саяси бағытын ресми мәлімдемелер, сөз сөйлеулер, түсініктемелер және бірлескен мәлімдемелер, сондай-ақ «Шығысқа көзқарас», «Гуджрал доктринасы», «кеңейтілген көршілік» және «Орталық Азиямен байланыс» сияқты бағдарламалар бойынша қарастырған. Сонымен қатар, Орталық Азия және Үндістан республикаларының жоғары деңгейдегі ресми сапарлары барысында қол қойылған келісімдерге талдау жасалған. Үндістанның Орталық Азия елдерімен тауар айналымына қатысты статистикалық жұмыс жүргізілген, олардың көрсеткіштері кесте түрінде салыстырылған. Авторлар қауіпсіздік, энергетика, технология, білім беру, көлік және т.б. сияқты әртүрлі салаларды қамтитын ынтымақтастықты зерттеген. Қазіргі уақытта ол екіжақты негізде де, экономика және қауіпсіздік саласындағы әртүрлі ұйымдар аясында да дамуда. Сонымен қатар, Үндістанның Орталық Азия өңіріндегі саясатына талдау жасалған, осы ынтымақтастықтың орын алған тәуекелдері мен артықшылықтары атап өтілген.

Кілт сөздер: Орталық Азия, Үндістан, геосаясат, қауіпсіздік, экономикалық ынтымақтастық, «Бір белдеу — бір жол», қауіп-қатер, кеңейтілген көршілік, Орталық Азиямен байланыс, стратегиялық мүдделер, жұмсақ күш.

Г.А. Мовкебаева, А.М. Садвакасова

Сотрудничество между Индией и Центральной Азией и его значение для региона

В статье рассмотрены основные аспекты сотрудничества между Индией и странами Центральной Азии, их стратегические основы, главные отраслевые направления отношений с регионом, динамика развития двусторонних и региональных отношений. Современные международные связи между государствами, а также между такими странами, как Индия и регион Центральной Азии, характеризуются динамичными глобальными процессами, которые существенно влияют на мировой порядок. Индия проявила заинтересованность в укреплении разнообразных отношений с Центрально-Азиатским регионом. В этом контексте авторами был изучен внешнеполитический курс Индии по официальным заявлениям, выступлениям, комментариям и совместным заявлениям, а также по таким программам, как «Взгляд на Восток», «Доктрина Гуджрала», «Расширенное соседство» и «Связь с Центральной Азией», которые доказывают растущий интерес Индии к региону. Кроме того, проделан анализ подписанных соглашений в ходе официальных визитов на высоком уровне республик Центральной Азии и Индии. Проведена статистическая работа касательно товарооборота Индии со странами Центральной Азии, сопоставлены их показатели и приведены в виде таблиц. Авторы проанализировали вопросы сотрудничества, которые охватывают различные области, такие как безопасность, энергетика, технологии, образование, транспорт и др. В настоящий момент сотрудничество развивается как на двусторонней основе, так и в рамках различных организаций в области экономики и безопасности. Кроме того, изучена политика Индии в Центрально-Азиатском регионе, перечислены существующие риски и преимущества данного сотрудничества.

Ключевые слова: Центральная Азия, Индия, геополитика, безопасность, экономическое сотрудничество, «Один пояс — Один путь», угрозы, расширенное соседство, связь с Центральной Азией, стратегические интересы, мягкая сила.

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