

**India's Central Asia Policy since 2001:
A case study of India-Kazakhstan Relations**

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God is Great

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Dedicated in the loving Memory of my Grand Parents

Lt. Hemanta Kumar Biswas & Lt. Mina Biswas

Lt. Ashrumukul Chowdhury & Lt. Shefali Chowdhury

&

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Preface

Great Game have been one of the most interesting activities that occurred in the modern day world history and considering the importance of which Halford Mackinder also propounded his “Heartland Theory” in 1904 which still finds its relevance in the 2021 with new partners of the *new great game*. While the participants of the Game changed, the principal Participant remained the same. Moreover with the 9/11 attack this region became more and more interesting and tough with USA being a virulent participant of the New Great Game which centered around the Global War on Terror having its fulcrum in the unstable Nation of Afghanistan (Hub of Taliban). India which has always followed Non Alignment Strategy entered the Global Fight against Terror as India has always been fighting against Terrorism. Moreover this area was also rich in Energy Resources which is the principal need of all the nation states considering the need of consumption and India having the 2nd largest population in the world needs a considerable flow of energy which its domestic production cannot suffice. However India is already importing petroleum from the Gulf Nations and using renewable energy still the demand shall increase by leaps and bounds by 2040 (Almost Double). It was under this light that India’s Connect Central Asia Policy was launched in 2012 which attracted my attention to study in details about it. But the policy soon withered away and no progress was seen unless 2015.

Further historically much before the Heartland theory was propounded Central Asian Region and India were connected through trade and cultural exchanges via the Ancient Silk route nearly about 2000 years ago. It was in 1990’s that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, that The Central Asian Republics came into existence as sovereign nations after being ruled by the Tzars followed by the Red Army of Soviet Union respectively. But the scenario completely changed with the Taliban Attack at the Twin Towers in 2001. The Central Asian republics by now had started forming nations and India always recognized their independence. It was Kazakhstan, owing to its Economic Stability had the most successful bilateral relations among the Central Asian Republics as well as with India. So I have willfully taken up the Case Study of India –Kazakhstan Relations since 2001 in order to establish a successful Connect Central Asia Policy or India’s Look North Policy. While India ventured into Look East Policy after India was introduced to Globalization, but never ventured around India’s Look North Policy.

Thus it was this gap that attracted my focus on India's Look North Policy or Connect Central Asia Policy. It was interesting to observe that strategically how much India is important for Central Asian Republics which are landlocked countries and Uzbekistan being double landlocked country. Starting from Russian Dominance to Chinese interference to Pakistan's hostile nature to Afghanistan's instability, India is the only stable nation that the Central Asian countries have, strategically to get access to Indo-Pacific region for energy- trade and build its own Foreign Policy without the influence of China and Russia. It is therefore here that the importance of various projects finds its importance like the TAPI project which shall provide India with 42% of total gas produced. North South Transport Corridor with Chabahar Port countering Gwadar Port, an initiative of China & Pakistan. Further with the usage of Chahbahar the trading would be cost effective for India to import its natural gas and energy reserve which are found in abundance in Central Asian Region.

Thus the thesis systematically dwells into the principal aspects of India's economic relation with Post Soviet Central Asian Republics where in Economic Relation of all the Five Central Asian Republics has been studied in details. Next chapter deals exclusively about India's Economic Relation with Kazakhstan where in the economic conditions of both the nations have been discussed along with the recent agreements that has been signed between the two. The Chapter of Energy Cooperation deals with the energy situation in both the nations along with its transportation. But the transportation of Energy and Trade is challenged by nontraditional security issues principally because of drug trades that is followed through ancient Silk Route and Cross Border Terrorism from POK. The last chapter analyses Russia's and China's Affect on India's Connect Central Asia Policy with a conclusion of necessary prescription to revamp India's Connect Central Asia Policy.

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Abbreviations

AEW&C aircraft: Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft

AIIB: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

APEDA: Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority

ATS: Amphetamine Type Stimulant

BCE: Before Common Era (Before Christ)

BHEL: Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited

BRI: Belt and Road Initiative

BRICS; Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

BU: Billion Units

CAGR: Compound Annual Growth Rate

CARs: Central Asian Republics

CAS: Central Asian states

CEA: Central Electricity Authority

CERC: Central Energy Regulatory Commission

CERC: Central Energy Regulatory Commission

CICA: Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

CII: Confederation of Indian Industry

CIS: The Commonwealth of Independent States

CNG: Compressed natural Gas

CNPC: China National Petroleum Company

CO₂: Carbon Dioxide

CPC: country of particular concern

CSTO: Collective Security Treaty Organization

CTC: crush, tear, and curl

EAEU: Eurasian Economic Union

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

ECP: Eurasia Competitiveness Programme

EEU: Eurasian Economic Union

EIB: European Investment Bank

EPCE: Energy Providers Coalition for Education

ETIM: East *Turkestan Independence Movement*

EU: European Union

FDI: foreign direct investment

FFFAI: Federation of Freight Forwarders' Association of India

FICCI: Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chamber of International Commerce

FOC: Foreign Office Consultations

FPC: Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy Concept

GAIL: Gas Authority of India Ltd

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GHG: green house gas

GtCO₂e: Giga tones of Carbon dioxide

GW: Giga Watt

HDII: Human Development Indices and Indicators

HMT: Hindustan Machine Tools

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

IBEF: India Brand Equity Foundation

ICCR: Indian Council for Cultural Relations

ICT: Information Communication Technology

IEA: International Energy Agency

IESS: India energy security scenarios

IGC: Inter Governmental Commission

IJU: Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)

IMF: International Monetary Fund

IMU: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

INR: Indian Rupee

INSTC: International North–South Transport Corridor

IOCL: Indian Oil Corporation Ltd

IPHE: International Partnership for Hydrogen Economy

IRP : Islamic Renewal Party(IRP)

ISAF: International Security Assistance Force

ITC: Indian Tobacco Company

ITEC: Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation

JBC: Joint Business Council

JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

JWG: Joint Working Groups

KEC/RPG: Kamani Engineering Corporation/Raman Prasad Goenka Group

LNG: Liquid Natural Gas

MAEC: Movement-Assisted Energy Conserving

MDG: Millennium Development Goals

MEA: Ministry of External Affairs

MFN : most favored nation

MMSCM: million metric standard cubic meters

MNRE: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

Mtoe: Million Tonne

MW: Mega Watt

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCV: Net Calorific Value

NFRK: National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan

NPP: Nuclear Power Plants/portals

NRI: non-resident Indian

NSG: Nuclear Suppliers Group

NTPC: National Thermal Power Corporation Limited

ODIHR: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OMCs: Oil Marketing Companies

ONGC: Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

P&NG: Petroleum and Natural Gas

PIB: Press Information Bureau

PPP: purchasing-power-parity

PSS: Pumped Storage Schemes

PSU: Public sector undertakings

R&D: Research and development

RATS: Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure

RATS: Regional Anti-terrorist Structure

S&T: Science and Technology

SAARC: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SCM: Steering Committee Meeting

SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organization

SDPs: Small development projects.

SHP: Small Hydro Power

SPA: Strategic Partnership Agreements

TAPI: Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline

TIITC: Turkmen-India Industrial Training Centre

TRACECA: Transport System Europe-Caucasus-Asia

TWG: TAPI Technical Working Group

TWh: Terawatt-Hours

UNDCP: United Nation Drug Control Programme

UNECE: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe,

UNIFIL: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

UNODC: United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime ()

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

US: United States

USCIRF: U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

VPN: virtual private network

WTO: World Trade Organization

Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 came as a shock as India had lost a major economic partner and its closest strategically ally. The intimate Moscow-New Delhi relationship that had developed over more than three decades came to an end with Yelstin administration. Moreover Russia was not particularly interested in maintaining a privileged relationship with India pertaining to its disintegration. Thus all of a sudden making India exposed to International pressures on vital issues like Disarmament, non-proliferation, Kashmir issue. Furthermore the Non –Alignment Policy that framed India's Foreign Policy was completely obsolete with the end of the Bi-Polar world. Thus India had no other option but to restructure the basic parameters of its foreign policy. Therefore subsequent domestic liberalization policy of 1991 helped India to launch its "Look East Policy". From here India started reemphasizing its neighborhood policy from a broader context ie to look beyond its economic and security arrangements with Russia. The newly emerged Central Asian states (CAS), namely, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan from the former Soviet Union became attractive partners for India in economic and security arrangements, and formed the extended neighbor of India and out of the many central Asian countries Kazakhstan gained the maximum importance in the context of India- central Asia relations as Kazakhstan had a stable government with the largest economy in the region along with its rich natural resources.

Initially India could not venture into the region like China did mainly because India considered the region as Russia's sphere of influence and China had the advantage of having direct borders with CASs which India lagged. Moreover while China economically influences the Central Asian Republics, Russia has the dominance over Geopolitics of Central Asia thus making Russia inevitable to dwell into The Central Asian Security and Military issues. Further the factor of poor economy, disrupted political setup, and internal strife's within the Central Asian Republics also triggered instability in the region. This instability of the Central Asian Republics hindered India to launch a clear "Central Asia Policy" as India was also introduced to liberalization policy in the 90's. But India could establish Bi-lateral relationship with each of the

Central Asian republics.



Figure 1 Political map of the Central Asian region

However with the onset of the New Millennium World politics started changing and with the 9/11 attack on Twin Towers in 2001 the entire focus was on Asia. India as a nation had always been fighting terrorism since independence but 2001 brought a drastic change in the fight against terrorism and it was here that again India proved to be faithful and a loyal friend to those nations fighting against terrorism. With the War on Terror as declared by George W.Bush, Afghanistan came to the limelight and with it came the conditions of people living in the reign of dictatorial regimes where basic human rights were negated. The area in and around Afghanistan also came in the influence of illicit activities of drugs and Human trafficking including Tajikistan which itself was fighting civil war after being disintegrated from Soviet Union. But the war that started with Fight against Terror eventually started incorporating issues of natural resources found in abundance in Central Asian Region thereby initiating a “New Great Game”. It was since September 2001 India participated actively with the global war-on-terror and reset its foreign policies towards the CARs. India, which was at the periphery of the Great Game that had started with US-China-Russia in the Central Asian region with the war on terror because of the nation’s being neighbor to Afghanistan (hub of Taliban), was now one of the principal actors in the “new great game”. Therefore, although the game which started with fighting back terrorism was not confined to the security factor alone because energy became an intrinsic factor owing to the global demand especially for India which is the 3rd largest consumer of energy.

Condition of Central Asia: (Background):

The **political** scenario was full of tension and strife since the nations were given their independence without much struggle and lacked national identity with weak democratic setup, over-centralized and increasingly authoritarian governments, arbitrary and often disputed borders, interethnic tensions, repressive law enforcement agencies without effective party system, violation of Human rights thereby facing the major challenge of filling up the formal structure political system with real power, thus Central Asia belonged to the camp of delayed democratization. As the post-communist world's surge of new democratic states produced a massive and compact "fourth wave" of democratization, pro-democratic political change in Central Asia remains in a "proto-stage," implicit and inconsistent (McFaul, 2002). Censorship over the scope and nature of questions related to politics, and citizens' attitudes toward politics remain under strong state control with heavy censorship in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. The most advanced and open countries are Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have softened their censorship over political studies during the last few years, but Turkmenistan remains the only country where inquiring about citizen's political values and attitudes remains almost impossible (Haerpfer & Kizilova, 2020). Further the statehood that was forced on these central Asian Republics were the principal cause of disorientation as it lacked nationalism because of differences in the community that existed among different ethnic groups. The specific characteristics of post-Soviet political and economic change in comparison with other forms of democratization are that there is a confrontation of a *trifold* transformation:

1. A political revolution from a communist one-party authoritarian state to a multi-party democratic system;
2. An economic revolution from a centrally planned command economy to a free capitalist market economy;
3. A social revolution from a communist and classless society with a small political and administrative upper class, to a modern and open society with a broad middle class making ways for voluntary associations, freedom of speech, demonstrations, and other civil liberties .

The first free parliamentary elections which are an important sign of the beginning of a democratic transition took place in all countries in 1990, before the USSR was legally dissolved and ceased to exist. It is remarkable that in the countries which have since become electoral autocracies or consolidated autocracies like Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, elections did not take place immediately and were postponed until several years after the end of the USSR. The timing and character of the first elections to be held in the country can be considered here as an important marker of the state of the polity and the civic consciousness of the population and an important precondition for the choice of a pro-democratic path of future political development. Initially, the majority of political leaders represented a continuation of the previous Communist “party of power,” which was attractive to the population because of its perceived ability to preserve the inter-ethnic and inter-tribal equilibrium and the stability and peace in multi-ethnic fragmented society, where clan and tribal affiliations and sub-ethnic identities remained very strong. Political opposition that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, represented primarily by nationalist and Islamic-democratic movements with their sometimes radical and extremist statements, was viewed as a dangerous alternative to the old Soviet political elite.

The universal type of political system that emerged in Central Asia is a presidential republic with an extensive scope of power concentrated in the hands of the executive branch. Democratic de-jure, de facto these political systems comprise elements of authoritarian rule. Although the separation of powers into three branches (executive, legislative, and judiciary) is formally present in all five Central Asian republics (which serves the purposes of establishing formal external legitimacy), legislative, and judicial institutions are heavily dependent and controlled by the executive bodies (Laumulin, 2016)¹. The significant empowerment of the president reflects the historical traditionalism in (patriarchal) Central Asian societies, where the head of state is perceived as the “father” of the nation. Differences between the five countries affect the scope of authority left for the legislative branch. In Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan national parliaments are semi-independent, but in other countries of Central Asia the power of

¹Laumulin, M. T. (2016). *Formation of the Post-Soviet Statehood in Central Asia*. *Ideas*. Retrieved from <https://ideas.repec.org/a/ccs/journl/y2018id293.html>

the president is practically unlimited (Haerpfer & Kizilova, 2020)². In addition to the hypertrophied role of the executive branch, political elites in Central Asia have merged with the business structures, giving them additional means of control over the economy, wealth, and natural resources. Another feature of post-Soviet politics which is particularly relevant for Central Asia and which is both the legacy of the Soviet political system and the earlier monarchical period in the history of this region is the malfunction of the democratic mechanism of power transfer and rotation of elites; in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, the same political leaders who were newly elected into the president's office in the 1990s or who had held their position since the time of the USSR, remained in power for ten or more years, sometimes until their death. The absence of a clear mechanism of election of the Soviet leader in the past and the lack of related democratic practices and experiences both by the population and the political elite turned the elections into a primarily confirmatory procedure in this region.

A transition toward the democratic multi-party system was initiated in most former Soviet Republics, including those in Central Asia, after the dissolution of the USSR. Some movements toward democracy have been made in all countries with the adoption of new constitutions, the creation of parliaments and political parties, and the holding of elections in all Central Asian countries. Consequently, the initial years following independence witnessed some progress and a shift away from the Soviet political system. However, this trend later weakened and most states in Central Asia moved to a more authoritarian system. In Kazakhstan, there were very modest attempts at democratization between 1992 and 1998. After Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Communist leader of Kazakhstan, became the first President of independent Kazakhstan, a number of reforms were introduced, aimed at transforming the economy into a free market one and to liberalize trade. While Nazarbayev was quite successful in re-building, Kazakhstan's economy until the recent economic decline caused by the sharp drop in both oil prices and the Kazakh Tenge, an actual full democratic transition of the political system has never occurred and instead the consolidation of power and wealth around the "ruling family" took place. For the 2019 Presidential elections, where Kazakhstan elected their second new president for the first time since 1991, the OSCE concluded that "significant irregularities were observed on election day meant that an honest count could not be guaranteed" (Organization Security and Co-

operation in Europe, 2019)². This indicates a lack of democratic practices and weakness of those few that have been established. Nevertheless, former President Nazarbayev in his 2017 book “Era of Independence” states that Kazakhstan is a “democratic, secular, law-based state.” In 2017, the President signed the Constitutional law on the redistribution of power between the branches of governance and the increase of the role of the executive branch (the Parliament).

In Tajikistan, the post-Soviet transition started with a bloody civil war, which lasted from 1992 to 1997 and was linked with the confrontation between the old Soviet elite and the opposition Islamic-democratic and nationalist parties. The war led to over 100,000 deaths and over 1.2 million refugees and internally displaced persons. Emomali Rahmon, elected as President in 1994, agreed a ceasefire in 1997, and has remained President of the country ever since. The civil war, a lack of natural resources and the economic decline of the 1990s resulted in political instability and delayed both the political transformation and the region's consolidation of executive power, which became explicit in the late 2000s. The 2016 referendum, which was passed in Tajikistan, introduced further amendments into the Constitution, with the most significant of them referring to the removal of restrictions on the number of terms for the presidency, which would allow President Rahmon to be re-elected again in the next Presidential elections planned for 2020. For the most recent 2013 presidential elections, an ODIHR/OSCE international observation mission concluded that “the election in Tajikistan took place peacefully, but restrictive candidate registration requirements resulted in a lack of genuine choice and meaningful pluralism”(Organization Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013)³. Similar to other autocratic post-Soviet leaders, Rahmon introduced censorship and the media now has no freedom in the country, while opposition leaders are heavily prosecuted. Implementation of all governmental policies was made while exploiting the fears of the population about the possibility of resuming the civil military confrontation, and thus the consolidation of autocracy received no opposition from the population. While Tajikistan has made efforts to improve its economy, the country remains highly dependent on Russia, which is the main receiving country for labor migration from Tajikistan.

²Organization Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/2019>

³Organization Security and Co-operation in Europe. (2013). Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/odihr/119809>

In Turkmenistan, which is labeled as the most authoritarian and closed political regime in the region, the leader of the Turkmen Communist Party, Saparmurat Niyazov, was elected as the President in 1992 after proclaiming Turkmenistan's independence in 1991. But Niyazov was the only candidate for the President's post in 1991 and got 99.5% of votes. Niyazov later assumed the title "Turkmenbashi" meaning "Father of the Turkmen". All opposition parties were banned, and the government obtained full control over the media and other information channels. Niyazov also introduced the politics of neutrality, causing total international isolation of Turkmenistan and preventing the country from entering any international organization. After Niyazov's death in 2006, his Vice-President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow was elected as the next and current President of Turkmenistan. Berdimuhamedow has undertaken small steps toward liberalization, initiating healthcare, pension system, and education reforms, and easing travel permit regulations for citizens. The cult of personality, which was developed under the previous president, was abolished. At the same time, Berdimuhamedow clearly showed that Western-style democracy was not a goal for Turkmenistan, and there was no substantial change to the autocratic, exclusive, monopoly power assumed by the President. 30 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, Turkmenistan remains one of the most authoritarian and closed regimes in the world.

Islam Karimov, the former leader of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, became President after the declaration of independence in 1991. He announced the country's course toward becoming a free market economy and a secular democracy but in reality, the pro-democratic transition was never realized, having been prevented by the lack of democratic governance experience, old economic ties, and imbalances of the economic system, as well as the absence of democratic values and norms among both the political elite and the population. Shortly after independence, from 1992 to 1993, there were very modest attempts at introducing some minimalist form of democracy in Uzbekistan. However, those attempts were aborted very quickly and there was no democratization process in the country until the death of Karimov in 2016. Student protests of 1992 in Tashkent, as well as any further expressions of civil activities, were suppressed, meeting with a strong and brutal autocratic response. The newly elected President Shavkat Mirziyoyev had been Prime Minister under Karimov and was hence considered his successor. The institute of presidency in Uzbekistan—similar to other autocratic post-Soviet countries—is therefore reproduced not via the democratic procedure of free and fair

elections, but via nomination of the successor by the President from his close circle. After his inauguration, president Mirziyoyev initiated economic reforms aimed at the reduction of the isolationism of the Uzbek economy. Hence, Uzbekistan, after being “frozen” for over two decades in its economic and political internal and external development, obtained a new chance to change the vector of its development toward liberalization.

The only former Soviet Republic in Central Asia to attain the status of a democracy is Kyrgyzstan. Democratization in Kyrgyzstan began in the turbulent times of 1990-91, when Askar Akayev, the newly elected pro-democratic President, introduced new democratic institutions and replaced the Soviet with younger politicians. In the first years of democratization, comprehensive market reforms including liberalization of prices and foreign trade, privatization, and the freedoms of speech, religion, and participation were introduced (although these were slow to deliver economic outputs). Democratization in Kyrgyzstan was not a linear process and there were several backslide between 1995 and 2012. Over time, President Akayev became more authoritarian in his decision-making, causing significant dissatisfaction among the population. However, unlike other Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan did not consolidate into a full autocracy. As a result of Tulip Revolution, which took place in the spring of 2005, the president was forced to resign and flee to Russia. After the revolution, Kyrgyzstan experienced several years of political struggle and civil unrest when protestors blamed the government for failing to eradicate poverty and corruption. During the 2009 elections, the new president, Bakiyev, was accused of falsifying the election results and was forced to flee to Belarus. The next president, Almazbek Atambayev, elected in 2011, had despite his pro-Russian alignment undertaken significant steps to improve the foreign trade of Kyrgyzstan and to obtain greater energy independence for his country. Despite recurring ethnic strife in recent years, democratization in Kyrgyzstan has not yet come to a halt. Kyrgyzstan remains the only country in Central Asia which introduced a parliamentary republic as the form of governance. Kyrgyzstan is also the only country in the region recognized as “partly free”. The Tulip Revolution signaled the beginning of a new wave of democratization, which led to a steady and continuous increase of democratic rule in those new independent states alive to prevent those countries from sliding into autocracy.

Further the differences continue in the area of population as well affecting the political as well as economic spheres. Uzbekistan is the most populous country in the region, followed by Kazakhstan, which has a much larger territory. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are much less populous than the other two republics. All five Central Asian countries have an ethnically heterogeneous population with a cross border migration and varying ethnic structure between central Asian republics leading to differences on the constraints that political leaders face. Russian migration to the northern parts of Central Asia, specifically the Kazakh steppe and the cities of Kyrgyzstan, than to the south, as a consequence, the ethnic structure of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are to some extent similar (Stark & Ahrens, 2012)⁴. In several regions, Russians outnumbered Kazakhs, in some cases by a ratio higher than three to one (Zhardykh, 2002)⁵. As can be seen in Table 1, Kazakhstan is the only country that lost population since its independence. The main reason for this was the high emigration of ethnic Russians and Germans, which were disproportionately well-educated and skilled⁶. In Kyrgyzstan, the Russian population only amounted to 21.5% in 1989, and the Kyrgyz themselves made up slightly more than half of the population at this time. The third largest ethnic group was formed by Uzbeks, with around 11%, while Germans only amounted to 2.3% of the total population. While emigration of Russians and Germans also took place in Kyrgyzstan, however, their lower numbers and the higher birthrate in Kyrgyzstan compensated this loss of population (Abazov, 1999)⁷.

⁴Stark, M & Ahrens, J. (2012). *Economic reform and institutional change in Central Asia: towards a new model of the developmental state?*. Private Hochschule Göttingen.

⁵Zhardykh, Zhar (2002). 'Kazakhstan and Central Asia: regional perspectives.' *Central Asian Survey* 21(2): 167-183.

⁶Pomfret, R. (2006). "Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?" (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

⁷(Abazov, R. (1999). "Economic Migration in Post-Soviet Central Asia: The Case of Kyrgyzstan." *ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/24085844_Economic_Migration_in_Post-Soviet_Central_Asia_The_Case_of_Kyrgyzstan

Table 1: EBRD transition indicators of the Central Asian countries, 1991 and 2000

	Kazakhstan		Kyrgyzstan		Tajikistan		Turkme- nistan		Uzbekistan	
	1991	2000	1991	2000	1991	2000	1991	2000	1991	2000
Large scale privatisation	1.0	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.3	1.0	1.7	1.0	2.7
Small scale privatisation	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.0	1.0	3.3	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.0
Enterprise restructuring	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.7
Price liberalisation	1.0	4.0	1.0	4.3	1.0	3.7	1.0	2.7	1.0	2.7
Trade & Forex system	1.0	3.3	1.0	4.3	1.0	3.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Competition Policy	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Banking reform & interest rate liberalisation	1.0	2.3	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.7
Securities markets & non-bank financial institutions	1.0	2.3	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Overall infrastructure reform	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.3

Note: Indicators are measured on a scale from 1 (no reform) to 4.33, with pluses and minuses, e.g., 3+ and 3- are represented by 3.33 and 2.67.

Source: EBRD (2011).

The **economic scenario** was market based leading to income inequality and poverty. While the Central Asian leaders faced exogenous constraints in terms of governing the newly independent landlocked country in the same geographical region, the conditions varied sufficiently to explain different transition strategies and economic outcomes to a remarkable degree. It is certainly true that the Central Asian presidents had considerable freedom of action concerning economic policies and reforms at the beginning of the 1990 (Pomfret, 2010)⁸, the differences in constraints faced by political leaders were decisive for the further path of institutional change. A crucial difference, in this respect, was the uneven distribution of resource endowments across the five Central Asian countries. As summarized by Spechler, the smallest countries in terms of territory, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, are generally considered to be resource-poor. In sharp contrast, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan have abundant resources of oil and natural gas. Uzbekistan's economy has been dominated by cotton since the times of the

⁸Pomfret, R. (2010). "Trade and Transport in Central Asia" (p.450).SAGE. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/097491011000200302>

Russian empire, but also has some resources in natural gas and gold (Spechler, 2008)⁹. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, are considered to have been the region's faster reformers in the early 1990s(Pomfret, 2006)¹⁰. This is also evidenced by the EBRD transition indicators. In particular concerning privatization and the liberalization of prices and trade, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were considered to be significantly closer to a market economy than their Central Asian neighbors at the end of the decade (as shown in Table 1) mainly because Kyrgyz political leadership was consciously using the Western market economies or at least the presumed ideal-type market economy as embodied in the recommendations of Western-dominated international organizations as the key reference models for its country. As a consequence, Kyrgyzstan received much more aid from international donors than any other country (Pomfret, 2006)¹¹. Between 1991 and 1996, the Kyrgyz government also introduced a new legislative framework to govern the liberalized economy(Abazov, 1999)¹². Kazakhstan on the other hand was substantially influenced by the need to maintain economic ties with Russia and attempted to construct a "viable successor organization to the USSR"(Pomfret, 2006)¹³. Due to higher living standards and human-capital endowments, Kazakhstan's political leaders were facing more

⁹Spechler, M. C. (2008). "The Economies of Central Asia: A Survey"(p. 39).*ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5219067_The_Economies_of_Central_Asia_A_Survey

¹⁰Pomfret, R. (2006). "Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?" (p. 43). *ResearchGate*.(pp. 6-7).Retrievedfromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

¹¹Pomfret, R. (2006). "Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?" (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (p. 74).Retrievedfromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

¹²Abazov, R. (1999). "Economic Migration in Post-Soviet Central Asia: The Case of Kyrgyzstan" p. 243). *IDEAS*. Retrieved from <https://ideas.repec.org/a/taf/pocoec/v11y1999i2p237-252.html>

¹³Pomfret, R. (2006). "Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?" (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (pp. 6-7).Retrievedfromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

favorable initial conditions for constructing a market economy than Kyrgyzstan's(Pomfret, 2006)¹⁴.In the early 1990s, Kazakhstan started the transition towards a market economy fairly quickly, following the radical reforms. But Kazakhstan remained for a longer time in the ruble zone than Kyrgyzstan and did not focus on macroeconomic stability to the same degree(Pomfret, 2006)¹⁵.Concerning privatization, Kazakhstan initiated a privatization program that included almost half of medium and small enterprises in 1991. However, the success of this process had become highly doubtful in the mid-1990s, when privatization became increasingly associated with corruption and resembled the Russian reference model in creating powerful vested interests (Pomfret, 2010)¹⁶. Turkmenistan has also shown extremely specific conditions. As a country that is only sparsely populated but in possession of large reserves in natural gas and oil and, in addition, an important exporter of cotton, Turkmenistan could expect unusually large gains in the terms of trade from the dissolution of the Soviet Union(Spechler, 2008)¹⁷. However, these gains made the emergence of a highly authoritarian political regime.

Economic liberalization had never been an objective for the regime, which, instead, focused on attaining economic independence. While some limited privatization took place, the overall resource allocation except for small-scale trading on the bazaars has not been determined by free prices. In addition, inflation amounted to more than 1000% for several years in the early 1990s, before it was brought down to double-digits in 1998. To some degree, profits from the

¹⁴Pomfret, R. (2006). Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy? (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (pp. 6-7).Retrievedfromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

¹⁵Pomfret, R. (2006). Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy? (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (pp. 6-7).Retrievedfromhttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

¹⁶Pomfret, R. (2010). Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?.*ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

¹⁷Spechler, M. C. (2008). "The Economies of Central Asia: A Survey" (p. 34).*ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5219067_The_Economies_of_Central_Asia_A_Survey

exports of cotton, gas, and oil were used to finance import substitution projects such as oil refineries and textile plants, however their efficiency has been considered highly doubtful (Spechler, 2008)¹⁸. Uzbekistan strategy was characterized by one key objective, namely “stability at any cost”. While Uzbekistan’s approach to transition was certainly more progressive than Turkmenistan, it is usually characterized as one of the slowest reformers in the former Soviet Union (Pomfret, 2006)¹⁹. The Uzbek transition strategy was gradual in the sense that small-scale privatization was undertaken quickly, while large-scale privatization and agrarian reform were only limited when compared to Kazakhstan and Russia (Pomfret, 2006)²⁰. Furthermore, the government has retained the control over natural resource rents and, for the most part, over the financial sector (Pomfret, 2006)²¹. Industrial policies aimed at import substitution were pursued through public investment in favored enterprises, specifically in chemical and petrochemical enterprises as well as in cotton mills. As a result of such policies, the Uzbek development strategy was characterized as inward looking, even though its economy had a high export to GDP ratio.

Influenced by these conditions, the Central Asian states have joined a number of multilateral security and economic structures promoted by the major powers and groups. While

¹⁸Spechler, M. C. (2008). “The Economies of Central Asia: A Survey”. *ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5219067_The_Economies_of_Central_Asia_A_Survey

¹⁹Pomfret, R. (2006). “Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?” (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

²⁰Pomfret, R. (2006). Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy? (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (p. 2). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

²¹Pomfret, R. (2006). “Is Regionalism an Increasing Feature of the World Economy?” (p. 43). *ResearchGate*. (p. 27). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4997284_Is_Regionalism_an_Increasing_Feature_of_the_World_Economy

the objectives of major powers are to promote their own politico-military security and economic agenda and absorb these nations into their spheres of influence, the key goal of Central Asian states is to strike a delicate balance of power and ensure the best deal for themselves by exploiting the rivalry between the major powers. Further, the Central Asian states consider such multilateral arrangements as the best way to maintain security and stability in the region. Many factors have affected their political reforms, institution building, and promotion of national identities and exploitation of their natural resources. Among these are the proximity of major powers like Russia and China; the U.S.-led NATO; the European Union; and the ongoing global war on terrorism at Central Asia's southern borders. Hence, all the five states have been following policies that can be termed multi-faceted or multi-directional. The Central Asian states consider the preservation of equilibrium between the major powers the best way to advance their interests. Some believe that the political leadership of the five states is looking for regime security rather than national security in its widest sense. This is not a strange concept in many Asian states (Acharya&Goh, 2007, p.241).²².Such an approach has the effect of bringing Central Asian states closer to so-called 'quasi-democratic' powers, such as Russia and China, perhaps at the expense of the U.S. and the West. In recent years, while the influence of the U.S. and the West is showing a downward trend, the Russian and Chinese strategic footprints in the Central Asian Republics are exhibiting an ascending trajectory. Further, situated strategically at the intersection between Europe and Asia, Central Asia is a transit corridor for narcotics and small arms migrants. Further Afghanistan's proximity led to trafficking of drugs and small arms contributing to the criminalization of economy thereby making security a deeper concern.

Emerging strategic trends in Central Asia are part of an overarching strategic construct that has been evolving since the end of the Cold War. Rich in oil and natural gas, having transit routes to Eurasia, located at the crossroads of Ancient Silk route linking China, India and Iran with the West, the strategic significance of this area cannot be overlooked. Historically this region played the buffer zone between czarist and subsequently Soviet Union and British India. Mackinder's "Heartland concept" also justifies the importance of Central Asian countries to the world politics. He said who controls the heartland will be able to control the world is true even in

²²Acharya, Amitav&Goh, Evelyn (2007). "Reassessing Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: Competition, Congruence and Transformatio Cambridge":MIT Press.

the present day context as the Great Game still continues as a New Great Game revolving around energy, trade, security and control over Islamic radicalism. The geostrategic location of the Central Asia has made this region extremely pivotal as its located at the epicenter of instability (Afghanistan).

Post 9/11 and the power rivalry

Religious extremism and fundamentalism pose serious challenge to regional stability. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001 foreign powers took much greater interest in preventing the spread of radical Islamic terrorist organizations such as IRP and IMU. The central Asian Nations offered their territory and airspace for use by US and its allies in operations against Taliban in Afghanistan. Powers such as US-Russia-China were not only interested in fighting terrorism; they used war on terror in order to advance their political and economic agendas in the region, particularly over the exploitation of central Asian energy resources. Thus the new game is centered on regional oil and gas politics. Now, instead of competing for actual control over a geographic area, pipeline, tanker routes, petroleum consortiums, and contracts are the prizes of the new Great Game.

The geo-strategic salience of Central Asia today has been underscored by two main factors. First, Central Asia has become important because of the discovery of hydrocarbon reserves and second, it has become a major transportation hub for gas and oil pipelines and multi-modal communication corridors connecting China, Russia, Europe, the Caucasus region, the Trans-Caspian region and the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, whether it was Czarist Russia or the Soviet Union or even the present Central Asian regimes, there has always been a strategic ambition in the north to seek access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean.



Figure 2 showing the map of India and Central Asian Republics

Thus Afghanistan, which links Central Asia and South Asia, is a strategic bridge of great geopolitical significance. Central Asia and South Asia are intimately connected not only geographically but also strategically. The Central Asian republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have borders with Afghanistan, Iran lies to its west and Pakistan to the east and south. Therefore, the geostrategic significance of Afghanistan is enhanced even though it may not be an oil- or gas-rich country. With the control of Afghanistan comes the control of the land routes between the Indian subcontinent and resource-rich Central Asia, as well as of a potential corridor to Iran and the Middle East. Thus, stability and peace in Afghanistan, and for that matter Pakistan, are a geostrategic imperative.

India entering in Central Asia: India-Kazakhstan relationship finds importance :

Central Asia has great strategic potential for South Asia especially India. India on the other hand having interest in Central Asia has always followed a cooperative approach towards Central Asian Republics. India's presence in the region although was not liked by China and Russia but was supported by US since India is viewed as a rising powerhouse of South Asia. Further its own economic and strategic interest in the region, India has to counter its rivals like Pakistan and

China in the region. India defines Central Asia as an extended neighbor despite sharing border with central Asia. India is geographically close to central Asia and has long standing historical and cultural ties with central Asia, these bring them even closer together. Recently India's launching of Central Asia Policy in 2012 harps on her interest in the region.

- Security Interest figure most prominently in India's Central Asia Policy. The security situation in Central Asia directly affects India's own security through Pakistan cross border terrorism which results in striving captive power by coercive means resulting in civil strife and turbulence and having spillover effect on Kashmir Issue. The compatibility of security interests between India and Kazakhstan was evident when the two countries signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership in 2009. India's policy towards Central Asia is becoming energized and proactive, unlike in the past, when it was reactive.
- Another area of interest for India is Energy. Therefore security and stability of central Asia is of utmost importance to India because of accessing and transporting of energy resources. For India, a greater challenge that of exploiting central Asian energy resources is how to transport them to India, as there are few choices available to it, building oil or gas pipelines through Afghanistan and Pakistan would clearly be extremely difficult, even if it were possible to construct, they could not be relied upon. India therefore proposed for hydrocarbon pipeline from Kazakhstan which is 1500 km, longer than that of TAPI heading from former Silk Road. The ancient silk road has been revived by the CARs (landlocked countries) to build connectivity with the global markets.
- The driving force behind India's objective of enhanced engagement with Central Asia is economics. CARs is the epicenter of investment market and want to diversify their economy and want new partners. And India has the ability to help build Central Asians' capacities in areas such as information technology, science and technology, knowledge industries and soft power as she has done with Kazakhstan. Areas such as energy, non-conventional sources of energy and agro-based industries are promising spheres for trilateral cooperation. Joint ventures in cotton and agriculture can be established which could benefit the entire region. However, lack of direct connectivity and difficult market conditions in some parts of the region hamper interaction. Still, increasing linkages between India and Kazakhstan, Afghanistan's membership to the SAARC, and its

emergence as a potentially important player in facilitating regional economic cooperation is shaping India's "Look North Policy". At this juncture, the concept of a "Greater Central Asia" offers opportunities to connect India with Central Asia, particularly in the transport and trade sectors. In a sense, it recreates the past history of the region when robust trading activity was a dominating feature. Afghanistan was the fulcrum on which such activities were carried out in various directions. Further if the transport and trade activities as envisaged by the Greater Central Asia concept are operationalised, the proposed Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline project could also see the light of the day. Indeed, transport and natural gas pipelines could run parallel to one another. Therefore India's relation with this region needs an in-depth examination.

A critical appraisal of this phenomenon is not only necessary but also essential. There is a need to analyze the changing scenario of this region so as to understand the appropriate orientations of India's foreign policy towards Central Asia. Further new avenues should be strengthened and thought about for a long term India-Central Asia relationship which is not only strategically but also economically and politically beneficial for India. And to establish India's Central Asia policy as a core area of interest for India, India-Kazakhstan relations need to be focused as the relation between the two has been a success story since Kazakhstan's independence, as the history of India and Kazakhstan has a lot of things in common starting from her revolt as civil war against Soviet annexation after 1917 revolt to being the last soviet state to be independent. Being the last soviet state to be independent, it has comparatively a stable government unlike the rest of the newly formed central Asian republics. Although it's a presidential form of government but there is a bicameral legislature with the upper and the lower houses. The candidates are elected by the people to the legislatures and have a stable government. Kazakhstan also has a stable relation with all its neighbors, and this will help India in her connect Central Asia policy. Further Kazakhstan is a member of Shanghai Cooperation Organization and supported India's permanent membership in SCO where India is just in the observer status. Kazakhstan has pursued "Multivector foreign policy" seeking good relations with its two large neighbors, Russia and China as well as with USA and rest of the Western world. Further it has the strongest and the largest performing economy in central Asia, supported by rising oil outputs and prices. If India can gain the confidence of Kazakhstan then it shall not be difficult for India to have a greater central Asia policy. Again Kazakhstan personally shares a

good relation with India. It gained the confidence of India when it condemned the 13th December 2001 attack on Indian Parliament saying terrorism is unjustifiable and that terrorism should be fought back globally thereby completely eliminating it and promised to be by side of India. Further India and Kazakhstan has also developed close collaboration in fighting religious terrorism an extremism as well as promoting regional security. A joint memorandum signed in 2002 enabled joint projects such as training military officers, developing joint military industrial projects and establishing partnership between the defense industries of India and Kazakhstan. India also extended support to Kazakhstan in building a naval fleet in Caspian Sea despite Russia's opposition. In 2009 with President's Nazarbayev's visit to India a civil nuclear pact had also been made signed where Kazakhstan will supply fuel to atomic plants of India. Kazakhstan has also sought to negotiate a multilateral trade agreement with Iran and Turkmenistan to create a transport corridor to India to ensure a reliable trade route and provide Kazakhstan commercial and shipping access to the warm water ports of India. To bolster commerce, both nations have established Indo-Kazakh joint Business council. Kazakhstan is India's largest trade and investment partner in Central Asia. As per statistics of Kazakhstan for 2019 (from January to November), total bilateral trade between India and Kazakhstan amounted to 1.56 billion US Dollars, out of which exports from Kazakhstan was to 1299.1 million US Dollars, and exports from India was 267.9 million US Dollars (Ministry of External Affairs, India. 2019)²³. Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 17th SCO Summit in Astana on June 8-9, 2017. India was admitted as a full member of the SCO during the Summit. Kazakhstan supports India's permanent membership in an expanded UNSC and has extended its support for India's non-permanent membership in 2021-2022. India supported Kazakhstan's successful candidature for non-permanent membership of UNSC in 2017-18.

Literature Review

A wide range of literature is available on India's engagement with the Central Asian States especially with that of Kazakhstan. The existing literatures deal with various dimensions of India's engagement with Central Asian states mainly Kazakhstan, geo-economic and geo-strategic importance of the region, problems of nontraditional security threats. Some of these literatures have been reviewed for the present purpose of the study.

²³Ministry of External affairs, India. (2019). Retrieved from <https://mea.gov.in/>

- Olcott (2005) discusses that the path taken by central asian states was wrong because of the faulty economic and political system. Leaders excused political failures because of security risks and terrorism in Afghanistan but no one tried to mend it by taking a new approach.
- Zaffarno (2013) argues of who would control the region next as the region's strategic location and landlocked position invites international powers for a zero-sum game. For India, it has continuing interest as the region is close to the areas of Jihadist and anti Indian terrorist group and also proximity to territory where Pakistan and China are engaged in massive military cooperation.
- Parakhonsky (2012) narrates the situation of Central Asia and compares the conflict situation of Balkans and Caucuses. Since 1991 Russia's fall of interest in the region due to Russia's own economic problem led the Central Asian states find for new partners in US and China to help them overcome economic burden and security concerns. Since India shares the same problems as that of CARs thus became a new partner to the CARs. India concentrates in strengthening bilateral cooperation with adjacent countries providing technical assistance and initiating economic programme.
- Asopa (2003) has given a detailed picture of growth from Pre to Post Soviet era. In spite of having strong historical linkage India is late comer in the region because of no direct border, unstable region and less feasibility of the realization of Central Asian gas and energy resources. To promote stability in the region by curbing terrorism problem is the primary reason for India's engagement in the region.
- Sahgal and Anand (2010) discusses many reasons for India being the late comer in the region. While India could not give much attention to this region soon after independence because of various pre-occupations, India also considered the region as soft underbelly of Russia which prevented India from having direct linkages with these countries. Furthermore unstable factors like Pakistan and Afghanistan, and no direct territorial linkages were also there. They also argue that certain democratic values of India hold tremendous importance for these countries.
- Dash(2012) narrates that contemporary and common problems like narcotic trafficking, money laundering, terrorism and others are the major reasons for bringing India-Central Asia closer.
- Bal(2008)says that India's Look North Policy is primarily based on the concerns of India's security . He gives a deep insight of intra-regional and inter-regional tensions and

politics. He also analyzed the energy potential of the region. The author critically analyses the political, social, demographic, economic and security status of each of these states and gives pointers about where the synergies exist between India's future and these emerging nations.

- Gangal (2011) points out the significance of the region in India's objective to attain the strategic depth in its wider neighborhood. Closer defense cooperation has supplemented economic and historic ties in elevating the profile of bilateral exchange between India and regional partners especially Kazakhstan. The CARs are also valuable partners in India's counter terrorism effort. Further India is not only a trade partner but also potential strategic ally.
- Santham and Dwivedi (2004) discusses about the cooperation of India-Central Asian Countries in politico-economic-security issues faced in the region especially International Terrorism and how to curb them. They also say that though India is engaged with these nations in various ways but India needs to find out the Connectivity linkage for smooth trade and economic relations. To maintain as well as to increase its economic relations, India needs to work with these countries on the security arrangements particularly on nontraditional security issues.
- Attri(2010) argues that India's response and policies towards Central Asian countries have always been positive even though the situations were hostile. The present level of mutual understanding and efforts towards strengthening of existing links in economic strategic and political spheres between both has unfolded significant potential of co-operation between them.
- Joshi(2010) defends the argument that India is the extended neighbor of Central Asia. With India's engagement in Central Asian countries, India can build capacities in areas such as agriculture, information, technology, service industries science and media for the central asiannations as well as satisfy her energy need thereby boosting to continental trade across the region benefitting the involved nations. This would also integrate South and Central Asia and result in vast economic benefits to all the stakeholders involved leading to a positive outcome for stability and security in the region.
- Carras(2013) argues that the rich resources of Central Asia especially that of Kazakhstan would help in Indian energy industry. The rich hydrocarbon and uranium resources could serve the needs of rapidly industrializing Indian economy and nuclear programmes. But the biggest geostrategic hindrance of Afghanistan and Pakistan needs to be solved for India to benefit in her energy trade.

- Sharma(2009) argues that the natural resource rich CARs especially Kazakhstan provide India with reliable alternate source of Oil, Gas and Hydrocarbons. Hydroelectric project with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the two rich in water resources can help India to meet the dire energy consumption requirement and energy cooperation between India and Kazakhstan can reduce India's dependency on other international markets and expand other areas for mutual benefit.
- Wariko(2011) argues for increasing energy cooperation and transport linkages between Central Asia and South Asia thereby eventually between Kazakhstan and India. The new quest is for an alternative and shortest transportation route to export oil/gas from this region to other countries mainly of south Asia. For India's demand of energy Wariko talks about establishment of Pan-Asian gas supplies system passing through Asia connecting the source country and the consumer countries. This indeed would be beneficial for the region. He also deals with the problems and prospects of India-pakistan-iran(IPI) and TAPI pipelines dealing with the subject of transport linkages with the challenges of connectivity faced by the landlocked countries. Also harps on Silk route and Trans-Siberian railway, North-South corridor and the newly built Gwadar Port in Pakistan.
- Peyrouse(2010) argues Chinese and Indian growing interests in the region replace the traditional power rivalry between Russia and US. Though India is unable to equally compete against Chinese presence in the region but New Delhi is well established in Afghanistan and has begun to cast her eyes towards the North to the shores of the Caspian Sea arguing that both the Asian powers are looking to redeploy their rivalry on the Central Asian and Afghan theaters not only on geopolitical but also political and economic levels.
- Campbell(2013) opines the reason for India to engage with CARs being primarily to secure and sustain India's energy suppliers to sustain economic growth , to check the rise of Radical Islamist group posing threat to India's security and to tap the commercial potential of Central Asian region.
- P.Stobdan (2009) opines that India and Kazakhstan should share a complimentary relationship and should work out a framework that suits their common objectives. Since Kazakhstan has offered many stakes for India in strategic sectors, the country also has large scale space technology research centre with military hardware production complexes which can be easily exploited by India for mutual benefit. India through Kazakhstan can establish new diplomatic phase in Central Asia-a region vital for geo strategic reasons.

- I.Malik and M. AfzalMir(2013)analyzes the dynamics and potential of trade between India and Kazakhstan. Also analyses the states of the trade and commercial policies in the two countries and the extent of trade takes place as a result of official efforts and the consequent trade agreements. The authors opine the potential of trade with special reference to energy and information technology sector and describe a bright future for trade and the present difficult challenges in terms of institutional and infrastructural bottlenecks.
- Z.Hussain(2009) harps on India and Kazakhstan is moving ahead in their relationship and India finds Kazakhstan significant for mainly three reasons-its strategic location, vast energy and mineral resources and its secular and composite social culture. He also opines that it is through Kazakhstan that India can venture into a cooperative economic and trade relations with the central Asian region.

Rationale of the Study:

Despite the existence of vast literatures on India-Central Asia relations, no previous work has been seriously attempted in listing out the prospects and problems in India's Central Asia Policy with special reference to India-Kazakhstan relations. India as a rising powers, needs strategic partner. India's growing economy, huge population needs more energy consumption and needs new partner for its liberalized economy. While India could successfully establish Look East Policy , Look North Policy could not be successfully established mainly because of Terrorism originating from Afghanistan and Pakistan which is a continuous threat to India. India needs strategic, security and economic partners to deal with all these problems. The land locked Central Asian states look for sea access, consumer goods, pharmaceutical goods, humanitarian assistance, training for military personnel and up-gradation of air bases. The Central Asian states also needs economic power house to explore its natural resources. India because of its stability is gradually emerging as a natural partner for these countries in general and with Kazakhstan in particular. In India's Connect Central Asia policy, Kazakhstan features prominently. For India, in order to make any inroad with the region, India-Kazakhstan relation needs to go beyond from present working partners to natural partners. There is going to be huge security vacuum in the region with the withdrawal of the US led forces from Afghanistan which has already started since 2014 and in 2021 January there has been the largest reduction in US Troops from Afghanistan amounting to 2500 soldiers causing a fear of revitalization of Taliban in Afganistan. For India, closer relations with the Central Asian states and particularly with Kazakhstan are

required to contain the terrorist problem in the region. Kazakhstan also searches partners like India to contain China and Russia in this region. The present work will be looking into India's engagement in the region especially with Kazakhstan and will try to study the complementary nature of economic energy and security interests of India in the region.

Scope and Objectives

With the absence of direct means of transport which is the main obstacle in developing India's relation with Kazakhstan, inter regional trade are creating demand for viable transport connectivity, land linking arrangements and important transit services which could be achieved at its best by reviving and restoring the legendary silk route and also a few more routes which would directly connect India China and Central Asia like the North South Corridor. And here Kazakhstan can play a key role in developing these routes into a reality as it has good relation with both China as well as India without irking US and Russia. This would further improve the chances of increasing cooperation between South Asia, Central Asia and China, keeping India in the centre. With this a new phase of more dynamic and vibrant relationship between India and Kazakhstan can be viewed. With Kazakhstan's progress in becoming a stable state economically and politically, India's central Asia policy also finds its root to be strengthened. The current political, strategic and economic scenario, both regionally and internationally, presents immense potential for India and Kazakhstan to qualitatively and quantitatively enhance their engagement to bring it to a significantly higher level. Both India and Kazakhstan are factors of peace, stability, growth and development not only in their regions but also in the world. Stronger and deeper relations between these countries will further contribute to increasing prosperity and security for the peoples of the two countries as also for the world as a whole.

Methodology

A comparative, analytical and descriptive methodology has been employed for the present study. The study has been based on both qualitative and quantitative data as the study involves security and economic arrangements between India and Central Asia as a whole and India and Kazakhstan relation in particular. For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data has been collected. Mainly secondary data has been collected as many of the bureaucrats have ceased to share any information or sit for interview pertaining to ministerial/departmental norms. In order to look into India's Central Asia Policy, a case study of India Kazakhstan relation has

been dealt with in details principally harping on the economic trade and energy relations along with the nontraditional security issues.

Secondary Data: The study has been mainly based on the secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from books, journals after visiting libraries of Jadavpur University Jawaharlal Nehru University library, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, American Library, British Council and JNU(2015) and newspaper clippings.

Primary Data: Along with secondary data, primary data has also been collected for the purpose of the present study. Primary source included government documents, documents of various bilateral and multilateral treaties. Besides, the present study proposed for conducting a survey among the different stakeholders of the proposed research work. To supplement the secondary study findings, a primary survey was planned to be conducted. For the purpose of the study, different type of stakeholders was planned to be interviewed on different aspects of India-Central Asia relations and India-Kazakhstan relations. Some of the major stakeholders of the study would have been Central Asian and Kazakhstan experts like Academicians, ex-diplomats who served in the region from India and vice-versa, the current diplomats, strategic and security experts, economist, etc but only representatives from cultural sector could be interviewed over social media like instagram and the information received were exclusively on movies and dramas and lifestyle which offers to have knowledge only of a particular sector and provides no information as such about the area of research that I have tried to dwell into. Besides, young and emerging research scholars were called in for interview in order to elicit their perception towards India's increasing engagement in the region. Around 10 experts and young scholars from Kazakhstan as well as from India was scheduled to be interviewed in social media but none turned up. A few who turned up did not agree in giving formal interview but was open for casual discussions. A field trip was also planned to be made in Kazakhstan at Astana, Almaty and Shymkent. But it could not be materialized due to Covid lockdown situation. The Research Schedule as planned couldn't be brought into action as no one agreed to a formal questionnaire. For the analysis of qualitative data, statistical data have been presented through tables followed by an analysis.

Chapterisation

India the largest democracy and a growing power house of South Asia, and Kazakhstan the oil rich state and the most successful state in having a stable relation with other central Asian states which skillfully maneuvers Russia and the West in Central Asia, the relation between these two economically promising nations definitely is an interesting area to be experimented with in order to venture India's Central Asia policy, since both the nations seek to develop an extensive commercial and strategic partnership.

1. India's Economic Relations with Post Soviet Central Asia: While the introductory chapter mainly gives an overview of what the following chapters shall deal with to establish the importance of India's Look North Policy surrounding around Central Asian Republics. This chapter titled as "*India's Economic Relations with Post Soviet Central Asia*" gives a brief historical introduction of India and Central Asian relationship which dates back to the Harappan Civilization to trading through silk route to cultural diplomatic exchange to the time of Czarist Russia and post 1917 with the rise of Soviet to fall of the same in 1991 with the formation of Central Asian Republics after its disintegration. Thus showing India always had interest in Central Asia and vice versa. Although borders have changed, earlier while south asia exclusively meant India but now South Asia comprises of many countries where Pakistan plays the pivotal role to counter the India's Central Asia policy. The chapter establishes the importance of having a strong Connect Central Asia Policy by showing a comparative study of India and Central Asian republics in economic sector and addresses the research question of "*Why is Central Asian region is an important area for South Asian region as a whole and India in particular?*"

Both South and Central Asian Region have long history which dates back their linkage through the Silk Road (a flourishing trading hub in history). Further the answer becomes incomplete without referring to *Mackinder's Heartland theory* which invariably shows the Central Asian Region being the heartland of the Great Game of territorial annexation travelling to the new great game of controlling the untapped and virgin energy resources of Central Asian region thereby incorporating South Asian nations in the new great game considering their enormous need of energy and natural resources since the

newly independent nation states find confidence in India mainly because of her historical linkage as well as selfless support and recognition to the newly independent Central Asian republics in the world forum. India definitely has her own interest in the region other than energy interest as this region is equally unstable due to nontraditional security threats such as terrorism, illicit arms trade, human trafficking , drug trafficking. Thus by trying to establish various arenas of India's Economic Relationship with the Central Asian Republics which proves that India always had bilateral partnership with each of the central Asian republic and the lacuna laid on the part of India to not have been able to establish a robust Look North Policy unlike she established the Look East Policy.

CARs is the epicenter of investment market and want to diversify their economy and want new partners. And India has the ability to help build Central Asians' capacities in areas such as information technology, science and technology, knowledge industries and soft power. Areas such as energy, non-conventional sources of energy and agro-based industries are promising spheres for trilateral cooperation. Joint ventures in cotton and agriculture can be established which could benefit the entire region. However, lack of direct connectivity and difficult market conditions in some parts of the region hamper interaction. Still, increasing linkages between India and Kazakhstan, Afghanistan's membership to the SAARC, and its emergence as a potentially important player in facilitating regional economic cooperation is shaping India's "Look North Policy". At this juncture, the concept of a "Greater Central Asia" offers opportunities to connect India with Central Asia, particularly in the transport and trade sectors. In a sense, it recreates the past history of the region when robust trading activity was a dominating feature. Afghanistan was the fulcrum on which such activities were carried out in various directions. Further if the transport and trade activities as envisaged by the Greater Central Asia concept are operationalized, the proposed Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline project could also see the light of the day. Indeed, transport and natural gas pipelines could run parallel to one another. Therefore India's relation with this region needs an in-depth examination and this chapter and the following chapters have been showing all the aspects in details.

2. India-Kazakhstan Economic Relations : India and Kazakhstan have historical, cultural and social links. In this respect the trade relationship between the two has its own significance. India-Kazakh trade is the most dynamic segment of India's foreign trade in Central Asian region. While there are comparing areas of comparative advantage, there is acute shortage of institutional and logistic infrastructure to cater it which has lifted a huge gulf between actual trades between the two countries which needs to be bridged. The driving force behind India's objective of enhanced engagement with Central Asia is economics. Kazakhstan has pursued "*Multivector foreign policy*" seeking good relations with its two large neighbors, Russia and China as well as with USA and rest of the Western world. Further it has the strongest and the largest performing economy in central Asia, supported by rising oil outputs and prices. If India can gain the confidence of Kazakhstan then it shall not be difficult for India to have a greater central Asia policy which India has started achieving as The recent achievements in 2015, with their earlier deal having expired, India and Kazakhstan signed a new agreement for the purchase of 5000 tonnes of Kazakh Uranium until the end of 2019. In 2009 with President's Nazarbayev's visit to India a civil nuclear pact had also been made signed where Kazakhstan will supply fuel to atomic plants of India. Kazakhstan has also sought to negotiate a multilateral trade agreement with Iran and Turkmenistan to create a transport corridor to India to ensure a reliable trade route and provide Kazakhstan commercial and shipping access to the warm water ports of India. To bolster commerce, both nations have established Indo-Kazakh joint Business council. Bilateral economic and trade relation with the 5 central asian republics have been focused to justify the successful trade relation with Kazakhstan and to work on the model of India Kazakhstan economic relationship to thrive as a successful third vector after Russia and China in the region.

Apart from the bilateral cooperation, India has also focused on multilateral engagement with the region at two levels. The first is through regional connectivity, with a renewed push for long delayed projects starting with Prime Minister Modi's visit to Iran, India's gateway to Central Asia, in 2016. During this visit, both sides signed an agreement to develop Chabahar Port, which has now become commercially operational. To facilitate transport of goods between India and Central Asia via Iran, India acceded to the Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets

in 2017 and joined the Ashgabat Agreement – which includes Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – in 2018. While these steps have given a new lease of life to India's vision for Eurasian connectivity, New Delhi must combine skillful diplomacy with action on the ground to ensure the continued viability of these projects in the face of US-Iran tensions.

The second is through platforms for multilateral cooperation with both the Central Asian states and other external powers. On the economic front, India and the Eurasian Economic Union, which includes the Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, set up a Joint Study Group to explore the possibility of a Free Trade Agreement in 2015 but formal negotiations are yet to begin though the feasibility report have been submitted by the group in 2017.

Within the region, India has observed the strengthening of mutual understanding, dialogue and cooperation among the Central Asian states. Recognizing this as a positive step, India has explored opportunities to engage with the region as a whole rather than bilaterally or as part of mechanisms that include other external powers. The first ever India-Central Asia Dialogue, at the Foreign Ministers' level, was held in Samarkand on 13 January 2019. The second iteration of the dialogue is expected to be held in New Delhi in 2020. Through regular institutional dialogue and exchanges, this platform can help bring India and the region closer together.

Geography has placed Central Asia at the nexus of crucial political and economic transformations for centuries. With the actualization of the BRI, India's Connect Central Asia policy, and the EU's new Central Asia strategy, the 21st century could possibly be the most decisive period for the region. Stemming from its historic cultural and economic bonds, India is now well placed to take a more active role in the development of the region. India's growing global visibility and key contributions to multilateral forums – like the SCO – have catapulted India from an observer into a critical stakeholder in the region. As India looks beyond its borders, Central Asia provides India with the right platform to leverage its political, economic and cultural connections to play a leading role in Eurasia.

3. India-Kazakhstan Energy Cooperation: India is fourth largest consumers of energy according to EIA 2013 and domestic production is not sufficient to meet the domestic

consumption and the total energy demand is expected to be double by 2025. To balance this gap India has to import cost effective energy products and CARs which is the best alternative for India given the distance between India and the CARs which is minimal as compared to the Gulf countries thereby its transportation cost would decrease. Therefore security and stability of central Asia is of utmost importance to India because of accessing and transporting of energy resources. For India, a greater challenge than that of exploiting central Asian energy resources is how to transport them to India, as there are few choices available to it, building oil or gas pipelines through Afghanistan and Pakistan would clearly be extremely difficult, even if it were possible to construct, they could not be relied upon. India therefore proposed for hydrocarbon pipeline from Kazakhstan which is 1500 km, longer than that of TAPI heading from former Silk Road. The ancient silk road has been revived by the CARs (landlocked countries) to build connectivity with the global markets. Furthermore to maintain its growth, India needs to assure its energy supplying and external routes to drain its production. *As Sachdeva (2007) puts in: "New energy resources from Greater Central Asia will play an important role in Indian energy strategy in the coming years"*. This conscience is clear when India takes part in TAPI Pipeline project. The country is also a partner of the North South International Trade Corridor and plays a key role in the SAARC. Thus India needs to show itself as an alternative partner and investor to develop infrastructure and local economies in Central Asia and use its relationship with Kazakhstan to place itself as the third weight on the balance.

- *Has India been able to set up a vibrant and dynamic energy economic and trade relation with Kazakhstan? Can India Kazakhstan relation help India to have a strong and vibrant "Connect Central Asia Policy"? How would Russia and China factor work here?*

Four different chapters have been thoroughly explained to deal with this question. To secure its energy interests, India has expanded civil nuclear cooperation with the region. Again Kazakhstan personally shares a good relation with India. It gained the confidence of India when it condemned the 13th December 2001 attack on Indian Parliament saying terrorism is unjustifiable and that terrorism should be fought back globally thereby completely eliminating it and promised to be by side of India.

Further India and Kazakhstan has also developed close collaboration in fighting religious terrorism and extremism as well as promoting regional security. A joint memorandum signed in 2002 enabled joint projects such as training military officers, developing joint military industrial projects and establishing partnership between the defence industries of India and Kazakhstan. India also extended support to Kazakhstan in building a naval fleet in Caspian Sea despite Russia's opposition. In 2015, with their earlier deal having expired, India and Kazakhstan signed a new agreement for the purchase of 5000 tonnes of Kazakh Uranium until the end of 2019. Currently, both sides are negotiating a third agreement, as part of which Kazakhstan is planning to increase its supplies to India to 7500-10000 tonnes. India also signed a uranium supply agreement with Uzbekistan.

4. Non-Traditional security issues in India-Kazakhstan Relations: India and Central Asia have convergence of interests especially India and Kazakhstan in the areas of non-traditional security threats like drug trafficking, terrorism and domestic turmoil as their economies are hampered the most with the trade disturbance resulted out of non-traditional security threats. Despite of an investment treaty between India and Kazakhstan (Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement), yet cross border investment between the two is weak. From the problem of direct land connectivity and India's inability to take the route through Pakistan and Afghanistan on account of the unstable security and political situation in these countries to the huge "information gap" that exist between the two nations on the potential and prospect of collaborating with each other that hinders the two from realizing the full potential of their relationship has been dealt with precision. Religious extremism and fundamentalism pose serious challenge to regional stability. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001 foreign powers took much greater interest in preventing the spread of radical Islamic terrorist organizations such as IRP and IMU. The central Asian Nations offered their territory and airspace for use by US and its allies in operations against Taliban in Afghanistan. Powers such as US-Russia-China were not only interested in fighting terrorism; they used war on terror in order to advance their political and economic agendas in the region, particularly over the exploitation of central Asian energy resources. Thus the new game is centered on regional oil and gas politics. Now, instead of competing for actual control over a

geographic area, pipeline, tanker routes, petroleum consortiums, and contracts are the prizes of the new Great Game which could be established only if there is stability in the region. Security Interest figure most prominently in India's Central Asia Policy. The security situation in Central Asia directly affects India's own security through Pakistan cross border terrorism which results in striving captive power by coercive means resulting in civil strife and turbulence and having spillover effect on Kashmir Issue. The compatibility of security interests between India and Kazakhstan was evident when the two countries signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership in 2009. India's policy towards Central Asia is becoming energized and proactive, unlike in the past, when it was reactive. India also held its first joint army exercise with Kazakhstan, PrabalDostyk, in 2016. Held annually thereafter, this was renamed as the KAZIND in 2018. This exercise focuses on joint counter insurgency and counter terrorist operations in urban and rural environments, mountainous terrains, and those conducted under the mandate of the United Nations. In addition, the Kazakh Armed Forces Unit also underwent training on peacekeeping operations in India in April-May 2018 and was then deployed under the command of an Indian Battalion at UNIFIL Lebanon.

- *How did the threat of religious extremism, Islamic fundamentalism and rise of terrorism over the years had an impact on the relationship of India and Central Asian region? And Has Kazakhstan been any importance to help India fight back terrorism and vice-versa?*

The regional security challenges in Central Asia have the potential of spilling over into India. The increasing Islamic radicalization has become a major security concern for the governments of the region. Given its experience in successfully tracking down and limiting the influence of the IS domestically, India's agenda in Central Asia includes cooperation to tackle terrorism and radicalization. At the bilateral level, India has enhanced the institutional basis for its defence cooperation with the region. Notably, during Prime Minister Modi's visits in 2015, India signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and agreements related to defence and military technical cooperation with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. Reflecting the growing engagement, India and Kyrgyzstan agreed to hold their bilateral military exercise, Khanjar, annually. The following year, they agreed to construct a Mountain Training Centre to provide instruction, train personnel of the Kyrgyz Armed Forces and to host joint mountain

training exercises. Most recently, during Uzbek President Mirziyoyev's visit to India last year, both sides agreed to expand cooperation in the areas of counterterrorism, with joint military training exercises, military education and military medicine. They also agreed to institutionalize this cooperation by setting up a Joint Working Group on defence related activities.

5. Russia and China factor in India-Kazakhstan Relations :The two most influential nation states in Central Asian Region. While Russia has its importance because all the Central Asian republics are formed with the disintegration of Soviet Union or Soviet Russia but China has its control over Central Asian Republics mainly because of direct connectivity that it has with the all the Central Asian Republics especially Kazakhstan. Russia traditionally has been Central Asia's main trading partner. But commercial ties between Russia and the region have atrophied over the past decade with the increased trade figures being 30 billion dollars with China in 2016 while that of Russia being just 18.6 billion. Now with India's presence in the region which was not liked by China and Russia but with Russia's strong support the SCO expanded to include both India and Pakistan, when the membership of the former was obstructed by China. India defines Central Asia as an extended neighbor despite sharing border with Central Asia because of its historical linkages. This Chapter has been divided into segments principally showing influence of Russia on Central Asian States especially Kazakhstan and its Impact, Influence of China on Central Asian States especially Kazakhstan and its Impact and readjustment of its policies towards the region from exploitative to constructive following the influence of India over the Central Asian Republics. Further it was also very interesting to notice that the policy of China in the region towards India has always been to counter. The best example being giving permanent status to Pakistan when India was given the permanent status in SCO from the observer status. China's further attempt is to develop Gwadar Port in Pakistan which is again a counter on India's Central Asia policy for developing the Chabahar Port at Iran to have unhindered connectivity with Central Asian Region. To add fuel into the fire China and Iran are on the verge of signing 400 billion dollar project which India fears of a willful hindrance of China on the Chabahar Project which has remained halted due to diplomatic sanctions imposed by USA over Iran. Thus India has been utilizing its full time membership in SCO to gain grounds in the region and establish

a strong Central Asia policy through its projects like North South Transport Corridor to gain access to the resource rich central Asian countries.

Chapter 1

India's Economic Relations with Post-Soviet Central Asia

India's strategic and economic relation with the Central Asian countries goes back to the Harappa civilization. The fame, vibrancy and geopolitical importance of the silk route are very well known in the annals of the history. However, with the advance of civilizations and formation and deformation of new empires, it became gradually obsolete and was replaced by other avenues of transport (namely ships) and communication. But its essential importance is again revived by certain significant political and geo-strategic developments in the region and is, as a matter of fact, being deeply felt now by India, Iran and Central Asian countries and endeavors are afoot to convert the obsolete into operational with modifications suited to the present era to facilitate quid pro quo between modern Indian and Central Asian countries' economic and political requirements.

What caused this sudden shift of importance to Central Asia and how it has gradually attracted India's economic interests eventually adding distinction to it are the main objects in question. Therefore, it is in the interest of due diligence and comprehensive understanding that a brief recollection of post-World War II, India's foreign policy development be ventured so as to be on a more reasonable premise to understand and reflect on the intricacies of a very complex phenomenon which is gradually shaping itself up as India's economic relations with the post-Soviet Central Asia.

Historical Background

Post World War II, India's strategic positioning was a difficult one given she had inherited the benign and the collective self-consciousness of a country just shaken loose from the shackles of centuries of subordination, tyranny and deprivation trying to meekly bargain her way through international developments and adopting policies best suited to her purpose (the policy of Non-Alignment). Rattled by the general exposition of cold-war between two great powers, namely, the U.S. and the Soviet Union, wounded by her hostile neighbors' namely Pakistan and China, India had to tread very carefully until she would be in a position to develop herself to be a voice worth attention.

However, tireless disruptions from Pakistan with the blessings of USA and a belligerent China had an inverse reaction when a cornered India dealt a tactical upper hand by relaxing the impractical austerity of non-alignment and took the lone helping hand extended to her by Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and signed India-USSR non-aggression pact in 1971. But this debt of gratitude also came with a catch. India had to silently bear with the military excesses of USSR in Afghanistan with the intention of establishing communist governance with their military might and taunting the capitalist U.S. The U.S replied in kind by way of raising the notorious radical group - Taliban with her abundant military and monetary support. By the end of 1980s, the communist government in Afghanistan was overthrown and replaced by their Taliban counterparts followed by the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Soviet Russia was sitting on a loose chair barely held together by the military command straining under the clamors of self-determination of soviets. This distant thunder i.e. this apparently unrelated international signs (in terms of India's foreign policy) were a subtle hint of a more serious and infinitely more complex repercussions to come in the tectonics of international politics:

1) The dissolution of USSR in 1991 and subsequent rise of Central Asian states like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Mongolia implied that the international politics with respect to India was steadily tipping from bipolar to multi polar approach i.e. India's tactics needed multifaceted aspects in order to tap into their immense natural resources (oil, natural gas, manganese, uranium) by establishing a direct transit route in exchange for technological, educational and monetary support.

2) Preoccupied with power-play USA had unwittingly given birth to a Leviathan, the notorious Taliban group, which is, as it is perceived, to become capable of hostilities far beyond the imagination of its mentor. With the administrative power of Afghanistan in its firm grip, it became a manufacturer of violence strife, intra-sect turf wars, and infiltrations. Its sympathies and religious dispositions being common with those of Pakistan, India's economic and political interests were at stake, because she had to choose between the absurdity of maintaining commercial trade establishment via convoluted sea-route to Iran, and thence to Central Asian countries through a hostile Afghanistan, and endeavoring bargain to establish a direct transport route to Central Asian countries which is politically difficult but more feasible, arguing that the changes in international scenario might eventually mould the attitude of China and Pakistan and

Afghanistan and Central Asian countries to look for their own perks in trade and be benefitted as well. Although the possibility of that mutual co-operation is remote at present, endeavoring to achieve it is more sensible to India's economic interests than sticking back to continuation of economically unprofitable ventures in roundabout sea-route to Iran and thence to Central Asia skirting a hostile Taliban administrated Afghanistan and a strife-torn Af-Pak border.

3) Globalization in India ushering in prospect of foreign investments and trade opportunities multiplying, her concern was the growing consumption of natural resources and procurement of alternative source of energy (nuclear energy) to support her populations. The great powers like USA and regional powers like China being opposed to her ambitions, she naturally took the gamble of benignly negotiating to help the Central Asian states with her technological resources, strategic partnership in exchange for a possibility of tapping into their natural resources (uranium, natural gas ,oil etc.). The CAS being carved out of Russia and sharing a considerable part of their borders with China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran they are highly prone to being influenced by either, some or all of them. Whereas the CAS has external concern over outbreak of terrorism from Afghanistan and Pakistan, Russian and Chinese inhibitions vis-a-vis responding to India's economic interests in the region, they share the internal divisive concern of corruption, strife, drug racketeering and political instability in the region. Therefore, so long as the CAS are not united under a common umbrella of interest to establish a political and economic partnership with India, India, has to make efforts to enter into economic partnerships one-on-one. India has been low-key in flaunting her status as a non-alignment front-runner and abstained from inflicting her interests on CAS. This enigmatic attitude of India has the two-fold impact of- at once rousing speculation over her actual political and geo-strategic interests and inspiring good-will at her gentleness and her willingness to help them with what little she has under all circumstances (Foshko, 2012)¹.

4) India is an emerging power in the world. Her growth requires both vast energy and food requirements and scope for investments and security. Her neighbor- Pakistan together with the radical Taliban from the Afghan borders has made security concerns even graver for her by

¹ Foshko, K. (2012, February). *India in Central Asia Time for a New Strategy*. Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations.

aiding cross-border infiltrations and remote-controlling terrorist activities. The CAS, albeit beset with internal strives, and being hotspots for covert criminal rendezvous, are concerned with the eruption of terrorist outrages infiltrating into their territories and endangering their national security. From this perspective India, a secular country with generally benevolent attitude to other countries, has all the potentials to be a reliable economic and geo-strategic partner. Despite India's aforementioned potentials to be an important factor, India has so far been underutilizing her opportunities whereas China has been instrumental with her vast economic enterprises in tapping into the natural resources and clinching hugely profitable deals. Ironically, whereas China's expansionist disposition should be theoretically despised by freedom-loving Central Asian people and India's gentleness appreciated by the same, it is a strange fact that China is far ahead of India in terms of economic enterprises. The recent encouragement by U.S for India to play a greater role in CAS is motivated by balancing interests (India: Domestic Issues, Strategic Dynamics, and U.S. Relations, July 31, 2006 – September 1, 2011)². But for India it should be sensible if she considers it more in the interest of quietly diversifying her energy supplies and benefitting by establishment of fair-trade and political good-will rather than merely denting into increasing Chinese influences in the region (Singh Roy, 2012)³.

This being the run-up to the inception of economic partnership between India and CAS, a more particularized account (India to each CAS country) strictly limited to the economic aspects and the important geostrategic aspects in the formulation of India's interactions with these countries is following:

A Brief Understanding of India's Economic Engagement with Central Asian Republics:

The launch of India-Central Asia Business council on February 7, 2020, in New Delhi signals the renewed focus to boost business & economy between India and Central Asian Countries. India and the five Central Asian republics -Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan declared to collaborate to promote business in the region.

² India: Domestic Issues, Strategic Dynamics, and U.S. Relations.(July 31, 2006 – September 1, 2011). CRSR Report. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL33529.html>.

³Roy, M. S.(2012). *India's Interests in Central Asia*, Volume 24,Issue no 12 .

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar highlighted the formation of the Council as a significant step in exploring the investment opportunities and examining the viability of establishing air corridors between India and Central Asia. At the same, he also expressed the concern over India's low level of trade with the Central Asian Republics "despite excellent bilateral relations".

India's economic relations with Central Asian Republics have been shaped by the new economic order where India engages with the region through extended neighbourhood policy. Within the framework of Connect Central Asia policy launched in 2012, India seeks to maintain peace and stability in the region securing energy security, prevent terrorism, control drug trafficking, and establish mutually beneficial economic ties. India has adopted the multilateral approach towards the Central Asian Republics. India is developing its contact with the region not only through strengthening bilateral relations but also as a new member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and connectivity projects. India has successfully agreed to the renovation of Chabahar port, development of International North-South Corridor (INTSC) and membership of Ashgabat Agreement.

The Problem Area for a successful Economic Relation between India and Central Asia:

India's renewed interest in Central Asia can be attributed to the geopolitical relevance of the region with Chinese inroads in the region through infrastructural projects like Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a continued legacy of Russia's dominance, and the external security dynamics. India's trade level amounts with Central Asian countries amount to 2 billion US Dollars now which is less than 0.5 percent of India's overall trade volume, and a fraction of the region's 100 billion US Dollars trade with China (Mogilevskii, 2012)⁴. India's lack of visibility in the Central Asian region can be accorded to geographical as well as geopolitical factors. Absence of direct land connectivity to the Central Asian region act as a constraint in India's economic engagement in the region. The unfriendly investor, unfriendly environment along with a strict visa regime in Central Asian countries proves to be another major obstacle in strengthening economic contacts. Instability in Afghanistan due to terrorist activities and drug trafficking also limit India's reach to

⁴ Mogilevskii, R. (2012). *Trends and Patterns in Foreign Trade of Central Asian Countries*. University of Central Asia: Institute of Public Policy and Administration.

the Central Asian region. The reluctance of Pakistan to allow the transit route to India worsens the situation as seen in the case of Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan Iran (TAPI) pipeline which is on hold till date. Chinese products enter Central Asia with relative ease and provide a tough competition to India. While China caters to a wide range of products from oil, gas to mobile phones. India's trade relations limit to high-end products.

India has the potential to revitalize the economic relations not just through connectivity and energy security but in the spheres of knowledge transfer, enterprise, innovation, pharmaceutical, tea industry, and spices. India's major trade in the region is more than half with Kazakhstan (55 percent) and Uzbekistan (20percent) Turkestan (10%) Kyrgyzstan (9%) Tajikistan (6%). India has to adopt a country-specific trade strategy instead of one size fits all approach while engaging with Central Asia (Meena, 2020)⁵.

Uzbekistan

Since after Uzbekistan's independence, India was one of the first countries to respond by opening a consulate in Tashkent. Uzbekistan is reputed for its high agricultural turnovers with intensive farming with the help of artificial irrigation. She is also rich in uranium, oil, coal, copper, etc. India's involvement with her started with helping Indian students living there and gradually elevated to exporting medicinal help, telecommunication overhaul, conceptualization of software for educational purposes(ITEC),capital goods (during former Indian Prime Minister NarsimhaRao's visit in 1993). "Trade relations between India and Uzbekistan are governed by the Agreement on Trade and Economic Co-operation signed in May 1993. It covers such elements as mutual MFN treatment, promotion of economic, industrial, scientific and technical cooperation, including in the field of training of personnel, active participation of small and medium sized enterprises in bilateral economic cooperation, and counter-trade, etc. India and Uzbekistan also signed an Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation in 1993 and Agreement on Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection in May 1999. (MEA , Govt. of India, 1993-

⁵ Meena, A. (2020, May 10). *Strengthening India's economic engagement in Central Asia*. <https://thekootneeti.in/2020/05/10/strengthening-indias-economic-engagement-in-central-asia/>.

94)⁶”. Trade diversified during Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh’s visit to Uzbekistan with bilateral agreements on import of oil, natural gas, and utilization of mining Uzbekistan. (Wikipedia)⁷

India’s trade with Uzbekistan as per India’s exports to Uzbekistan includes drugs, pharmaceuticals, machinery instruments, metal products, paper & wood products, meat preparations. Raw cotton and non-ferrous metals constitute the largest item of Indian imports from Uzbekistan. Other principal items of import are petroleum, hide and skin, pulses, raw silk and services. India also extended humanitarian aid by way of extending Line of credit to draught relief-programmes, by supplying medicines for tuberculosis in 2001. According to the figures published by the State Committee on Statistics, Republic of Uzbekistan, the total trade turnover between India and Uzbekistan in 2010 was 151.0 million US Dollars and rose by 27.3% compared to the same period of previous year. Total trade turnover for the period from January-September 2011 also increased by 10% over the same period in 2010. Total trade turnover with India by 2011 was 89.6 million US Dollars according to the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan⁸

⁶ Annual Report 1993-94. MEA Library: Ministry of External Affairs, *Government of India*.
<https://mealib.nic.in/?2522?000>.

⁷ India–Uzbekistan relations. (2016, May 10). In *Wikipedia*.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India%E2%80%93Uzbekistan_relations.

⁸ India–Uzbekistan relations. (2016, May 10). In *Wikipedia*.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India%E2%80%93Uzbekistan_relations.

Year	Imports from India(In US milliom Dollars)	Exports to India(In USMilliom Dollars)	Total Trade Turn Over (in US Million dollars)
2012	163.4	37.8	201.2
2013	217.4	42.2	259.6
2014	249.0	67.0	316.0
2015	260.6	58.7	319.3
2016	318.1	51.9	370.0
2017	291.0	32.6	323.6
2018	261.3	23.3	284.6
2019	193.46	44.8	238.26

Source : Uzbekistan State Statistic Committee

Among other important economic developments are following: Indian textile company “Spentex” bought two textile mills near Tashkent in August 2006 with an investment of 81 million US Dollars. Spentex also acquired one more textile company in Ferghana in 2007 and made further investment of USD 6 million. Ashok Minda Group of India has established a joint venture with Uzavtosanoat and formed “OzMinda LLC” in March 2010 in Free Industrial Economic Zone, Navoi with a total investment of 9 million US Dollars. The company is producing driver information system and security systems of automobiles. The major customer is GM Uzbekistan. In June 2011, Uzbekistan Government announced that ONGC would undertake exploration work in the central part of Uzbekistan from 2011-2015. (MEA, Gov. of India)⁹A Cooperation Agreement was executed on 28.09.2018 between ONGC Videsh Limited and Uzbek Nefte Gaz to jointly explore the possibilities to assess potential opportunities in exploration blocks, under development assets and producing fields/blocks located within the Republic of Uzbekistan and third countries pertaining to upstream sector, with an initial term of two years. A

⁹ Ministry of external affairs: Government of India. https://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visits.htm?2/outgoing_visits.

Joint Working Team with members from UNG and ONGC Videsh is formed and preliminary data is under review (ONGC, 2018-2019)¹⁰. During President Shavkat Mirziyoyev visit to India on 30 September- 01 October 2018, 17 Agreements/MoUs were signed concerning scientific and technical cooperation, agriculture, tourism, military, education, justice, health and medical science, pharmaceuticals, space exploration for peaceful purposes and other areas. Agreements were signed on establishment of cooperation between Andijan region and state of Gujarat, the cities of Samarkand and Agra, organization of a free pharmaceutical zone. Both countries agreed to initiate action to start negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit-2019 in January 2019 as Guest of honour. Deputy Chairman of the State Investment Committee signed the framework agreement with the Exim Bank worth 200 million US Dollars for construction of affordable housing and other social infrastructure projects. India has also offered to consider further credit of USD 800 million under Lines of Credit and Buyer's Credit mechanism of Exim Bank. The first meeting of the India Uzbekistan Joint Business Council was held in Ahmadabad on 17 January, 2019. The first "India-Central Asia" Dialogue with participation of Afghanistan took place in Samarkand in January 2019 jointly hosted by India and Uzbekistan. Foreign Ministers emphasised the need to take measures for promoting mutual trade, strengthening cooperation in attracting investments, innovations and technology to the economies of the region, developing transit and transport communication potential of Central Asian countries, increasing tourism, as well as implementing specific joint projects in the spheres of science, medicine, education and sports. India and Uzbekistan have a modest bilateral trade turnover of over 300 million Dollars. Pharmaceuticals is a major area of both trade and investment by India. Medical tourism to India has increased sharply in the recent past. The 11th Session of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held on 16 August, 2018. On the margins of the IGC, Joint Working Group meetings on Cotton & Textiles, Information &

¹⁰ Annual Report 2018-2019. ONGC. https://www.ongcindia.com/wps/wcm/connect/a424064f-1ad7-4b99b8eda00874496b3c/annualreport201819.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORLDSPACE-a424064f-1ad7-4b99-b8ed-a00874496b3c-mNwhsly.

Technology, Tourism and Pharmaceuticals were held. Business forums anchored by CII and Uzbek Chamber of Commerce were held in Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. (MEA.Gov.in)¹¹

India has been especially co-operative with conceptualizing and providing educational soft-wares for Uzbekistan, in training of their students. The visit of Indian present Prime Minister MrNarendraModi to Uzbekistan in 2016 was quite successful in strengthening the bilateral ties between India and Uzbekistan. Besides inking three pacts to boost their cooperation in the field of economy, culture and tourism, agriculture, information technology and energy, the two governments also discussed about regional issues including that of the rising threat of extremism and terrorism in the extended neighborhood especially on the vulnerability of Afghanistan (The Hindu, 2016)¹². Further besides agreeing on intensifying on security cooperation and exchanges, they also agreed to strengthen cooperation in defence and cyber security. Noting that the two countries have built a strategic partnership, Mr. Modi said, “This includes expanding economic cooperation, combating terrorism, advancing stability in the region and promoting regional integration.”.While Uzbekistan President supported India’s permanent membership in UN Security Council, Indian Prime Minister proposed Uzbekistan to become a member of International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC). The Prime Minister also sought Uzbek president’s support for India joining the Ashgabat Agreement.

India and Uzbekistan held their first Bilateral " Virtual Summit" on December 11, 2020. The Prime Minister of India and President of Uzbekistan took part in it. Nine memorandums of Understandings (MOU) were signed between the two countries to boost up co-operation in renewable energy , IT, Community development projects and Cybersecurity.The Indian side confirmed the approval of 448 milliom US Dollars of Line of Credit to be extended by India for

¹¹ India - Uzbekistan Bi-lateral relations. (2020).
https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Uzbekistan_Updated_Bilateral_brief_feb_2020.pdf.

¹² India, Uzbekistan ink pacts to boost cooperation. (2015, July 06). Updated (2016, April 03). The Hindu.
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/prime-minister-narendra-modis-visit-to-uzbekistan/article7392482.ece>.

four developmental projects in Uzbekistan in the fields of road construction , sewerage treatment and IT.¹³

TAJIKISTAN

Within three years since her inception in 1991, a procommunist government came which later ratified a Presidential system of parliament. But Muslim-rebels kept fighting against god-less pro-Communists. However with the intervention of Russia, a peace treaty was signed between President Rakhmanov and the oppositions.

The economic relations between India and Tajikistan was to face the ups and downs owing to Tajikistan's territorial contiguity with Afghanistan and an internal conflict between her authoritarian regime and Muslim rebels with a seriously preponderant security issue with respect to India. Tajikistan's economy is basically agro-centric encapsulating farming, horticulture & cattle breeding. Their harvest consists of grain, potatoes, milk, eggs, wool, cotton. Significant among their natural resources are brown coal, lead, zinc, oil, uranium radium and arsenic. Industry is diversified by mining, engineering, food, textile, clothing, bricks, ferroconcrete, knitwear and footwear.

What if Tajikistan's non-traditional security concerns and India's lukewarm responsive bilateral trade has not advanced significantly, India has been instrumental in establishing both governmental and private industrial sector- pharmaceutical, engineering, telecommunication, soft power (technological), hospitality management partnership with her.

According to MEA Document of 2003, In 1995, India extended a credit line of 5 million US Dollars to the Government of Tajikistan to set up a Joint Venture with a private Indian company "Ajanta Pharma" for production of pharmaceuticals. The Joint venture, "Tajik Ajanta Pharma" could not function due to the inability of Tajik side to provide working capital. The Government of India converted the principal amount along with the accrued interest of 3.37 million US Dollars into a grant during the visit of Prime Minister of India in November 2003. Under a grant of 0.75 million US Dollars, India set up a Modern Engineering Workshop which was commissioned it in June 2011.

¹³ Chaudhury, S. (2020, December 31)Pakistan, China Counter US, India BECA Pact With Military Intelligence Deal. *The Eurasia Times*.

During the State visit of President Rahmon to India in August 2006, India committed to undertake rehabilitation and modernization of a 1936 vintage Varzob-1 Hydro Power Station through Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC). Government of India financed the project through 100% grant at an estimated cost of approximately US \$ 20 million. After renovation, installed capacity was enhanced from 2x3.67 MW to 2x4.75 MW. On 28 December, 2012, Minister of Energy and Industry of Tajikistan and Ambassador of India inaugurated the rehabilitated Power Station. (MEA, Govt of India, 2013)¹⁴

Further, Indian private investments in Tajikistan included that an Indian company KEC/RPG (Kamani Engineering Corporation/Raman Prasad Goenka Group) completed the construction of 116 km long power transmission line from Sangtuda-1 Hydropower plant to the Afghan border in October 2010. On a commercial contract, BHEL supplied a 7 MW generator to Tajik company “Pamir Energy” and this project was completed in 2011. During the visit of President Rahmon to India from September 1-4, 2012, India, as part of its ongoing developmental partnership with Tajikistan, announced new development projects including: an IT Centre of excellence; an e-network, including tele-education and tele-medicine; medical centres; language laboratories; an Entrepreneurship Development Institute; supply of agricultural machinery; and the implementation of a package of small development projects (SDPs). According to the Department of Commerce, Government of India, between April and September (2012-13), India’s exports to Tajikistan was at a meagerly value of 15.83 US dollars and imports from Tajikistan stood at 6.83 million US Dollars, which was 0.010 million US Dollar (export to India in 2018), while its import from India was 20.49 million US Dollars. Tajikistan's total import in 2017 was 23.41 million and export to India was 0.248 million US Dollars (MEA, Govt. of India, 2020)¹⁵.

Tajikistan president’s visit to India led to the signing of agreements against terror financing and money laundering, stabilizing Afghanistan, bilateral investment and avoidance of double taxation. Tajikistan invited India to invest in four free economic zones that have come up

¹⁴ Annual Report 2013-2014. *Ministry of External Affairs*.
https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/23873_EXTERNAL_AFFAIR_Eng_AR_2013-14.pdf.

¹⁵ India-Tajikistan Bilateral Relations.(2020, February 03). *Ministry of External Affairs*.
https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bilateral_Brief_Taji_Feb_2020.pdf.

in the country and thanked her for the modernization of the Varzob-1 Hydropower Station. (Bhattacharya, 2016)¹⁶ President Rahmon sought investment from India in the small and medium hydroelectricity projects, appreciated the signing of the trilateral Chabahar port agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan as the project will provide connectivity to Tajikistan. From Chabahar, India could connect with the border town of Zaranj in Afghanistan and then, through the Zaranj-Delram highway constructed by India, it can connect further north to Central Asia and beyond. So besides the INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor) which is a water/land/rail route to Central Asia, Russia and Europe via the Arabian Sea, Iran and the Caspian Sea bypassing Pakistan, the Chabahar Port can help India in getting access to Central Asia. Chabahar Port also provides direct access to India's Farkhor Air Base in Tajikistan. Chabahar route thus results in 60% reduction in shipment costs and 50% reduction in shipment time from India to Central Asia. (Baruah, 2019)¹⁷ But Iran's relations with Beijing have significantly improved in recent years, with the two planning on signing a proposed mega-deal on economic and security partnership, worth a staggering 400 billion dollars, which has garnered massive attention from India considering India's relation with China and China's preference towards Pakistan.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan, a Presidential Republic, is flanked by the Caspian sea on the left, Kazakhstan on the north, Uzbekistan on the east and north east and Afghanistan on the south. A significant 80 % of her land being Karakum desert, the life-blood of water flows through in the form of Karakum canal connected to Amu Darya River outside her boundaries. Despite several visits by diplomats of both the countries since early 1990s, important bilateral trade partnerships started belatedly. The 5th Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held in Ashgabat on 8 April 2015. During the 5th IGC, both sides signed an MoU on upgradation of the Turkmen-India Industrial Training Centre (TIITC) by HMT (Hindustan Machine Tools), besides wide ranging discussions on bilateral cooperation across the sectors. (Embassy of India, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan)¹⁸

¹⁶ Bhattacharya, K. (2016, December 18). (updated 2016, December 18). New Delhi, *The Hindu*. <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Tajikistan-India-step-up-security-ties/article16897179.ece>

¹⁷ Chabar Port: Why it's important for India. (2019, September 01). In *IFAIR*. <https://ifair.eu/2019/09/01/>.

¹⁸ Embassy of India. Ashgabat: Turkmenistan. <https://eoi.gov.in/ashgabat/>

TAPI (Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan– India) gas pipeline project remains active since the TAPI Summit was held in Ashgabat in December 2010. On 13 November, 2014 the four state gas companies of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India established a company (TAPI Pipeline Company) that will build, own and operate the planned 1,800-kilometer Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) natural gas pipeline. The company has been incorporated as a Special Purpose Vehicle in the Isle of Man. During the 22nd Steering Committee Meeting of TAPI, Turkmenistan offered to lead the Consortium which was agreed to unanimously by all the other three members. TAPI Ground Breaking Ceremony was held in Mary on 13 December 2015 marking the beginning of first phase of TAPI Gas Pipeline laying ceremony on Turkmen side till Afghan border (215 kms).

The TAPI Technical Working Group (TWG) was held in Ashgabat on 18-19 November 2014 followed by the TAPI Steering Committee Meeting. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas led the Indian delegation at the 19th Steering Committee Meeting of TAPI project was held in Ashgabat on 20 November, 2014. Hon'ble Minister P&NG also led Indian delegations to the 20th Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) which was held in Islamabad on February 11, 2015 and the 21st TAPI SCM that was held in Kabul on March 18, 2015. A stone-laying ceremony was held to commemorate the start of construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan section of the TAPI gas pipeline in December 2015 in Mary, Turkmenistan, near the Galkynysh gas field. The investment agreement for the development of the TAPI project was signed by the four countries in February 2016. The ceremony marking the beginning of construction of the Afghanistan-Pakistan section of the pipeline was held in February 2018. Designed to serve for 30 years, the pipeline is expected to commence operations in 2021. It is expected to transport 33 billion cubic metres (bcm) of natural gas a year. (Hydrocarbons Technology, 2020)¹⁹

Among other trade partnerships, India has been commercially engaged with Turkmenistan in exporting technological consultancy, pharmaceutical trade, textiles, petrochemical, electronic and electrical goods ventures as with other Central Asian countries. According to Indian Embassy in Ashkhabad, Indian exports touched 91.98 million US Dollars in

¹⁹Hydrocarbons technology. <https://www.hydrocarbons-technology.com/>. Visited on 15. 10. 2020

the financial year 2014-15. The trade figure is shown in tabular form. (Indian Trade Portal, 2020)²⁰

Bilateral trade in (in million US \$) between India and Turkmenistan			
Year	Indian exports	Indian imports	Turnover
2013-14	73.63	14.1	87.73
2014-15	91.98	13.05	105.03
2015-16	68.53	46.97	115.5
2016-17	57.6	21.32	78.92
2017-18	54.31	26.15	80.46
2018-19	45.64	20.63	66.27

Source: Indian Trade Portal 2020

Total trade for the year 2017-18 stood at 80.46 million US Dollars. Of this, exports from India stood at 54.31 million US Dollars and imports by India at 26.15 million US Dollars with India registering a trade surplus of 78.93 million US Dollars in its favour. Major items of import from India include electronic and electrical items, machinery and woven apparel and pharmaceuticals, frozen meat and tyres. Exports to India from Turkmenistan comprises of raw hides and inorganic chemicals (e.g. Iodine). India and Turkmenistan have been exploring opportunities for cooperation in petrochemical sector. A Memorandum of Understanding between ‘Turkmenhimiya’ (Turkmen Chemicals) and Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers on the supply of chemical products was signed during Hon’ble Indian Prime Minister’s visit to Ashgabat on 11 July, 2015. A five member Turkmen Automobile delegation visited New Delhi & Pune from 8-12 July 2018 for exploring opportunities in automobiles sector. They interacted with representatives from TATA motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti& Hero MotoCorp, etc. 15 Indian pharmaceutical companies participated in the International Health ‘Expo 2018’ on 20-23 July 2018 and a 26 member Pharmexcil delegation from India visited Ashgabat from 24-28 November 2018 to further explore business opportunities in Pharmaceutical sector.

²⁰ India Trade Portal. www.indiantradeportal.in, visited on 15.11.2020

Kyrgyzstan

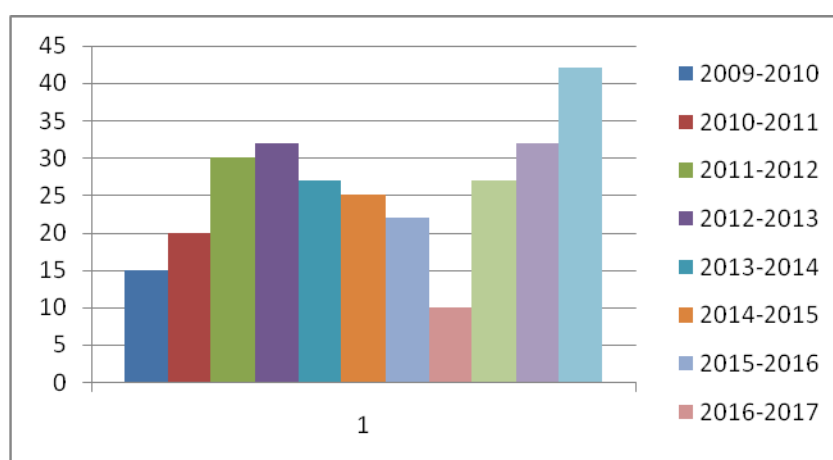
Having being independent on 31st of August 1991, Kyrgyzstan was recognized by India and India established diplomatic ties on 18th March 1992. Further-more the Resident mission was set up on 23rd May 1994. While politically the two nation states share a healthy and diplomatic relationship as the two countries face the common threat of terrorism, drug trafficking and extremism. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992, the two countries have signed several frameworks of agreements including on culture, trade and economic co-operation, civil aviation, investment promotion and protection, avoidance of double taxation, and consular convention. An Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation was set up in 1992. At the institutional level, 8th round of foreign office consultation which was held in Bishkek on 27th April 2016 discussed principally on inter-governmental commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation.

On 10th to 13th June 2013, India announced its Connect –Central Asia Policy with the visit of the then External Affairs Minister Shri E.Ahamed to Kyrgyzstan, with the 1st India Central Asia Track II Dialogue held in Bishkek. In this dialogue meeting, India declared India's intention to establish e-network in Central Asia to promote tele-medicine and tele-education. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on July 11-12, 2015, the relationship made new paths. He laid new wreath at Victory Square, gifted medical equipment to Field Hospitals, visited Kyrgyz-India Mountain Bio Medical Research Center; inaugurated Tele-medicine links between hospitals in Kyrgyzstan with super specialty hospitals in India, Four MOUs/Agreements in the field of Defence Cooperation, Culture, Election and Standardization were signed. A joint statement by Indian Prime Minister and Kyrgyzstan President was issued. Minister of State for External Affairs M.J Akbar visited Kyrgyzstan to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) Meeting held in Bishkek on 2-3 November 2016. (MEA, Govt. of India, 2020)²¹ He called on the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic. He also held bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister of Tajikistan and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran on the sidelines of the SCO summit meeting. The Kyrgyz President while his visit in India participated in the India-Kyrgyz Republic Business

²¹ Briefs on India's Bilateral Relations. (2017, August 30). *Ministry of External Affairs: Government of India*. <https://mea.gov.in/foreign-relations.htm>.

Forum. Seven Agreements/MoUs in the field of tourism, agriculture, youth development, cooperation between diplomatic, academies, broadcasting, exchange of cadets, and investment promotion were signed. Our close bilateral ties were reinforced with the Indian delegation meet of the Heads of Emergency Departments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization member States. The meeting was held in Cholpon Ata, Kyrgyzstan on 24-25 August 2017. (Ninth SCO Meeting of Heads of Emergency Prevention and Relief Agencies, 24.08.2017)²²

India-Kyrgyz trade was 24.98 million US Dollars in 2016-17. India's exports to Kyrgyzstan was 22.66 million US Dollars whereas Kyrgyz exports to India was 2.32 million US Dollars. Apparel and clothing, leather goods, drugs & pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, and tea are some of the important items that India exported to Kyrgyzstan. The Column diagram shows Kyrgyzstan's import from India(2009 -2020)



Kyrgyzstan imports from India

Kyrgyzstan exports to India consist of raw hides, metalifers ores & metal scrap, etc. The fifth and sixth session of India-Kyrgyz Joint Business Council meeting between Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Kyrgyz Chamber of Commerce and Industry took place in Bishkek on 19 March 2014 and in New Delhi on 02- 03 December 2014 respectively. In 1995, India had extended a 5 million US Dollars line of credit to Kyrgyzstan; out of this, 2.78 million US Dollars were disbursed for four projects – a plant for manufacturing toothbrushes, a polythene bag manufacturing plant, a toothpaste production plant and a pharmaceutical plant.

²²Press release on the Ninth SCO Meeting of Heads of Emergency Prevention and Relief Agencies, (2017, August

24). <http://infoshos.ru/en/print.php?idn=17095> visited on 15.11.2020

(MEA, Govt. of India, 2013)²³Kyrgyz Republic repaid 1.66 million US Dollars and the balance amount was converted to grant. During the visit of President Akaev to India in August 2002, Government of India had offered setting up an IT development centre and a potato processing plant in Kyrgyzstan. An MoU for setting up of a IT Development Centre was signed in Bishkek on March 20, 2006. The Indian implementing agency set up the Indo-Kyrgyz Centre for Information Technology in Bishkek and the Centre was formally inaugurated by Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Murli S. Deora on 15th August, 2007. Presently, this Centre is imparting short duration IT courses and has trained over 1000 professionals from Kyrgyzstan by now. An MoU was signed in May, 2009 for setting up a potato processing plant (for production of Potato chips and potato flakes) at Talas, Kyrgyzstan. The project was undertaken under India's Aid to Central Asia. The plant was inaugurated by Shri E. Ahmed, MoS for External Affairs on 12th June, 2012. Government of India provided assistance for setting up a mountain bio-medical research centre in Kyrgyzstan at Too Ashu Pass. The Centre was inaugurated on 05 July, 2011 by India's Defence Minister Shri A. K. Antony. Eighth session of India-Kyrgyzstan inter-governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held in Bishkek on 28th November 2016. The Indian side was led by Ms. Rita Teatota, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, government of India. The Commerce Secretary also held meeting with Kyrgyz Minister of Economy and discussed ways and means to improve trade and investment relations between the two countries. A ten member Business delegation from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) visited Bishkek on 6-9 December 2016 and participated in Bishkek Investment Forum. A road show was organized by the Mission on October 7, 2016 to promote tourism and particularly tourism. Five members of Congress of Women entrepreneurs visited India and took part in Surajkund Handicrafts Mela in Faridabad, Haryana from January 31 to February 14, 2017. In agriculture sector, three delegations visited Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek in connection with installation of demonstration unit for extraction of essential oil/aroma water. Technical assistance under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program, particularly in terms of human resources development is the cornerstone of India's economic involvement in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan has utilized 58 slots for 2016-17. More than 1040 professionals from Kyrgyzstan have received training in India

²³ Ministry of External affairs : Govt of India, (2013, January). https://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visits.htm?2/outgoing_visits, accessed on 15.11.2020

since 1992. 80 ITEC slots have been sanctioned for 2017-18.²⁴ It is also to mention that about 4500 Indian students are studying medicine in various medical institutions in Kyrgyzstan. A few businessmen are engaged in trade and services in Kyrgyzstan.

Kazakhstan

India was the first country to recognize Kazakhstan after its independence that was resulted with the disintegration of Soviet Union and established her first diplomatic ties on February 1992. The historical linkage of Kazakhstan with India, which dates back around 2000 years ago, finds new prism with its economic linkage in post-Soviet era. Kazakhstan, is the largest Central Asian country and the best performing economy in Central Asia. Agriculture constitutes approximately 5% of Kazakhstan's GDP with a diversified harvest of grains, potatoes, vegetables, melons and livestock. Her natural resources, too are abundant. According to some estimates, Kazakhstan has the second largest uranium, chromium, lead, zinc reserves the fifth largest copper reserves and ranks in the top ten for coal, iron and gold. The country has the 11th largest proven reserves of both petroleum and natural gas (Kazakhstan energy profile, 2020)²⁵. Therefore it is needless to explain why an energy-hungry India has been keen to establish bilateral economic partnership with Kazakhstan.

During the visit of President Nazarbayev in January 2009 a Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership was adopted which foresees comprehensive cooperation in all spheres. Both leaders met along the sidelines of the SCO summit in Yekaterinburg on June 16, 2009 and again on April 11, 2010 on the sidelines of Nuclear Security Summit in Washington and held fruitful discussions on promoting bilateral relations. As a follow up to the discussions, External Affairs Minister Shri S.M. Krishna visited Kazakhstan on 11th-13th May, 2010. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Astana on 15-16 April 2011. During the visits, several Agreements were signed. Important among them were:

- (i) Agreement between ONGC Videsh Limited and Kazmunaigas on Satpayev Exploration Block,

²⁴Manorama Year Book (2019), Kottam: Malayala Monorama

²⁵ Kazakhstan energy profile. (2020, April). IEA. <https://www.iea.org/reports/kazakhstan-energy-profile>.

- (ii) Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy,
- (iii) Joint Action Plan for furthering Strategic Partnership between India and Kazakhstan.

Mr Rajeev Kher , Secretary of Union Commerce led an official-cum-business delegation comprising of officials from department of Commerce, CII representatives and executives of select 12 companies to Kazakhstan for Ministry of Commerce flagship trade exhibition “INDIA SHOW-2014”. (Joint Feasibility Study Report on the Free Trade Agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union and its Member States, of the one Part, and the Republic of India, of the other Part, 2016), (MEA, 2014)²⁶ The India Show was held in Almaty from 27-30 March 2014, where over 140 Indian companies and Public Sector Units’representing diverse sectors such as manufacturing, engineering products, mechanical equipments, chemicals, pharmaceutical products, oil sector, food processing industry, textiles, garments, handicrafts and mining participated.

In the 17thSCO Summit in Astana on June 8-9, 2017, India was admitted as a full member of the SCO during the Summit. It was during this time that Shri Narendra Modi Hon’ble Prime Minister of India met President Nazarbayev on the margins of SCO summit in Qingdao, China on June 10, 2018. Member of the States visited Kazakhstan on 14-15 December, 2014 to participate in the SCO heads of Government meeting held in Astana. Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) at the level of Deputy Foreign Ministers are held to discuss the entire range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Recently in March 2020, Foreign Office Consultations was held to discuss the entire range of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. The last (6th FOC Foreign Office Consultations) was held in Astana in March 2015. External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj paid an official visit to Kazakhstan on 2-3 August 2018. Dr. Satya Pal Singh, HRD visited Kazakhstan on October 15-18, 2018 to attend the 7th meeting of Ministers of Education of the SCO member states. Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare paid an official visit to Kazakhstan on 24-26 October, 2018 to attend the Second International Conference on Primary Health Care towards Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goals held in

²⁶India-Kazakhstan Relations. (2014, July). Ministry of External Affairs: Government of India.

https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Kazakhstan_July_2014.pdf .

Joint Feasibility Study Report on the Free Trade Agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union and its Member States, of the one Part, and the Republic of India, of the other part, 2016

Astana. India and Kazakhstan actively cooperate under the aegis of Multilateral Fora including CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia), SCO and the UN organizations. India has been a consistent supporter of Kazakhstan's initiative on CICA and is actively participating in the process. Kazakhstan supports India's permanent membership for an expanded UNSC (United Nations Security Council) and has extended its support for India's non-permanent membership in 2021-22. (MEA, Govt. of India)²⁷

The India-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) established in 1993 is the apex bilateral institutional mechanism for developing trade, economic, scientific, technological, industrial and cultural cooperation between the two countries. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on the Indian side and Ministry of Energy on the Kazakh side are the nodal ministries with respective Ministers as the Co-Chair of the Commission. The last IGC meeting was held in Astana on Sep 19-20, 2020 discussing the possibilities of expanding cooperation in E&P of hydrocarbons and investments infrastructure projects in oil and gas sector also exploring possibility of expanding the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) by linking it to the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran rail link (Outlook India.com, 19th September, 2017)²⁸. Eight Joint Working Groups have been established in the areas of Counter Terrorism, Trade & Economic Cooperation, Defence & Military Technical Cooperation, Information Technology, Hydrocarbons, Textiles, Tea Debt and Space Cooperation. It has been decided to set up two new Joint Working Groups on Transport & Connectivity and Health to take forward bilateral relations in the respective spheres. Kazakhstan is India's largest trade and investment partner in Central Asia. As per statistics of Kazakhstan for 2019, total bilateral trade between India and Kazakhstan amounted to 265.7 thousand US dollars, recording to 50.4% increase from the last year. (Economic Times, 4th May, 2019)²⁹ FICCI (Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and Chamber of International Commerce of Kazakhstan

²⁷ Ministry of External affairs : Govt of India, https://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visits.htm?2/outgoing_visits.

accessed on 15.11.2020

²⁸ Dharmendra Pradhan visits Kazakhstan for 13th Inter-Governmental Commission meeting. (2017, September 19). Outlook the new scroll. <https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/dharmendra-pradhan-visits-kazakhstan-for-13th-intergovernmental-commission-meeting/1150631>.

²⁹ Chowdhury, D.R. (2019, May 04) India, Kazakhstan witness record jump in trade volume in 2019, Jan-Feb. *The Economic Times*.

have set up a Joint Business Council (JBC) to promote trade, economic and investment cooperation between the two countries. Further liberalization of visa for Indian nationals to increase trade and commerce and more inflow of tourists from India are under discussions. APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) responsible for promoting Indian agro-products visited Almaty and Astana in June 2018 and conducted wet sampling of different varieties of Indian mangoes in prominent stores of Kazakhstan. This was received with great enthusiasm by the people of Kazakhstan.

Cooperation in the area of science and technology (S&T) with Kazakhstan has been an agenda item in IGC meetings. However, not much concrete progress has been registered. The fourth meeting of the sub-committee on S&T took place in Astana on January 11-13, 2009 which discussed and finalized the Program of Cooperation between India and Kazakhstan for the period of 2009-11. (Kazinform, 15th February, 2017)³⁰ India and Kazakhstan signed an agreement in April 2009 for supply of 2,100 tons of Uranium to India up to 2014. An Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy was signed during the visit of PM Manmohan Singh to Kazakhstan in April 2011. A new five year Purchase Agreement for purchase of 5000 tons of Uranium was signed during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Astana on July 7-8, 2015. The supplies are being made regularly as per contract schedule. Kazakhstan supported India in obtaining India-specific exemption to allow civil nuclear cooperation with Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) countries in 2008 (India-Kazakhstan joint military exercise, 14th October, 2019)³¹. It also supported India's membership of NSG at the Plenary Session in Seoul in June 2016. As the official and unofficial accounts indicate India seems to have a huge potential in economic partnership with Kazakhstan and a considerable scope for acquirement of energy requirements for her own growth.

Conclusion

The growing influence of India in the geopolitical forum is favorable for the Central Asian republics that have consistently supported and voted for India to become a permanent

³⁰ India launched Kazakhstan satellite Al-Farabi-1. (2017, February 15). Kazinform: *International news agency*. https://lenta.inform.kz/en/indian-launched-104-satellites-including-kazakhstani-satellite-in-single-mission_a2999762.

³¹: Indo-Japan Joint Military Exercise. (2019, October 14). JVS. *Dharma Guardian* -2019 <https://www.jatinverma.org/dharma-guardian-2019-indo-japan-joint-military-exercise>.

member of the UN Security Council. The nations believe India can help as an ally for the nations to flourish further in exchange for some of their energy resources which can be used as major bargaining chip. And in the coming future, India's relevancy on the international stage could be proliferated with the backing of these nations. This would not sit well with China, who has tried to quash India's attempt of gaining permanency in the Security Council. In fact, for the future having the Central Asian economies dependent on itself would provide China the status quo required to deny India the permanent seat at the table. Recently, with the turn of the decade, China has been increasing its presence into Central Asia. The exit of NATO forces from Afghanistan means lesser attention will be diverted to Central Asia which presents a gainful window to China who have been looking forward to play up the dismemberment of the Soviet Union to reduce the diplomatic importance of Russia and capture the markets part of the former Silk Road. Additionally, with its geographical location, exerting influence in the region would serve China's purpose to build a bridge beyond into Eurasia and Europe. With China looking to capture the continent with its mega-developmental projects under the BRI as well as the Shanghai summit, India needed to make sure it keeps its friends close.

The Central Asian region is experiencing high growth in the construction industry and cities of Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand offers great scope for investment in construction works for India. India has immense potential in developing small and medium scale industries in the region which is presently being provided through India's program of ITEC (Indian technical and economic cooperation). The pharmaceuticals offer a huge component for India 's export component of Central Asia worth 28.14 % of total exports. Indian companies can actualise their share in the market through joint ventures and setting up manufacturing units of pharmaceutical products in the region.

Sericulture has re-emerged as an area of synergetic importance in the region. According to International Sericulture Commission 2018, Uzbekistan is the third-largest producer of silk following China and India. India and Central Asia can collaborate by setting up of integrated textile plants within the region to manufacture high-quality silk material. Similarly, according to the Indian Chamber of Commerce 2017-18, India is the world's second-largest tea producer with a total production of 1325.05 million kgs. Central Asian people are often known as "tea addicts" and offer a huge market for Tea. Trade facilitation centers are required to boost the centuries-old

dry-fruit, tea, and species trade from Central Asian countries to India. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have a large production of various such as cumin, saffron, pepper, etc. which have immense potential to boost the trade volume with India

This would also result in the targeted development of small farmers through a new export market for both India and Central Asian countries. Central Asia has vast potential of untapped service market and India can bridge the gap of rise in demand and lack of services. India, being a major hub of the Information Technology sector, has vast scope for collaboration with these economies for strengthening its Information Communication Technology (ICT) sector. Integrating the service sector of central Asia with information technology would transform the manufacturing and service sectors. India and Central Asian republics can partner in language training while collaborating on the tourism sector which can provide the twin benefits of employment generation. India needs to focus on trade in finished and semi-finished products and not just limit its trade relations to import hydrocarbons from the Central Asian Region. It is imperative for India to shift the focus from import orientation to establishing a manufacturing base in Central Asia. India needs to establish the base of a special manufacturing zone with a tax-free zone for the goods. Central Asian countries would be mutually interested in manufacturing bases as it will save their industries from Chinese dominance and provide jobs to the Central Asian workforce. It will also boost the local domestic growth and would ease the viability of products such as agricultural products. India's public sector undertakings (PSU's) with the private players have the potential to tap the exports of Central Asian products not just to India but to third countries as well which require a huge financial investment in resources. It can be illustrated in the case of the untapped Hydel potential of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan which is to be supplied to China which at present is only 6% of the total capacity. While the economic partnership will be the key driver of the relationship between India and Central Asia, the cooperation will manifest in strategic and defence spheres too. India's recent entry into Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and participation in the Eurasian economic union will affect the relations between Central Asia and South Asia. India's engagement with China, Russia, European Union within the multilateral regional structure would open the avenues of economic cooperation the Central Asian region.

INDIA – KAZAKHSTAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Prelude: Indian economy is characterized by the development of market economy. It is world's third largest economy by purchasing power parity¹ and fifth largest economy by nominal GDP (Gross domestic production). Since independence, India followed protectionist economic policy with state intervention and regulations, until 1990's when it introduced the programme of economic liberalization under the Prime ministership of late P.V. NarasimhaRao and Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and entered in the sphere of globalization. With the acute crisis in balance of payments, India in the 90's experienced internationalization of its economy. The annual average GDP growth since the beginning of 21st century was 6% to 7% (Kanungo, Rowly, Banerjee, 2018)² which became a fastest growing major economy from 2014 to 2018 surpassing China. (World Economic Outlook, October 2018)³

The economy of Kazakhstan on the other hand is the largest in Central Asia in both absolute and per capita terms possessing oil reserves as well as minerals and metals with considerable agricultural potential. Soon after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan faced challenges as it had to pass through recession and stagnation but today it stands as the most advance among the Central Asian republics. Kazakhstan has also embraced radical economic reforms and these radical market economic reforms (Arhens et al, 2013)⁴ escalated the economy of Kazakhstan to account 60% of regional GDP in 2006, but the currency also saw a sharp

¹Purchasing power parity is a measurement of prices in different countries that uses the prices of specific goods to compare the absolute purchasing power of the countries' currencies. In many cases, PPP produces an inflation rate that is equal to the price of the basket of goods at one location divided by the price of the basket of goods at a different location.

² Kanungo, Rama P. , Rowley, C., Banerjee, Anurag N. (2018). *Chanqing the Indian Economy: Renewal, Reform and Revival*. Elsevier. p. 24.

³ World Economic Outlook . (October, 2018). *Report for Selected Countries and Subjects*. International Monetary Fund (IMF).Retrieved 7 July 2019.

⁴ Ahrens, J et al. (2013). *Kazakhstan's Emerging Economy: Between State and Market by Roman Vakulchuk* : *Emerging Markets Studies* .Bremen: Jacobs University. Vol. 5.

depreciation between 2013 and 2016. (OECD, 2018)⁵ Further, Kazakhstan is the largest trade and investment partner in Central Asia for India. As per statistics of Kazakhstan for 2018, total bilateral trade between India and Kazakhstan amounted to 1.2 billion US dollars, out of which exports from Kazakhstan was 954.08million US Dollars, and exports from India was 242.78million US Dollars. Therefore, this chapter would deal with the gradual progress of Kazakhstan along with its structural changes in its economic policy. The chapter also deals with India's stand on establishing strong economic relation even when the trade figures were negative. The chapter concludes in providing necessary changes in the economic policy of both the nations to strengthen governmental policies advantageous to both the nation states.

India's Globalisation:

India embarked on a path of liberal economic reform in the 1990s after years of nurturing an intensively regulated and controlled economic environment that was loosened slightly in the mid-1980s (Kohl, 1980-2005).⁶ The most important and critical segments of this reform were trade and foreign investment. India has felt the impact of globalization through increased prosperity, partly triggered by increasing trade volumes, investment, and growth. Trade liberalization has probably had greater effects through its impact on gross domestic product (GDP). Trade flows have attracted more attention than capital flows and technological changes as drivers of globalization. But the new technology is changing the global composition of trade flows (Ghani, 2018)⁷. Trade in services is increasing at a much faster pace than trade in goods. The cost differential in the production of services across the world is still enormous. The cost differential in traded services is much greater than in trade in goods (Ibid 6)⁸. In the past, the only

⁵ OECD. (2018). *Enhancing competitiveness in Central Asia: A regional agenda for economic diversification in Central Asia*.

⁶ Kohl, A. (April, 2006). *Politics of economic growth in India, 1980-2005 Part I : The 1980's*. Economic and political weekly.

⁷ Ghan, E. (Oct, 2018) *Opinion India and the new face of globalization*. The Mint.

⁸ Ibid 6

means to narrow such cost differentials was migration. However, global international migration has not increased but instead remained steady at about 3% for decades (World migration report, 2020)⁹. Technology has enabled services to be digitized and transported long distances at low costs without compromising on quality. The internet has enabled firms to sell services without crossing national borders, and dramatically increased the size and the scope for exploiting cost differentials in services compared to trade in goods. India's trade characteristics are well aligned with the new face of globalization. Unlike China, India's global trade has been spearheaded by exports of modern services (Agarwal)¹⁰. Global service trade also tends to be more resilient compared with the goods trade during global downturns. Overall, India is much better off today than before; due to the new face of globalization. But there are many challenges as well.

Globalization of capital flows is also evolving with huge implications for macroeconomic management and growth. Some capital flow tends to be more volatile than others. Remittances, which tend to be more resilient, have been the dominant form of capital inflow (Live Mint, 2018)¹¹ into India. They have often exceeded foreign direct investment (FDI) and other capital inflows in the past (Anand, Ghani)¹². But given that global migration trends are not increasing, remittances are not enough, and new policy instruments are needed to attract more long-term capital inflows to invest in India's human and physical infrastructure. Many long-term investors, such as pension funds and insurance companies, which are ideally suited for human and physical infrastructure investments, look upto India as an important investment destination (Arnold,

⁹ UN migration. (2020). *World migration report 2020*. Switzerland: International Organization for Migration.

¹⁰ Agarwal, P. *Modern Services in India : Policymaking and Governance*.

¹¹ *India and the new face of globalization*. (2018, October 24). In Civildaily. <https://www.civildaily.com/news/op-ed-snap-india-and-the-new-face-of-globalization/>.

¹² Anand, R and Ghani, E. (2009) *How will changes in globalization impact growth in South Asia*. World Bank.

2019)¹³. There is increasing interest from global investors in solar power, water management, waste management, affordable housing and much more. Policy makers have many options to attract more remittances inflows, issue non-resident Indian (NRI) bonds, and attract NRI investors from countries with which India has a double-taxation avoidance agreement¹⁴. There is also increasing interest, both from philanthropic and private foundations, in promoting public private partnerships and maximizing finance for welfare development. Technology has become a bigger force of globalization, changing cross-border mobility of goods and services, and capital flows. New technological revolution has huge spillovers and externalities (Stever, Muroyama, 1988)¹⁵. Data and information technology is fuelling ideas for new products and services, and

¹³ *India becomes investment darling for sovereign wealth and pension funds.* (2019, June 21). Mint.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-becomes-investment-darling-for-sovereign-wealth-and-pension-funds-1561097975025.html>.

¹⁴ Double taxation is a tax principle referring to income taxes paid twice on the same source of income. It can occur when income is taxed at both the corporate level and personal level. Double taxation also occurs in international trade or investment when the same income is taxed in two different countries. DTAA's are made to make a country attractive for investment purpose by providing relief on dual taxation. The relief is provided by exempting income earned overseas from tax in the resident country or by providing credit to the extent wherein taxes have already been paid abroad. In some of the cases, DTAA's are known to provide concession on tax rates. India has Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with 88 countries, but presently 85 has been in force. The DTAA treaty has been signed in order to avoid double taxation on the same declared asset in two different countries. 1. Armenia 2. Australia 3. Austria 4. Bangladesh 5. Belarus 6. Belgium 7. Botswana 8. Brazil 9. Bulgaria 10. Canada 11. China 12. Cyprus 13. Czech Republic 14. Denmark 15. Egypt 16. Estonia 17. Ethiopia 18. Finland 19. France 20. Georgia 21. Germany 22. Greece 23. Hashemite kingdom of Jordan 24. Hungary 25. Iceland 26. Indonesia 27. Ireland 28. Israel 29. Italy 30. Japan 31. Kazakhstan 32. Kenya 33. Korea 34. Kuwait 35. Kyrgyz Republic 36. Libya 37. Lithuania 38. Luxembourg 39. Malaysia 40. Malta 41. Mauritius 42. Mongolia 43. Montenegro 44. Morocco 45. Mozambique 46. Myanmar 47. Namibia 48. Nepal 49. Netherlands 50. New Zealand 51. Norway 52. Oman 53. Philippines 54. Poland 55. Portuguese Republic 56. Qatar 57. Romania 58. Russia 59. Saudi Arabia 60. Serbia 61. Singapore 62. Slovenia 63. South Africa 64. Spain 65. Sri Lanka 66. Sudan 67. Sweden 68. Swiss Confederation 69. Syrian Arab Republic 70. Tajikistan 71. Tanzania 72. Thailand 73. Trinidad and Tobago 74. Turkey 75. Turkmenistan 76. UAE 77. UAR (Egypt) 78. UGANDA 79. UK 80. Ukraine 81. United Mexican States 82. USA 83. Uzbekistan 84. Vietnam 85. Zambia

¹⁵ Stever, H G, Muroyama, J H. (1988). *Globalization of technology : International perspectives*.

advancing the transnational flow of trade, capital, and ideas. There are at least three times as many connected devices in the world today as there are people. The cross-border flow of digital information-searches, transactions, communication has increased five-fold since 1990 (Kinsey and Company, 2016)¹⁶. The shift in value from physical to digital information services will only increase. The new era of innovation, in which cutting-edge technologies are replacing old production methods has impacted everybody. Latecomers to development, like India, face a bigger challenge compared to the US and UK, on how to capitalize on their comparative advantage, benefit from new technology, and create more jobs. This is where the policy challenges come in (Ibid 15)¹⁷. While investment in physical infrastructure has attracted the attention of policy makers in the past, investment in building human infrastructure has become even more important (Ibid 4)¹⁸.

India and Central Asia :The Economic partners:

While India adopted structural reforms, including liberalisation policies in 1991, it was during this time Central Asian countries were also born with the disintegration of USSR. India's "planning oriented economy" entered a period of transition to a much more "market-oriented open economy". India and Central Asia faced one common challenge in 1991 "how to integrate into the world economy?" Initially, the Central Asian countries faced a severe economic downturn. The reasons were several: disruption in the production network with the former USSR; loss of subsidies from the former USSR; inexperienced private sector; insufficient infrastructure; and lack of institutions for a market economy, including well functioning capital and labour markets (Stark, Ahrens, 2012)¹⁹. The manufacturing sector experienced a severe

¹⁶ Mc Kinsey and company. (2016, March). *Digital globalization:The new era of global flow*. MGI Digital Globalization.

¹⁷ Ibid 15

¹⁸ Ibid 4

¹⁹ Stark, M and Ahrens, J.(2012).*Economic reform and institutional change in Central Asia: Towards a new model of the developmental state?* . Ecconstor

breakdown of supply of raw materials and lack of markets. Central Asian countries were forced to create foreign trade ties with other countries since self-sufficiency in production of goods and services, which were established in the USSR, had collapsed. As the economies became more market-oriented and many industries were privatized, these nations stepped into the globalised world (UNCTAD)²⁰. Although India's proximity to Central Asian countries is offset by its unfavourable political relationship with Pakistan, trade in goods between India and Central Asia has increased manifold over the past decade. Kazakhstan a major trade partner in the region with a trade turnover of more than 1.5 billion US Dollars of bilateral trade in the first 11 months of 2019 Of which, India purchased crude oil amounting to more than 1 billion US Dollars. With over 400 million US Dollars of Indian investments in Kazakhstan and 68 million US Dollars of Kazakhstan's investments in India in pharmaceuticals, tea and agro-products. The Kyrgyz Republic and India established a Strategic Partnership during the Summit held between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in June 2019. Both countries have agreed to make a focused effort to enhance the current volume of trade which is about 30 million US Dollars and had in fact announced a Line of Credit of 200 million US Dollars which will help business development and attract Indian companies to seriously invest at Kyrgyz Republic. For Turkmenistan, With about 65 million US Dollars of bilateral trade, there is a wide scope for enhancing Indian exports of pharmaceuticals, household electrical gadgets, frozen meat, tyres etc. With the announcement of 200 million US Dollars on Line of Credit for Uzbekistan and an additional 800 million US Dollars to be made available for Lines of Credit and Buyer's Credit with an increase of 1 billion US Dollar in trade which is currently at the level of 300 million US Dollars thus giving impetus to the Projects including construction of highways and other water-related urban infrastructure which are under consideration to be taken up under India's line of credit. A contract for supply of uranium by Uzbekistan to India has been concluded. India and Uzbekistan have decided to start their negotiations for a Preferential Trading Arrangement (FICCI, February 2020)²¹.

²⁰ UNCTAD. *Economic diversification in selected Asian land locked developing countries*. UN pub.(pp 15 to 38).

²¹ Address by External Affairs Minister on the occasion of the launch of the India-Central Asia Business Council, FICCI (2020, February 06). In Ministry of External Affairs. <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/32365>

Table 1: India's Trade with Central Asian Countries in 2017-2018
(Values in US \$ Millions)

Country	Exports	Imports	Total
Kazakhstan	125.37	907.43	1032.81
Kyrgyzstan	28.59	30.94	59.53
Tajikistan	23.94	50.29	74.24
Turkmenistan	54.31	26.15	80.46
Uzbekistan	132.72	101.67	234.39
Total	364.93	1,116.49	1,481.21

Source; Department of Commerce: Export Import Data Bank
<http://www.commerce.nic.in/eidb/ergnq.asp> updated on 14/08/2018

India's trade is largest with Kazakhstan, with a turnover of 1,032.81 million US Dollars in 2017-2018. Uzbekistan is a distant second at 234.39 million US Dollars in the same year. But the complementary aspects of Indian and Central Asian economies mean that the potential for trade is extremely high. India's export to Central Asian states was 442.48 million US Dollars in 2018-2019 while its import was 862.96 million US Dollars totaling to 1305.44 million US Dollars (Vivekananda International Foundation, 2020)²². There was an increase in export by 60.18% to a

²² Round table discussion on India-Central Asia Relations. (2020, February, 28). In Vivekananda International Foundation. <https://www.vifindia.org/event/report/2020/02/28/round-table-discussion-on-india-central-asia-relations>.

decrease of total 253.53 Million US Dollars in imports amounting to a decrease in total Trade Figure of 175.77 Million US Dollars.

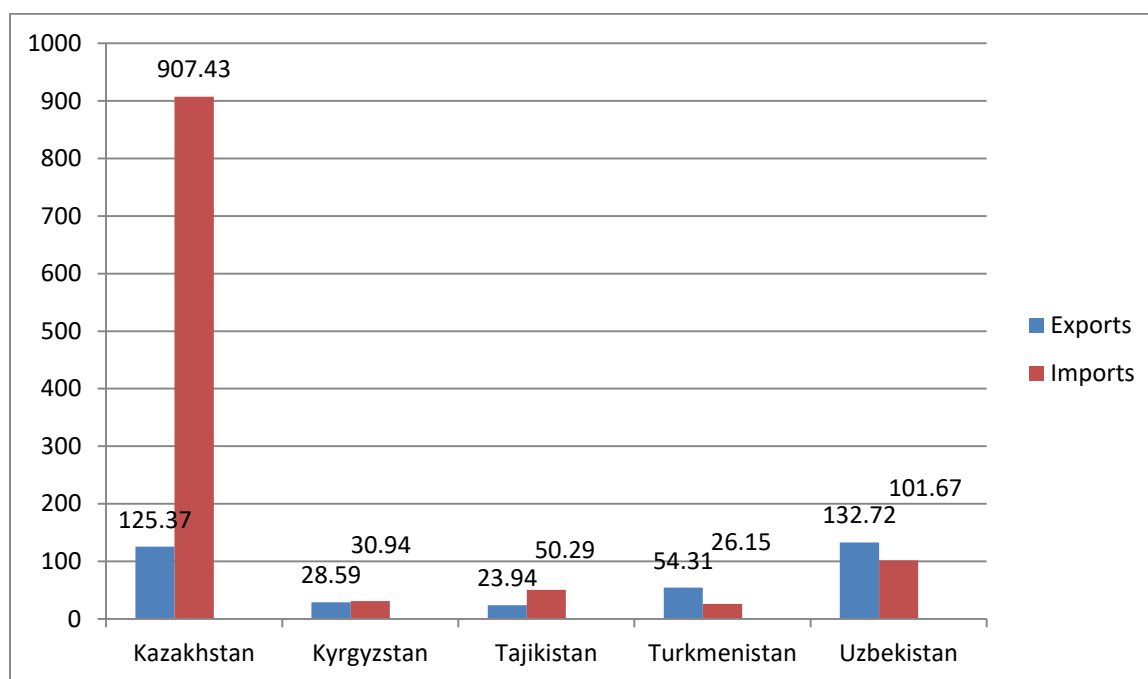


Figure showing India's Trade with Central Asian Countries in 2017-2018 (Values in US \$ Millions)

Thus, after experiencing a complete breakdown in the manufacturing sector, supply of raw materials and lack of markets, Central Asian states are fast getting linked to the global market for production, supplies of raw materials and services. However, the changing economic environment – prolonged recession in Europe, financial crisis in Russia, fall in oil prices, etc – is opening new vistas of opportunities for the Central Asia-India trade partnership to grow. Some studies, after identifying a trade potential index using a gravity model of trade framework, have indicated a huge untapped potential for increasing trade between India and Central Asian countries (Agarwal, Sangeeta, 2013).²³

India and Uzbekistan have signed several trade agreements. Uzbekistan also provided most favoured nation (MFN) status to 45 countries including India ie Friendly investment

²³Agarwal, P. & Sangita, S. (2013). *India and Central Asia: Trade Routes and Trade Potential*. IEGIEG Working .

environment on a reliable legal frame and wide range of guarantees and benefits for investors, including tax incentives, providing land and buildings on attractive terms (Economic Times, January 15, 2019)²⁴. India's imports mainly precious and semi-precious stones, chemicals, iron and steel, machineries, minerals, oils, copper goods, plastic goods, wool, and leather. Exports items include coffee, tea and spices, apparel and clothing (both knitted and not knitted), pharmaceutical products electrical and mechanical equipment. Several areas present excellent opportunities for Indian investment and cooperation in Central Asia such as hydro-power sector, mining and metallurgical industries, construction industry, development of entrepreneurship, infrastructure, agro-industrial sector, information technology, pharmaceuticals industry, silk, sewing and textile industries, leather industry, tourism industry, higher education, food processing sectors, etc. Central Asia has huge cultivable areas lying barren and without being put to any productive use. Uzbekistan alone offers an enormous opportunity for cultivation of pulses. Large quantities of pulses including kidney beans (rajma) from the region are bought over by Turkish firms and are re-exported to India (Global export company, 2019)²⁵. Indian agribusiness companies such as ITC (Indian Tobacco Company) or Bharti or Reliance should be setting up commercial agro-industrial complexes in Central Asia.

The region is experiencing a real boom in the construction industry. Kazakhstan has in particular created a competitive market for investments in this sector. The volume of construction works is also increasing in Uzbekistan's cities such as Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand. Owing to higher economic growth, several areas are becoming attractive for construction business in residential, non-residential and civil engineering segments of the market. New business centres,

²⁴ Roy Choudhury, D. (2019, January 15). *Uzbekistan eyes to emerge as India's gateway to Central Asia*. Economic times dtd.

²⁵ Bard, D. (2019, October17). *Pulses from Uzbekistan: An Interview with Abbos Botirov of the Global Export Company* . Global Export Company.

shopping malls, cultural centres, sports complexes, roads, etc are being planned in the cities along the oil-rich Caspian region in the west (Stopdan, 2018)²⁶.

Indian companies dealing with financial services, contractors, engineers, and management specialists are grabbing the opportunities. Large Indian companies are also engaged in bidding for road and railway construction, electric power transmission and distribution, telecommunications, power generation, etc. Apart from tea, pharmaceuticals represent the largest component of the Indian export basket to Central Asia worth 151.41 million US Dollars or 28.14 % of total exports (Ibid)²⁷. Most of the large Indian companies are represented in the market. Given India's strong position in this sector, Indian companies could push for aggressive marketing to expand their market share.

The entire region of Central Asia is a large producer of raw hides and semi-processed wet blue skins. Uzbekistan has domestic leather production facilities, notably in Khodjaabad, Urgench, and Kokand. France has set up a joint venture Kofra Uzbek-French joint leather footwear venture in Kokand. About 90 % of raw skins are exported to China and Turkey (Wani, 2002)²⁸. Indian leather companies should open tanneries here and convert the abundant hides and skins into finished leather as well as garments, bags and shoes of the highest quality for export to Europe. Similarly, Indian companies should source wholesale supply of raw hides and semi-processed wet blue skins, which will boost trade between India and Central Asian countries.

Central Asian traditional sericulture and cotton textile industry had declined over the last many decades. However, sericulture is once again developing as a major economic source for the rural population in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. After China and India, Uzbekistan is the third largest producer of silk to the world markets, (20,200 tonnes) of cocoon per year. Central Asian

²⁶ Stopdan, P. (2018, September 18). *India's Economic Opportunities in Central Asia*. Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ *Leather challenge for central Asian republics*. (2002, April, 23). In Leather International.
<https://www.leathermag.com/features/featureleather-challenge-for-central-asian-republics/>.

countries have been showing interest in learning from India's silk industry (Business reference services)²⁹. The Indian experience has been viewed as attractive for creating jobs in rural areas, removing poverty, and as a means to preserve national traditions.

Many important spices especially essential Mediterranean spices that are consumed in India are found in Central Asia. They include barberry, black pepper, basil, bay leaf, caraway seeds, cardamom, chervil, chives, cilantro, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, fennel, fenugreek, saffron, sage, almond, asafetida, black mustard seed, dill seed, garden cress, marjoram, tarragon and many other spices are found all over Central Asia (Douglas, Hayes, Smallfield, 2005)³⁰. None of these spices are exported to the Chinese or European markets. Import of spices from Central Asia could increase the volume of trade between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, on the one hand, and India, on the other. Uzbekistan and Tajikistan produce large quantities of fresh and dry fruits. Trade facilitation centers are required to bolster the centuries-old dry-fruit trade from Central Asian countries to India.

India is the world's second largest tea producer with a total production of 1205.40 million kg in 2013-14. Out of this, over 200 million kilograms are exported worldwide (IBEF, November 2020)³¹. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) alone imports 51.58 million kilograms of tea from India. Large quantities of Indian tea are consumed in Central Asia. The region mostly imports large quantities of the crush, tear, and curl (CTC) variety. During the year 2013-2014, tea constituted USD 52.63 million or 9.78 % of India's total exports to the region. Out of this, USD 50.28 million worth tea was exported to Kazakhstan alone (Economic Times,

²⁹ *The Influence of Chinese Economic Growth on Central Asian Countries : Business reference services* .(2014, November 19). In Business Reference Services. <https://www.loc.gov/r/business/asia/CentralAsia/centralasian.html>

³⁰ Douglas, H; Hayes, P; Smallfield, B. (2005). *Herbs, spices and essential oils Post-harvest operations in developing countries*. United Nations Industrial Development Organization : Food and agriculture organization of the United Nations.

³¹ *Tea Industry in India*. (2020, November 30). In IBEF. <https://www.ibef.org/pages/32329> India eyes Kazakhstan, other CIS countries for tea exports

16/08/2018)³². Kazakhstan is ranked fifth in the world in terms of consuming Indian tea and imports 12.61 million kg annually. Kazakhs are amongst the highest tea drinkers in the world with a per capita consumption of 1.5 kg annually, that is, an average of 5 to 6 cups a day, a reason why many people are labelled as "tea drunkards". Given the enormous popularity of tea, the Kaznet³³ website was created for "tea drunkards"

Kazakhstan's Economy :

Kazakhstan has a land area equal to that of Western Europe but with one of the lowest population densities globally. Strategically, it links the large and fast-growing markets of China and South Asia and those of Russia and Western Europe by road, rail, and a port on the Caspian Sea (The World Bank, 2020)³⁴. Kazakhstan has transitioned from lower-middle-income to upper-middle-income status in less than two decades. The country moved to the upper-middle-income group in 2006 (Daly, 2008)³⁵. Since 2002, GDP per capita has risen sixfold and poverty incidence has fallen sharply, significantly improving the country's performance on the World Bank's indicator of shared prosperity (Ibid 37)³⁶.

Ongoing economic expansion and a minimum wage increase in early 2019 boosted real wages by 8.9 percent and helped sustain labor demand. The official unemployment rate remained under 5 percent (World Bank ECA, 2020)³⁷. In the context of rising wages and increased social

³² Sarkar, D. (2018, August 16). Indian eyes Kazakhstan, other CIS countries for tea exports. The Economic Times.

³³ People in Kazakhstan use the term "Kaznet" to refer to Internet space originating from and related to Kazakhstan

³⁴ The World Bank : Kazakhstan. (2020). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kazakhstan/overview>

³⁵ Daly, J C K. (2008, March). *Kazakhstan's Emerging Middle Class*. Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program –A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center.

³⁶ Ibid 37

³⁷ COVID-19 and Human Capital. (2020, October, 7). In The World Bank: Europe and Central Asia Economic Update. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/europe-and-central-asia-economic-update>.

assistance, the poverty rate is estimated to have fallen to 8.5 % in 2019 from 13.0, marking the third consecutive year of poverty reduction. A drop in business activities will most probably cause a significant deterioration in firms' balance sheets and undermine the ability of households to repay loans, which in turn increases the risk of a higher number of nonperforming loans (NPLs) (The World Bank, 2020)³⁸. The deeper shortfall in tax revenues from the economic fallout might require that additional resources be deployed. The country has the fiscal ability to raise revenue either through external borrowing or additional transfers from the Oil Fund.

Kazakhstan embarked on its post-communist transformation in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. The Soviet economy from which it emerged was already in free-fall – Soviet GDP fell by somewhere between 8 and 17% in real terms in 1991(Granville, Ericson, 1995)³⁹ – and independent Kazakhstan faced enormous challenges not only of economic reform but of state-building in a much broader sense. Chronic shortages of domestic capital, the destruction of pre-existing trade networks and the difficulty of adapting Soviet enterprises and institutions to market conditions plunged Kazakhstan and its neighbours into a severe recession. This made deep and lasting economic reform more urgent but also more difficult; indeed transforming the economic system in such an environment was rather like rebuilding a ship in the midst of stormy seas.

Moreover, the newly independent Kazakhstan emerged at a time when the global economy itself was undergoing profound changes. The period since 1991 has been one of rapidly intensifying globalization, involving financial and economic integration and an unprecedented development of global value chains. The Internet and other technological changes altered the way business was done, while the creation of the World Trade Organization, the emergence of climate change as a global problem and the rapid rise of China and other emerging economies changed the way the world economy functioned. Kazakhstan and its neighbors thus had to make their way in a rapidly changing global context. Many of these developments brought benefits to

³⁸ *The World Bank in Kazakhstan Country Snapshot*. (2020, April). In The World Bank.
<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/283041587043459603/Kazakhstan-Snapshot-Spring2020.pdf>.

³⁹ *Reforming Kazakhstan Progress, Challenges and Opportunities*. (1995). In OECD.
<https://www.oecd.org/eurasia/countries/OECD-Eurasia-Reforming-Kazakhstan-EN.pdf>.

Kazakhstan. Global growth accelerated, particularly in emerging economies, lifting hundreds of millions out of poverty and contributing to big improvements in human health and life expectancy (OCED)⁴⁰. For Kazakhstan, this acceleration implied a surge in demand for its primary export commodities from the end of the 1990s, underpinning more than a decade of strong growth.

Building a stronger economy:

Economic growth has been impressive since the end of the 1990s. Growth has been driven primarily by exports of hydrocarbons and minerals. Kazakhstan has made remarkable progress in its transition from Soviet central planning to a market economy. Over the last two decades, it has been one of the fastest-growing transition economies and in 2002, it became the first former Soviet state to receive an investment grade rating⁴¹. It has also taken steps towards institutional integration in the global economy, joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) and signing an Enhanced Partnership and Co-operation Agreement with the European Union (EU) in 2015(European Commission)⁴². Kazakhstan's growth model to date entails significant vulnerabilities in terms of resource dependence and environmental sustainability, as well as a risk of growing inequality if the country does not generate more high-productivity, knowledgeintensive employment (Ibid 43)⁴³. To lay the foundations for more broad-based, sustainable growth, Kazakhstan needs to diversify its production and export structure and move away from reliance on extractive industries into new high productivity sectors (Anderson et al,

⁴⁰ *Reforming Kazakhstan Progress, Challenges and Opportunities*. (1995). In OECD.

<https://www.oecd.org/eurasia/countries/OECD-Eurasia-Reforming-Kazakhstan-EN.pdf>

⁴¹An investment grade is a rating that signifies a municipal or corporate bond presents a relatively low risk of default. Bond rating firms like Standard & Poor's and Moody's use different designations, consisting of the upper- and lower-case letters "A" and "B," to identify a bond's credit quality rating.

⁴² *Countries and regions : Kazakhstan*. In European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/kazakhstan/>.

⁴³ Ibid43

2018)⁴⁴. In particular, it press ahead with a range of reforms to improve the business climate and create the basis for a growth model driven more by innovation and human capital, and less by natural resources.

Like its post-communist peers, Kazakhstan experienced a severe contraction in the early stages of the market transition. During 1992-1995, real GDP fell by an estimated 31%, inflation surged into triple and quadruple digits (annual consumer price inflation did not fall below 100% until 1996), and the labour market witnessed the destruction of 1.6 million jobs. (Ahrend, Thompson, 2005)⁴⁵ A weak recovery began in 1996-97, but the impact of the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the Russian crisis the following year helped to tip the economy back into recession. Growth resumed weakly in 1999 and then began to surge in 2000 as oil prices recovered (Ibid 43)⁴⁶. From 2000, growth accelerated sharply, reaching an average of 9.4% during 2000-08. Growth slowed sharply in 2009 before rebounding somewhat until the sharp drop in commodity prices in 2014-15, which led to a slowdown, with growth falling to 1% in 2016. There were indications of a recovery in the first half of 2017, as growth picked up to 4.2% year-on-year, bolstered by increased oil export volumes and a rise in the price of Urals crude from 38.25 US Dollars in January-June 2016 to USD 50.41 in the first half of 2017(Adeleke, Kazakh)⁴⁷. Kazakhstan's growth was and remains highly dependent on oil and gas prices, and – to a lesser degree – on metals prices, which often move in tandem with them. Yet this is not to suggest that Kazakhstan has simply been lucky with its resource endowments and the commodity super-cycle of the early 2000s. On the contrary, the recovery that began at the end of the 1990s owed much to the policy and legislative changes initiated earlier in the decade, particularly in creating the

⁴⁴ Anderson, K (ed.).(2018, August).*Kazakhstan accelerating economic diversification*. Asian Development Bank

⁴⁵ Ahrend, R and Thompson, W. (2005, June). *Fifteen Years of Economic Reform in Russia: What Has Been Achieved? What Remains to Be Done?*. Researchgate.

⁴⁶ Ibid43

⁴⁷ Adeleke, O W. (2020). Social and institutional reforms in the first decade of Kazakhstan statehood. Al- Farabi Kazakh National University,Kazakhstan, Almaty.

conditions to attract badly needed foreign investment to the oil sector. This was a critical post-independence priority, in view of the relatively underdeveloped state of its most important deposits, the technical problems posed by some of those deposits and the absence of any other sector capable of generating substantial foreign exchange earnings quickly. Kazakhstan has indeed been lucky for much of the last 20 years, but it has also worked to make the most of its luck – many other hydrocarbon exporters have been far less successful in profiting from favourable international prices or in preparing for negative price shocks.

Kazakhstan's growth has been driven mainly by its extractives sector, particularly oil and gas. Oil production rose from 589 000 barrels a day at the end of the Soviet period to more than 1.7 million per day in 2013-14, raising Kazakhstan into the ranks of the world's top ten oil exporters (Background Reference: Kazakhstan, 2019)⁴⁸. Natural gas production dropped from a late Soviet level of around 5.8 billion cubic metres to just 3.0 billion cubic metres in the mid-1990s, before bouncing back to around 12.5 billion in 2015 (Tabuszezwska, 2019)⁴⁹. The direct contribution of oil and gas to growth was probably greatest in the decade or so to 2009, when output was growing fastest: by 2010, the extractives sector, including both hydrocarbons and hard minerals, accounted for almost 20% of GDP, up from around 8% in 1998 (Ibid 43)⁵⁰. Yet in volume terms, the growth of oil production slowed from the mid-2000s and in 2014-15, it turned negative as oil prices fell sharply. However, windfall revenues generated by high commodity prices over much of the period to 2014 fuelled growth in other sectors, and the fall in prices had a similar, but negative, knock-on effect on the growth of the non-oil economy, taking account of such indirect impacts, hydrocarbons and metals account for as much as 30% of GDP, 70% of

⁴⁸ *Background Reference: Kazakhstan*. (2019, January 07).

https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Kazakhstan/background.htm

⁴⁹ Tabuszezwska, A. (ed.) (2003, December). *The resource wealth burden – oil and gas sectors in the former USSR*. Warsaw, Poland: Centre for Eastern Studies.

⁵⁰ Ibid 43

exports and up to half of government revenues (Hewitt, 2003)⁵¹. Volume GDP underestimates the increase in real incomes and purchasing power that may be induced by, for example, a fall in import prices. One way to correct this is provided by the so-called “command GDP” indicator, which adjusts the calculation of GDP to reflect the impact of changes in the terms of trade on the aggregate purchasing power of the economy. In effect, it is a real income indicator that reflects both the magnitude of terms-of-trade shifts and the economy’s exposure to international trade.⁵² The calculation of command GDP provides a stark illustration of just how staggering the terms-of-trade shocks of the last few years have been, with command GDP diverging from conventional GDP by as much as 8% of GDP in some years (Ibid 43)⁵³. This helps account for the severity of the recent slowdown: while in volume terms, the country narrowly avoided a contraction of GDP in 2015-16, the sharp decline in the terms of trade made for a sharper impact on aggregate income. It also had a pronounced impact on public spending: fiscal revenues from oil fell by around 35% in tenge terms,⁵⁴ and the overall fiscal balance swung from an average surplus of

⁵¹ *World Commodity Prices and their Impact on Developing Countries*. (2003, January- 2003, December). In ODI. <https://www.odi.org/projects/1481-world-commodity-prices-and-their-impact-developing-countries>

⁵² Command GDP = TDDV + XGSV(PXGS/PMGS) – MGSV, where TDDV is total domestic demand, XGSV and MGSV are, respectively, export and import volumes, and PXGS and PMGS are the export and import deflators. Since the terms of trade are defined as the price of a country’s exports divided by the price of its imports, deflating both exports and imports by the import price deflator (rather than using different deflators for imports and exports, as is done when computing conventional measures of GDP) yields a summary measure of the impact of terms-of-trade shifts on a country’s purchasing power – i.e. on its ability to “command” goods and services. In other words, this indicator reflects an awareness of the fact that exports are important precisely because they enable a country to pay for imports. For further discussion of the command GDP indicator, see OECD (2003:37-8)

⁵³ Ibid43

⁵⁴ In dollar terms, the decline was in the order of 70%, but the depreciation of the tenge from the summer of 2015 helped cushion the revenue impact on the budget.

4.5% of GDP in 2011-13 to a deficit of 5% in 2015-16 (International Monetary Fund Washington, D.C, 13.04.2017)⁵⁵.

More diversified economies rarely experience sharp swings in the terms of trade. For example, Kazakhstan's terms of trade have changed, upwards or downwards, by more than 10% in eight of the last 16 years (World Trade Statistical Review, 2019)⁵⁶. By contrast, only one G7 country, in one year, has experienced a double-digit terms-of-trade shift over that period⁵⁷. Indeed, the United States has not experienced a double-digit change in the terms of trade since the oil-price collapse of 1986. This is largely because its export basket is so much more diversified and because the prices of the more sophisticated goods that it exports tend to be less volatile. This is a consideration for policy makers concerned with Kazakhstan's diversification agenda. That said, the relatively small size of the country means that it is likely to remain more exposed to international trade than larger economies tend to be, and also that its export basket will remain relatively concentrated – it is harder for small economies to achieve critical mass in a wide range of activities. Thus, while more diversified and sophisticated exports can help reduce external vulnerability, Kazakhstan will need to continue using macroeconomic and other levers to manage such volatility.

To a substantial extent, of course, it already does so: the domestic economy has been partially insulated from the shocks of recent years by the government's discipline in saving a large portion of resource revenues in the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan (NFRK)⁵⁸.

⁵⁵ *Republic of Kazakhstan : 2017 Article IV Consultation- Press Release; and Staff Report*. (2017, May 09). In IMF. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2017/05/09/Republic-of-Kazakhstan-2017-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-and-Staff-Report-44884>.

⁵⁶ *World Trade Organisation*. (2019). *World Trade Statistical Review*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Trade Organisation.

⁵⁷ In 2009, Japan experienced a 19.5% improvement in its terms of trade, thanks largely to sharply falling prices for many of the commodities it imports

⁵⁸ *Policy Dialogue on Natural Resource-Based Development work Stream 2: Natural Resource Funds and Revenue Spending Managing and Spending Extractive Revenues for Sustainable Development : Policy Guidance for Resource -Rich Countries*

A substantial portion of the export windfalls arising from very high commodity prices has been sterilized through the accumulation of fiscal reserves, which in turn allowed the authorities to cushion the impact of falling prices when shifts in the terms of trade were adverse (Ibid 43)⁵⁹. To that extent, the volatility experienced by the domestic economy was rather less than implied. However, sterilization of hydrocarbon windfalls was only partial, implying that the economy nevertheless experienced very substantial impulses from the terms of trade shifts observed over the period.

Moreover, there has been a drift towards greater reliance on oil revenues to finance current spending since the global crisis of 2009. During the boom years that preceded that crisis, the authorities in Kazakhstan kept the non-oil deficit below about 5% of GDP. This allowed the government to act in a strongly counter-cyclical manner when the crisis hit, but it has proved difficult to bring the non-oil deficit back to pre-crisis levels. The negative oil-price shock of 2014 led to a widening of the non-oil deficit, which reached 12.9% of GDP, as the government moved to counter the shock and avoid a recession (International Monetary Fund, Middle East & Central Asia Dept., 2017)⁶⁰. While this effort was broadly successful in the short term, the path back to fiscal sustainability was not easy. The authorities are well aware of the challenge, and in 2016, they began an extremely difficult fiscal consolidation, bringing the non-oil deficit down by 4.6% of GDP and adopting a new rule for the NFRK (Brown, 2018)⁶¹. Successful implementation of this concept will be critical in ensuring fiscal sustainability and thus financial market access on favorable terms. Over time, the new rule will allow the accumulation of financial assets, both to

⁵⁹ Ibid43

⁶⁰ *Republic of Kazakhstan : 2017 Article IV Consultation- Press Release; and Staff Report.* (2017, May 09). In IMF. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2017/05/09/Republic-of-Kazakhstan-2017-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-and-Staff-Report-44884>.

⁶¹ Brown, A. (2012, January 12). *Supporting Kazakhstan's Commitment to Fiscal Consolidation and Long-Term Economic Transformation.* The World Bank.

buffer future commodity-price shocks and to help Kazakhstan prepare for a post-hydrocarbon future.

Furthermore Since independence, Kazakhstan has undergone an important structural shift away from agriculture and towards the growth of extractive industries.⁶² The share of industry in value added rose from 20% in 1990 to a peak of 33% in 2010, driven largely by the growth of the oil, gas and mining sectors (Ibid 47)⁶³. Preliminary estimates from the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan suggest that the extractives share of GDP fell back to 12.9% in 2016, while the services share reached 57.8%, still somewhat below the 65-70% share typical of the major OECD economies. The relative weight of manufacturing, by contrast, has been stable at around 10-11% for almost a decade⁶⁴. Employment has also shifted out of agriculture: the agricultural sector's share of total employment fell by almost half, from 35% at the turn of the century to an estimated 18% in 2015, while the employment share of services rose from just under half to around 61.4% over the same period (Kazakhstan Agricultural Sector)⁶⁵. Employment in construction also rose, from 4% to 8%. However, as will be seen, there is still considerable scope for productivity enhancing reallocation of labor.

Economic growth since the end of the 1990s has brought substantial benefits to the great mass of households in Kazakhstan. Unemployment fell steadily and real wages doubled during 1999-2014 (Zhetpisbayev, 2017)⁶⁶. The nationally defined poverty rate⁶⁷ fell from almost half at

⁶²Extractive industries are the businesses that take raw materials, including oil, coal, gold, iron, copper and other minerals, from the earth. The industrial processes for extracting minerals include drilling and pumping, quarrying, and mining.

⁶³ Ibid47

⁶⁴ Precise comparisons with the period before 2010 are not possible, owing to changes in the system of national accounts

⁶⁵ Kazakhstan - Agricultural Sector prepared by Privacy Shield Framework:
<https://www.privacyshield.gov/article?id=Kazakhstan-Agric>

the turn of the century to 2.7% in 2015; the share of the population below the World Bank's 3.10 Us Dollars a day (World Bank Group, 2018)⁶⁸. Threshold has fallen even more dramatically, from almost one-third in 2001 to an estimated 0.26% in 2013. Since 1995, Kazakhstan's score on the United Nations Human Development Index has been rising steadily, at an impressive rate of almost 1% per year. Life expectancy at birth has risen by just under nine years since 1996 (Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update)⁶⁹. Not surprisingly, growth has also contributed to relatively rapid convergence with the advanced economies, although there is still some way still to go: measured in purchasing-power-parity (PPP) terms, GDP per capita rose from less than 29% of the OECD level in the late 1990s to more than 60% in 2013-16. While the convergence process stalled somewhat with the growth slowdown observed in 2015-16, there is good reason to expect that it will resume, even if at more modest rates. The benefits of growth, moreover, have been widely shared: income inequality in Kazakhstan is the lowest in the post-Soviet region: the so-called "decile ratio" – the ratio of income received by the top 10% of the population to that received by the bottom 10% – fell by almost half between 2000 and 2013, and the Gini coefficient has likewise declined, falling from 35.4 at the turn of the century to an estimated 26.3 in 2013. This is a relatively low level of inequality by OECD standards (IMF, 2014) (OECD, 2016)⁷⁰ and is even more remarkable in a fast-growing emerging economy – both the trend and the level set Kazakhstan apart from its regional peers. As will be seen, important challenges remain when it comes to ensuring that growth remains inclusive: these include sharp inter-regional income disparities, a significant urban-rural divide and barriers to labour-market

⁶⁶ Zhetpisbayev, B. A et al. . (2017). Legal Support of the Process of Kazakhstan Accession to the OECD: Potential for Improving Quality of Individual's Labour Rights Regulation. Slovakia: Asers. Vol. 8, 7(29).

⁶⁷ Here defined as the poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population).

⁶⁸ *A New Growth Model for Building a Secure Middle Class*. . (2018, May 30). In World Bank Group. <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/29792>.

⁶⁹ Human Development Indices and Indicators: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/KAZ.pdf>

⁷⁰ The Gini coefficients for Kazakhstan are not fully comparable to those for OECD countries because of methodological differences; therefore precision with respect to comparing levels is not possible. However, the trend is consistent and remarkable: growth has coincided with decreasing inequality. (IMF 2014 and OECD 2016)

success among certain groups. Nonetheless, the evidence leaves little doubt that recent growth has helped reduce both poverty and inequality substantially. The period since independence has also been of significant social transformation. During the transition period, the population fell from 16.5 million in 1991 to 14.9 million in 2000, largely as a result of the emigration of primarily ethnic Russians and other Slavs, as well as Germans. At the same time, Kazakhstan welcomed significant numbers of ethnic Kazakh immigrants, but this only partially offset the impact of out-migration. (Ibid 43)⁷¹

Kazakhstan's International Integration : Benefitting to Economy

Since independence, the authorities have pursued integration into the international economy. The initial priority was to attract foreign investment into the country's oil and gas sector. Kazakhstan's considerable hydrocarbon resources were well known in Soviet times, but the Soviet authorities were slow to develop them, giving priority instead to the development of Western Siberia. Soviet-era production peaked at 589,000 barrels per day in 1991, far below Kazakhstan's production potential. However, the newly independent country badly needed foreign capital and expertise to realise the potential for far greater production, given the relatively under-developed state of its most important deposits, and the technical problems posed by some of those deposits.¹⁰ Given the severity of the immediate post-Soviet economic crisis, the immaturity of the oil industry and the lack of any other sector capable of generating substantial foreign exchange earnings quickly, the authorities deliberately tried to secure deals with foreign investors to develop the country's largest fields first. Contract sanctity and stability were central to Kazakhstan's drive to attract foreign investors, who were protected from subsequent changes in taxation or other policies during the life of the contract. Despite some conflicts between the state and investors in the 2000s over these very issues, Kazakhstan's approach was overall extremely successful in attracting Western capital to the oil sector. Indeed, the country became the largest recipient of FDI per capita in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Over the two decades to 2014, inward foreign investment inflows averaged 8% of GDP (World Bank, 2017)⁷².

⁷¹ Ibid 43

Moreover, while the primary sector remained the most important destination for such inflows, Kazakhstan also began to attract more investment to other sectors. This required not merely a readiness to conclude specific deals with large-scale investors, as was done for the major oil and gas projects, but a broad-based effort to improve framework conditions for all investors. In 2002, Kazakhstan became the first former Soviet state to receive an investment grade rating, and successive OECD analyses have traced the steady improvement in its investment policies over time. According to the FDI Regulatory Restrictiveness Index, Kazakhstan is still more restrictive than most OECD countries but it is approaching the OECD.

Kazakhstan has also taken steps towards institutional integration in the global economy. Like the other post-communist economies, Kazakhstan quickly joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. However, in terms of institutional and policy commitments, entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) was probably the most significant step. WTO membership is an important step in international integration, as it ensures market access for a wide range of goods and services and provides a framework for negotiating trade agreements. It is also a very strong commitment for a country, because of its dispute resolution process, which aims at enforcing adherence to WTO agreements. The accession process involved substantial policy reform. Indeed, the real impact of WTO accession probably comes not from tariff adjustments but from the deeper institutional changes that membership necessitates. Kazakhstan's intensifying trade integration can also be seen in its trade growth: in real terms, both imports and exports have more than doubled since 1994.

More recently, the OECD has become a central focus of Kazakhstan's institutional integration. While Kazakhstan has been co-operating with the OECD since the early 1990s, its efforts to strengthen its co-operation intensified, particularly after 2008, not least owing to its growing involvement in the OECD Eurasia Competitiveness Programme (ECP) (OECD, 2019)⁷³.

⁷² *World Bank Annual Report* . (2017). In The World Bank.

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/143021506909711004/world-bank-annual-report-2017>.

⁷³ *Making OECD standards and policies count on a global scale: Report by the Secretary-General to Ministers on OECD Global Relations*. (2019). In OECD. [https://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/C-MIN\(2019\)11.en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/C-MIN(2019)11.en.pdf).

From 2012 to 2016, Kazakhstan co-chaired the ECP's Central Asia Initiative. It has also joined the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, became a Participant in the Committee on Industry, Innovation and Entrepreneurship in 2013, a member of the Development Centre in 2015 and an Associate in the Base Erosion and Profit-Shifting (BEPS) Project in 2016. These latter developments took place against the backdrop of the OECD Country Programme for Kazakhstan (KCP), launched in January 2015 and renewed in the spring of 2017. The Programme supports Kazakhstan's long-term domestic reform agenda on critical issues, including civil service reform, the rule of law, social policy and diversified and sustainable economic growth. It offers a structured co-operation plan involving analysis, capacity-building and policy dialogue that brings economic and social policy makers from Kazakhstan together with their peers from OECD countries (OECD's GLOBAL RELATIONS, 2015)⁷⁴. The Country Programme aims to allow both sides to learn from each other's experiences and to co-operate in devising approaches to such critical policy challenges.

In 2010, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan formed a Customs Union⁷⁵ within the already existing Eurasian Economic Community. In 2012, this became a Common Economic Space (CES), providing for free movement of goods, labour, capital and services across the member states, and in 2015, the CES became the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), encompassing the original three member states, as well as Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, and providing for common transport, agriculture and energy policies, in addition to a single market. The EEU remains controversial, within Kazakhstan and abroad. It has raised new barriers between EEU and non-EEU members, not least because some partners have had to adopt higher tariff levels when adhering to the common external tariff. However, the impact of this will abate somewhat as WTO-mandated annual tariff reductions are implemented. Secondly, there have been conflicts among EEU members concerning the imposition of adhoc restrictions and non-tariff barriers that

⁷⁴ *Ministerial Meeting 2015: Background documents*. (2015). In OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/mcm-2018/documents/ministerial-meeting-2015-background-documents.htm>.

⁷⁵ A customs union is generally defined as a type of trade bloc which is composed of a free trade area with a common external tariff. Customs unions are established through trade pacts where the participant countries set up common external trade policy

disadvantage them. Nevertheless, border crossings within the Union have become easier since the Customs Union was formed in 2010 (Aytzhanovna, MaratImangalievich, Islyamovna, 2015)⁷⁶. *In the long run, the more important question may turn on the impact of EEU accession on members' economic institutions and governance.*

Main Challenges of Kazakhstan Economy: Remodeling of Policies & implementation;

To diversify the structure of economic activity and sustain strong growth over the long term, Kazakhstan must continue to demonstrate progress towards more effective public governance, promote a more open and competitive economy, adopt a greener growth model, and develop education, employment and social inclusion. More effective public governance requires significant changes. The government has made substantial progress in improving good governance, including significant changes to budgeting practices, reforms of the civil service, and e-governance. However, a number of governance issues continue to inhibit long-term sustainable economic development, including an overly centralized governance system, politicization of decision-making, limited devolution of powers to regional administrations, lack of transparency, and corruption (Ospanova, 2014)⁷⁷. The legacies of Soviet administrative practice remain clearly visible in Kazakhstan's public governance, particularly its slow and highly formalized bureaucratic procedures.

The issue of over-centralisation is particularly salient. The governance system is highly centralised by OECD standards, particularly within the executive branch of government. Many institutions and government bodies have similar remits and specialisations, which results in an

⁷⁶ Aytzhanovna, A. G. et al. (2015, November 29). *Common Economic Space as Progressive Legal Institute of Integration in World Economy*. Canada : Canadian Center of Science and Education. Vol. 8 No. 9.

⁷⁷ Ospanova, S. (2014, January). *Assessing Kazakhstan's policy and institutional framework for a green economy*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development.

overlapping of functions and confused lines of authority and accountability (Ibid 43)⁷⁸. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities of the cabinet, ministries, sub-national levels of government, and other government institutions are not sufficiently defined. Improving the efficiency and quality of governance must also involve decentralization of authority, both to the legislature and to sub-national levels of government. At present, the devolution of powers to regional authorities is limited, and the centre of government maintains considerable influence over local political and economic processes. The result is an inflexible system that is unable to respond quickly and effectively to local needs. In turn, regional authorities lack accountability, since their lack of capacity is a by-product of a governance system outside their control, which further entrenches inefficient practices and governance (World Bank, 2000)⁷⁹. The absence of direct taxation at the regional and local levels is a further impediment to sub-national government accountability.

The responsibilities of local governments are not commensurate with their administrative, policy, and fiscal capacities. By deconcentrating power from the Centre of Government, the capacity of sub-national administrations to react in a timely manner to local events, and to more efficiently fulfill their existing responsibilities (including, among other areas, social services, environmental protection, and provision of utilities) will be significantly improved.

Corruption and issues of transparency persist as major impediments to good governance. Transparency International ranked Kazakhstan 131st out of 176 countries in its 2016 Corruption Perception Index, with approximately 26.7% of companies admitting to having expected a bribe request. A number of high-profile scandals, such as the arrest and imprisonment of the chairman of EXPO-2017 on charges of embezzlement of state funds, have reinforced the perception of corruption as an inveterate problem at all levels of government. The problem of corruption is

⁷⁸ Ibid 43.

⁷⁹ A World Bank Strategy . (2000, November). *Reforming Public Institutions and Strengthening Governance*. Washington DC , United States of America: Public Sector Group, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network.

aggravated by a prevailing lack of transparency, with opacity in government spending and activities entrenching public distrust. In the absence of publicly accessible information on government spending, public institutions are unable to build the trust of the population that is essential for them to function effectively. The government has taken steps to address the related issues of corruption and transparency, with its ambitions most clearly articulated in the “100 Concrete Steps to Implement Five Institutional Reforms” and “Anti-Corruption Programme (Satubaldina, 2018)⁸⁰(until 2025)”. However, legislative change is insufficient to address corruption and transparency problems. The government must also allocate sufficient resources so that implementation and enforcement of current and future measures can have the desired effect.

A more open and competitive economy will support diversification. Despite recent progress in convergence, labour productivity remains comparatively low by OECD standards, and OECD notes that total factor productivity growth has slowed somewhat since the global financial crisis in 2008-09. Moreover, there are very large disparities in productivity between both regions and sectors:

- OECD finds that inter-regional disparities in GDP per capita and per worker are exceptionally high in Kazakhstan, with an inter-regional Gini coefficient of GDP per capita of 0.41 in 2010. This was higher than that of any OECD member state, as well as such emerging economies as India, Indonesia, Ukraine and South Africa, though it was lower than China or Russia. Inter-regional inequalities increased rapidly during the first years of post-transition growth (only Greece and Ukraine recorded more rapid increases in inter-regional inequality) although they have been fairly stable now for around a decade. Zhambyl, Almaty, and South and North Kazakhstan fell further behind relative to the other regions, while Astana and Mangystau grew particularly fast. Of course, these trends coincided with declining inequality among individuals, reflecting in part the movement of population to areas with faster growth and better living standards, particularly around Astana and Almaty.

⁸⁰Satubaldina, A. (2018, March 1). Kazakhstan removed from list of most corrupt countries. *The Astana Times*.

- Most employment is concentrated in low-productivity sectors. Resource extraction is highly capital intensive: while it generates upwards of 20% of GDP, it employs a mere 2% of the working population. At the same time, close to half the population is employed in sectors with average productivity that is lower than half the national average (OECD Global Relations Eurasia)⁸¹.

Such disparities across sectors constitute one of the strongest arguments for making the diversification of economic activity a policy goal: given Kazakhstan's population and human capital endowments, a flourishing non-resource urban sector is likely to be crucial to long-term social and political stability, as well as broad-based prosperity. Kazakhstan can never follow the path of some of the smaller oil-exporting countries, such as Kuwait. Its resource sectors alone will never be able to provide an acceptable standard of living for the great mass of the population, even if one makes very aggressive assumptions about both future resource prices and Kazakhstan's ability to increase resource extraction (Ward, 2009)⁸². Thus there is a need for diversification in directions that will create more high-productivity employment. Service sector growth may yet offer opportunities: the services share of GDP is still well below the levels observed in the advanced OECD economies, and most service sectors are still relatively undeveloped, particularly high-value-added services like finance. There are risks here, though, inasmuch as a great deal of service-sector growth in recent years has been in non-tradable segments, like wholesale and retail trade, which in turn were largely driven by inflows from resource exports and which in many cases are characterised by low productivity. The challenge for policy makers is to facilitate the emergence of new, high-productivity activities in tradables as well (World Bank Group, 2017)⁸³. Closely related to this is the challenge of private-sector development. At present, Kazakhstan's economy is largely driven by wholly or primarily state-

⁸¹ *Reforming Kazakhstan Progress, Challenges and Opportunities*. (1995). In OECD.
<https://www.oecd.org/eurasia/countries/OECD-Eurasia-Reforming-Kazakhstan-EN.pdf>.

⁸² Ward, H. (2009, March). *Resource nationalism and sustainable development: a primer and key issues*.

⁸³ *Kazakhstan the economy is rising: It is still all about oil country economic*. (2017). In World Bank Group.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/kazakhstan/publication/economic-update-fall-2017>.

owned entities. Price controls are in place in a number of markets, and discretionary interventions by state actors are common. Limited competition also distorts price signals in some important sectors. The government's commitment to a new and substantial wave of privatisations is welcome, but it will not deliver rapid change. Much will depend on just how privatisations are conducted and on how complementary reforms create an open and competitive environment, with a level playing field for both new and privatised firms. A great deal also hangs on current efforts to strengthen the financial system; its weaknesses are an issue for foreign partners and local entrepreneurs alike. High levels of state intervention in the economy can hinder foreign investment, entrepreneurship and innovation. They also limit the space for the growth of new firms. The shares of both GDP and employment are low by international standards, and smaller firms often operate on the fringes of the informal economy. Innovation performance is weak, and inputs to innovation are limited. R&D expenditures have been fluctuating between 0.15% and 0.17% of GDP in recent years, well below the government's 2% target and below the OECD average of 2.4% in 2015. The business sector only performs about 40% of R&D in 2015, which is well below the OECD average (68%) but also far lower than in countries like China or Malaysia. (OECD, 2017)⁸⁴

Kazakhstan needs a remodeling of its Economic policies , A greener Growth model:

The government has outlined ambitious national economic and environmental targets as part of its attempt to move towards a greener growth. In addition to its domestic pledges, most clearly articulated in its Green Economy Concept (GEC) (Supporting Kazakhstan's transition towards Green Economy model, UNECE, 2020)⁸⁵, the government has also committed itself to numerous international environmental treaties. While these efforts are welcome, the circumstances in which these changes are to take place are inauspicious and suggests a number of steps to accelerate progress towards Kazakhstan's sustainability goals. Although the energy

⁸⁴ *World corporate top R&D investors: Shaping the future of technologies and AI.* (2017). In OECD.
<https://www.oecd.org/sti/world-corporate-top-rd-investors-shaping-future-of-technology-and-of-ai.pdf>.

⁸⁵ *Supporting Kazakhstan's transition towards Green Economy model.* (2020). In UNECE.
<https://unece.org/environment-policy/water/areas-work-convention/projects-central-asia/supporting-kazakhstans-transition-towards-green-economy-model>.

intensity of GDP fell sharply in the 1990s, Kazakhstan remains one of the most energy-intensive countries in the world. In part, this reflects its economic structure. Kazakhstan's economy is dominated by energy-intensive sectors, such as resource extraction (Arkhipov, 2010)⁸⁶. Yet its energy intensity is exceptionally high even when compared to other countries that rely heavily on their extractive sectors. The problem is exacerbated by inefficient practices, outdated technology and aging infrastructure, much of which was inherited from the Soviet Union. Kazakhstan continues to have serious problems with energy efficiency and savings. A combination of outdated heat distribution systems, transmission systems, and inefficient technology in the industrial sector contribute to sizable energy losses. Whilst the government believes that a modernisation of production technologies could deliver energy savings of 15-40% in the industrial sector, the extent to which these savings will be offset by expansion of the country's hydrocarbon sector is unclear. Kazakhstan's energy efficiency problems are not mitigated by the limited contribution of renewable sources to the country's energy mix. While the IEA has noted the potential for expanding the contribution of renewables (IEA, 2015)⁸⁷ The government has initiated plans for additional renewable capacity of 3054 MW, primarily from expanded wind and hydropower sources, but progress has been slow, its implementation impeded by a lack of effective co-ordination and concomitant financing constraints at the national and local level. The predominance of extractive industries and the associated high levels of energy intensity risk significant damage to land, water, and to air quality in the country. As the largest emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG) in Central Asia (Asian Development Bank, 2012)⁸⁸ Kazakhstan has GHG emissions that are high in both per capita terms and relative to production. For the purposes of illustration, CO₂ emissions per unit of GDP are almost four times the Norwegian level, and 15% higher than levels in China (OECD, 2016)⁸⁹. One of the most significant impediments to

⁸⁶ Arkhipov, S. et al. (2010, May 05). *Kazakhstan oil and gas sector*. Harvard Business School.

⁸⁷ *Kazakhstan country overview*. (2015). In International Energy Agency.
<https://www.euroenergy.iea.org/countries/kazakhstan>

⁸⁸ Sector assessment summary: Energy (2012). In Asian Development Bank.
<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/linked-documents/cps-kaz-2012-2016-ssa-02.pdf>.

⁸⁹ *Education*. (2016). In OECD. <http://www.oecd.org/education/>.

transitioning towards a greener economy is the dearth of available financing for investment purposes. The vast majority of financial commitments received by the government come from multilateral channels, including the EBRD, European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Union (EU). There has been very little private-sector involvement in renewable energy and climate projects; private investment has been hampered by an inauspicious business climate, with permits for green and environmentally oriented projects difficult to obtain. One of the most significant impediments to green growth is the country's continued subsidisation of energy for the domestic market, which reduces interest in energy efficiency and investment in green technologies. In the absence of a strong regulatory and legal framework, combined with the wide availability of cheap energy from non environmentally friendly sources, the government will struggle to attract the investment needed to achieve its green ambitions.

Education, employment and social policies can make growth more inclusive Kazakhstan's economic progress has become increasingly inclusive over the past decade, reducing inequality and bringing benefits to a wide spectrum of the population. The unemployment rate has halved from the levels commonly seen in the 2000s, and youth unemployment rates are one-fifth of the level they used to be. This, in turn, has resulted in higher wages and increasing incomes (World Social Report, 2020) ⁹⁰. Kazakhstan's Gini coefficient is low compared to regional peers and OECD countries, having fallen from 0.319 in 1996 to 0.278 in 2014 (Cingano, 2014)⁹¹. However important challenges remain, not least because there has in some cases been a contrast between progress on monetary and non-monetary dimensions of well-being and also because assessments of public service provision have identified significant gaps between quantitative progress, in expanding the services available, and improvements in the quality of services. This is something to which the government has in recent years paid greater attention. As Kazakhstan continues to develop and improve its economic and social well-being, its growth will become increasingly

⁹⁰ *World Social Report 2020*. (2020, January 21). In United Nations.

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/world-social-report-2020.html>.

⁹¹ Cingano, F. (2014). *Trends in Income Inequality and its Impact on Economic Growth*. OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 163, OECD Publishing.

dependent on efficiency and productivity gains, underpinned by strong human capital. To achieve such “high order” growth, Kazakhstan needs to see through several recent initiatives to link its economic performance with increased access to education, quality of employment and expanded social inclusion. In education, for example, reforms need to address the governance of the education system, the inefficient education funding scheme, and an overly centralised academic system. Even though the academic autonomy of universities has increased in recent years, Kazakhstan still relies heavily on the decision making of the Ministry of Education and Science. Curriculum development, budgeting and organisational flexibility are not yet sufficiently autonomous. The government is taking steps to improve external quality assurance in higher education, but internal institutional quality assurance and improvement are underdeveloped. Kazakhstan also faces some issues with the funding of its education system. Its recorded level of public funding for education was 3.8% of GDP in 2013, compared to an average of 5.6% across OECD countries in 2012 (Pons, et al, 2015)⁹². Moreover, funding is usually determined on a discretionary and incremental basis by rayons. In the labour market, Kazakhstan has achieved good employment rates and low inactivity rates, but more can be done to improve job quality. Approximately 20% of the working population is in informal employment – usually with lower paying jobs, limited access to training, poor social security coverage and little labour protection. A relatively high share of the population is also self-employed (30%) (Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture, International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2018)⁹³. Particular attention should be paid to youth, older workers and the disabled. While the youth unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the world, younger people usually work in jobs with poor quality and pay, frequently in the informal sector. The number of disabled persons in Kazakhstan is very low by international standards, at 3.5-3.7% in 2010, due to its narrow definition of disability (On the Margins” Education for Children with Disabilities in Kazakhstan,

⁹² Pons, A. et al. (2015, June). Kazakhstan, OECD and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. TheWorld Bank.

⁹³ *Women and men in the informal economy: A statistical picture (2018). (3rd ed.). Geneva: International Labour Office.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_626831.pdf.

March 14, 2019)⁹⁴. Those disabled persons who still have work capacity are rarely able to remain employed. The disabled are less likely to work full time or to hold onto their jobs. The elderly usually stop working before retirement age, and those who continue often have low-quality jobs. Early exit from the workplace is usually due to institutional factors, such as the low retirement age, the absence of incentives to keep working after retirement, and in many cases, poor health. The government is taking action to strengthen female participation in the labour market. The female activation rate, at 61%, is just below the OECD average of 62% and above the levels of many OECD countries (OECD, PISA, 2018)⁹⁵. As in the OECD area, women have lower employment rates and higher inactivity rates than men. There is still an over-representation of women in “feminised” sectors of the economy, and women on average earn only 67% of what men do. Female employment in SMEs has increased, but this is often accompanied by substandard working conditions. Women remain largely absent at directorial and executive levels – according to the World Bank, only 4.2% of large corporations are led by women (OECD, Eurasia)⁹⁶. They have good access and enrolment in education but are overrepresented in traditional areas of study.

Implementation is an overall challenge Kazakhstan has the potential to sustain strong growth over the longer term, but, given its current, somewhat fragile economic structure, continued adherence to prudent macroeconomic policies will be essential to achieving this goal. Realizing its full long-term growth potential will also require further structural reform in a large number of areas, to render both the state and the economy more efficient and more resilient. Fortunately, the authorities in Kazakhstan have committed themselves to a wide range of needed structural reforms and also to continued macroeconomic discipline. Implementing many of these

⁹⁴ *On the Margins: Education for Children with Disabilities in Kazakhstan*. (2019, March 14). In Human Rights Watch. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/03/14/margins/education-children-disabilities-kazakhstan>.

⁹⁵ Kazakhstan - Country Note - PISA 2018 Results. (2019, December 03). In OECD. https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_KAZ.pdf.

⁹⁶ *Reforming Kazakhstan Progress, Challenges and Opportunities*. (2016). In OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/eurasia/countries/OECD-Eurasia-Reforming-Kazakhstan-EN.pdf>.

reforms is likely to prove far more difficult than designing and adopting them, however, and will place great demands on the political will and administrative capacities of the state (astana-kazakhstan.net)⁹⁷. Nevertheless, if the authorities are able to deliver on their reform commitments, Kazakhstan may well realise its ambition to join the ranks of the world's most developed countries, not only in terms of economic output but also, more critically, in terms of citizens' wellbeing. Kazakhstan has pursued "Multivector foreign policy" (Vanderhill, Joireman, Tulepbayeva, 2020)⁹⁸ seeking good relations with its two large neighbors, Russia and China as well as with USA and rest of the Western world.

Astana from the very beginning made every effort to prevent the transformation of the Republic from a raw material source to a strong manufacturing power. It has attempted to create maximum favorable investment climate which ultimately was a success. Since the independence more than 27 billion dollars of investments (13 billion dollars - only between 2003-2006) flowed into the economy of Kazakhstan (Library of Congress – Federal Research Division Country Profile: Kazakhstan, December 2006)⁹⁹. The government of the country has tried to avoid preferences and has involved the largest companies of the West, Russia and China for cooperation in sphere of oil extracting and processing. This way, economic interests of many states became focused on Kazakhstan while none now possesses dominating influence. In the beginning of 1990s according to the data of the review done by a World Economic Forum, Kazakhstan ranked only 109th in the rating list of competitive countries. However in the index of competitiveness in 2006 - 2007 Kazakhstan had moved to 56th place. In comparison, Kazakhstan's nearest neighboring CIS. countries - Russia and Ukraine - occupied 75th and 84th positions respectively. These facts show that the strategy proclaimed by the President Nazarbayev in his Annual Message to the People of Kazakhstan in 1997 "Kazakhstan's Strategy of Joining the World's 50

⁹⁷ *Politics: Political system.* (2020). In Explore Astana. <https://www.astana-kazakhstan.net/kazakhstan/politics/>.

⁹⁸ Vanderhill, R; Joireman, S F; Tulepbayeva, R. (2020, July 01) *Between the bear and the dragon: multivectorism in Kazakhstan as a model strategy for secondary powers.* International Affairs, Volume 96, Issue 4.

⁹⁹ *Country profile: Kazakhstan.* (2006, December). Library of Congress – Federal Research Division. <https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/profiles/Kazakhstan-new.pdf>.

Most Competitive Countries" is being successfully realized (The Astana Times, 19th October, 2018)¹⁰⁰. The republic stands on the threshold of a new stage of development. The toughest transition period has approached its logical end and now in the long term one can speak about an absolutely new country which became the important segment of global geopolitics. Here again one more achievement of Astana can be pointed out which is in the diplomatic field. The authorities of the Republic have managed to avoid one-sided foreign policy and to succeed in creating a balanced system of relations with global powers like Washington, Beijing and Moscow. In Kazakhstan, on the one hand, initiatives which could have led to foreign domination of the Republic and its use for doubtful political actions have been blocked. On the other hand, joint projects which could promote development of Kazakhstan were not declined. It is obviously shown in relations with Russia. Astana and the Kremlin are united with large power projects; however, Kazakhstan has not made itself dependent on the stronger northern neighbour, and has joined the project on transporting oil by Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline which is actively supported by the USA. Other example is space projects which Russia carries out in Kazakhstan. Astana has insisted that Kazakhstan became not the contractor but a full participant as the host territory for realization of space projects and by that received real economic and scientific dividends. On June 18, 2006, Kazakhstan joined the club of the world's space powers in its own right when it launched its first commercial satellite 'KazSat 1' from the Baikonur Cosmodrome on a Russian built booster rockets (www.rferl.org, June 18, 2006)¹⁰¹.

Kazakhstan's Economic Policy towards India:

Kazakhstan and India are rapidly growing economies, which is opening new vistas for the bilateral cooperation. The two countries are rediscovering each other and people-to-people contacts have increased tremendously. As globalization pace gets faster, peoples of the two countries become "immediate neighbours" instead of "extended neighbours". It is expected in the

¹⁰⁰ Boteu, S.. (2018, October 19). *Kazakhstan retains position in World Economic Forum ranking*. The Astana Times.

¹⁰¹ *First Kazakh Satellite Put Into Orbit*. (2006, June 18). In Radio free Europe Radio Liberty. <https://www.rferl.org/a/1069248.html>.

near future relations between Kazakhstan and India as well as Central Asia and South Asia will gain more strength.

As is well-known, India is the most populous democracy and the sixth largest economy in the world with a GDP of 2.69 trillion. U.S. analysts predict India, currently the world's sixth largest economy, could become the third largest by 2025(Gupta, 2020)¹⁰². The Indian Government is implementing programmes to stimulate economic development, including improving public administration and national legislation as well as the business and investment climate. Many of the initiatives are similar to Kazakh programmes.

India is at the forefront in financial resources, innovation and scientific and technical development. The country is also a huge export market for foreign goods, as well as a major investor and supplier of advanced technologies, primarily in IT. India is one of Kazakhstan's key political and economic partners in the region. Modi's 2015 official visit and top-level negotiations spurred economic cooperation. Additional impetus came during the Indian Prime Minister's 2017 visit to Kazakhstan for the SCO Summit and the opening of EXPO 2017 (Sarsenbayev, 2019)¹⁰³. The cooperation is rapidly developing with a focus on economic diplomacy. Kazakhstan is India's main trading partner in Central Asia. Kazakh-Indian trade exceeds India's combined trade with other countries in our region. Bilateral trade in 2018 reached 1.2 billion dollars. Since 2017, trade has increased 26.5 percent (www.nordeatrade.com)¹⁰⁴. Compared to 2015, this figure has more than doubled (rbi.org.in)¹⁰⁵. For the first three months of this year, bilateral trade was 35.9 percent higher than the same period last year.

¹⁰² Gupta, S. (2020, December 27). *India to become 3rd largest economy by 2030: Report*. The Times of India.

¹⁰³ Sarsenbayev, B. (2019, July 29). *Kazakhstan and India move toward new horizons of cooperation*. The Astana Times.

¹⁰⁴ *Foreign trade figures of India*. (2020, January). In Nordea Trade Portal.
<https://www.nordeatrade.com/en/explore-new-market/india/trade-profile>.

¹⁰⁵ Annual Report. (2019, August 29). In Reserve Bank of India.
<https://m.rbi.org.in/Scripts/AnnualReportPublications.aspx?Id=1257>.

Kazakh Ambassador to India says, “I am convinced we can expand trade. To do so, we must improve delivery methods between our countries. Therefore, the embassy is making every effort to use the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway (www.railwaygazette.com)¹⁰⁶ (with further destinations at the ports of Bandar Abbas and Chabahar) and then the sea route to India. The reduced time and cost could double or triple trade.”

According to the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan, approximately 560 entities with Indian capital are registered in Kazakhstan. More than 200 Indian companies registered in the past two-three years (mea.gov.in, August, 2017)¹⁰⁷. Work to expand trade and economic cooperation is carried out jointly with the Kazakh-Indian Business Council. Tengri Bank in Almaty, of which Punjab National Bank is the shareholder, assists Indian companies in Kazakhstan (The Hindu , Business Line, September 18, 2020)¹⁰⁸. Regarding attracting investments, the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies are building a vertically integrated scheme to attract foreign investors, starting with embassies abroad. This aligns with the new task of the foreign ministry and our embassies to implement economic diplomacy (The Astana Times, 15 January, 2019)¹⁰⁹. Kazakh embassy in India has hired officers responsible for attracting investments and Kazakhstan recently opened a representative office of the Kazakh Invest national company in Delhi. At the end of 2018, the transnational company

¹⁰⁶ Iran – Turkmenistan – Kazakhstan rail link inaugurated. (2014, December 04). In *Railway Gazette International*. <https://www.railwaygazette.com/asia/iran-turkmenistan-kazakhstan-rail-link-inaugurated/40284.article>.

¹⁰⁷ Mapping Central Asia's relations with other Asian states. (2018, September). In Seneca. https://www.seneca-eu.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SEnECA_Policy_Paper_08_2018.pdf.

¹⁰⁸ Kazakhstan regulator revokes licence of Punjab National Bank's affiliate. (2020, September 18). The Hindu : Businessline.

¹⁰⁹ Editorials. (2019, January 15). *Emphasis on economic diplomacy positions Kazakhstan well to attract investment in times of growing competition. The Astana Times.*

Chaudhary Group acquired the assets of a noodle production plant in the Turkestan region and are seeking partners in Kazakhstan and 10 regional countries (The Astana Times, June 21, 2019)¹¹⁰.

Further together with Kazakh Invest, India and Kazakhstan are cooperating with Farm2U, a major Indian farming company interested in developing gardening in Kazakhstan. The Reflex group of companies is also expected to soon finalise an agreement on rare earth metals processing and the acquisition of the Drozhilovsky deposit. Additionally, the large energy company NTPC is ready to enter the Kazakh market to implement an alternative energy project with a capacity of over 100 MW (The Astana Times, 29 July, 2019)¹¹¹. The embassy also assisted an Indian business delegation's participation in the Astana Economic Forum. The delegation met with Kazakh Prime Minister Askar Mamin, Ministers of Industry and Infrastructure Development, as well as Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry, the heads of the National Bank, the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC), as well as other business and political organisations. Agreements totalling approximately \$300 million and two memorandums were signed. The embassy is also pursuing cooperation in finance, banking and FinTech. In April, presentations on what the AIFC can offer were organised in Delhi and Mumbai. Great prospects also exist for IT cooperation with India. The launching of telecommunications equipment production by Tejas at the Astana IT hub and cooperation with leading Indian IT company Infosys are being discussed. The space and military sectors could also become priority cooperation areas. (The Astana Times, 29 July, 2019)¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Saff Report in Nation. (2019, June 21). *Indian investors to build ski resort, noodle factory in Turkestan Region.* The Astana Times.

¹¹¹ Sarsenbayev, B. (2019, July 29). *Kazakhstan and India move toward new horizons of cooperation.* The Astana Times.

¹¹² Sarsenbayev, B. (2019, July 29). *Kazakhstan and India move toward new horizons of cooperation.* The Astana Times

India – Kazakhstan Bi-Lateral Trade:

From 113.14 million US Dollars in 2005, India-Kazakhstan bilateral trade has grown to 280.59 million US Dollars in 2009 (www.eepcindia.org, January 2014)¹¹³. During this period India's imports from Kazakhstan has grown much faster than exports. In 2009 India registered a negative trade balance of 12.73 million US Dollars (Ibid 116)¹¹⁴. It is interesting to note that prior to the financial crisis in 2008 India had a positive trade balance with Kazakhstan. However as on today India's trade balance with Kazakhstan is negative, over the last two years there is not much change in that volume

Validating the fact that Kazakhstan is fast becoming a major source for metals and minerals, iron and steel accounted for about 50 percent of India's imports. Zinc and its compounds constituted another 27.7 percent of imports and about 16 percent was accounted by salt, sulphur, lime and other minerals. Thus, more than 90 percent of India's imports are on account of these commodities. Significantly, oil and natural gas do not feature in this list of major import items (www.cuts-citee.org)¹¹⁵. On the other hand, pharmaceuticals, coffee, tea, spices, textiles and apparel are the main categories of exports from India. However, except for pharmaceutical products, among the top 15 merchandise imports to Kazakhstan Indian exports is less than one percent (www.infodriveindia.com)¹¹⁶. Even in case of Indian pharmaceutical export to Kazakhstan, percentage share of that export (as a percentage of total Indian export of pharmaceutical products) is less than one percent. India's export of services to Kazakhstan is

¹¹³ Doing business in Eurasia. (January, 2014). In EEPC India.

<https://www.eepcindia.org/download/150323164529.pdf>.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 116

¹¹⁵ A Note on India-Kazakhstan Trade and Investment Relations. In Cuts International. http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Briefing_Paper-India-Kazakhstan_Trade_and_Investment_Relations.pdf.

¹¹⁶ India Exports to Kazakhstan. In Infodrive India: Global Export Import Market Intelligence. <https://www.infodriveindia.com/india-trading-partners/kazakhstan-exports.aspx>.

negligible. Other than personal travel, financial services accounted for 3.94 % of India's total export of that category and architectural, engineering and other technical consultancy accounted for 1.95 percent. It is important to note that India's share in major Kazakh imports from other Asian countries is less than 10 percent in all categories of products except articles of iron or steel. It would be interesting to look at India's revealed comparative advantage in those product categories and compare them with that of its Asian competitors to understand future potential of Indian exports to Kazakhstan (www.cuts-citee.org)¹¹⁷. However, over the last five years (2005-09), the composition of bilateral trade (exports as well as imports) has remained more or less unchanged. There is hardly any sign of product diversification with overall growth in trade volume. Trade deepening through exploring prospects in other commodities and reaping full potential of bilateral trade is yet to be materialised.

An important study on India's future trade prospects in the light of financial crisis has identified Kazakhstan as one of India's trading partners with a high unexplored trade potential. The gap between actual and potential bilateral trade was estimated at 86.19 percent of potential trade volume. (De, 2009)¹¹⁸ In fact, the corresponding figures are very high for other prominent CIS countries – Uzbekistan (81.95%), Tajikistan (94.39%), Armenia (82.47%) and Kyrgystan (93.34%). This result coupled with the fact that Kazakhstan fairs far better in the Central Asian region in terms of economic stability as well as governance indicators shows the huge potential that they have in improving (net of trade creation by taking into account trade diversion factors as well) their trade relations in future (Jafari et al, 2011)¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁷ A Note on India-Kazakhstan Trade and Investment Relations. In Cuts International. http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Briefing_Paper-India-Kazakhstan_Trade_and_Investment_Relations.pdf.

¹¹⁸ De, P. (2009, May). Global economic and financial crisis: India's trade potential and future prospects. ARTNeT Working Paper. Series No. 64.

¹¹⁹ Jafari, Ahmad et al. (2011). *Political Stability and FDI in OIC Countries*, *Journal of Social and Development Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 18-23.

India-Kazakhstan Bilateral Investment:

Since the year 2000, foreign direct investment in Kazakhstan has increased by more than six times to reach 72.3 billion US Dollars (cumulative figure) and it stands as the second most attractive investment destination amongst the CIS countries after Russia.(World Investment Report, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2010)¹²⁰ Reduction of capital controls in general and in foreign currency transactions in particular has contributed to this increase. During 2007-09, annual FDI inflow has continuously remained above 11 billion US Dollars (www.rbi.org)¹²¹. On the other hand, outward FDI from Kazakhstan has reached 6.8 billion US Dollars.(Ibid 123)¹²² Kazakhstan's FDI flow to India has been minimal till date. Kazakhstan's outward FDI initiatives are driven by the need for economic diversification beyond mining and improvement in competitiveness through overseas experiences, adoption of internationally accepted standards of corporate governance, etc. (Amagoh & Markus, 2010)¹²³ Therefore, its FDI destinations have been developed countries with very high concentration in The Netherlands, Italy and UK. Likewise, India's contribution in FDI stock of Kazakhstan is also low.¹²⁴ Despite having an investment treaty (bilateral investment promotion agreement) between India and Kazakhstan, which came into force in July 2001, cross-border investment relations are weak (investmentpolicy.unctad.org)¹²⁵. In 2005-06, India's OFDI stock in transition economies

¹²⁰ *World Investment Report : Nations Conference on Trade and Development*. (2010). In UNCAD. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/wir2010_en.pdf.

¹²¹ *Foreign direct investment flows to India*. In Reserve bank of India. https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/bs_viewcontent.aspx?Id=2513.

¹²² Ibid. 123

¹²³ Amagoh, F and Ustina, M. (2010, November). *Kazakhstan's Outward Foreign Investments: Issues and Perspectives*. Central Asia Business Journal. Vol. 3

¹²⁴ A Note on India-Kazakhstan Trade and Investment Relations. In Cuts International. http://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Briefing_Paper-India-Kazakhstan_Trade_and_Investment_Relations.pdf

¹²⁵ *Kazakhstan Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs)*. (2018). In Investment policy hub. <https://investmentpolicy.unctad.org/international-investment-agreements/countries/107/kazakhstan>.

including Kazakhstan stood at US\$3.02 billion, out of total stock of about US\$12 billion.¹²⁶ A predominant share of this was concentrated in Russia. Since then a number of investment avenues opened up in Kazakhstan, mostly in sectors such as oil and natural gas, pharmaceuticals, banking and information technology. It is clear that energy security is the primary motivation for India's investment interests in Kazakhstan. The long-standing bid of Oil & Natural Gas Commission of India for joint oil exploration with KazMunayGaz (both are state-owned oil and gas companies) in the Satpayev Block has been a highlight of this motivation and with the signing of the deal, the ONGC is expected to invest 400 million US Dollars (Business standard Union Budget, 2021)¹²⁷.

While petrochemicals and uranium are of key strategic interests to India, building momentum in other sectors is hindered mainly by lack of adequate and authentic information available in both countries about the business potential and prospects. In 2010, the Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Ashok Sajjanhar, reported that there is a huge 'information divide' between the two countries and Indian businessmen and entrepreneurs are not fully aware of Kazakhstan's attractive investment climate (Sajjanhar, 2020) (Rana & Chatterjee, 2011)¹²⁸ Language barrier is an additional cause of hesitation on the part of Indian business enterprises. (Bhatia, 2009)¹²⁹ In short, given the current state of affairs and the high rating of Kazakhstan's FDI potential, looking beyond energy and mineral sectors in Kazakhstan is important for two reasons. (OECD, 2011)¹³⁰ First, in order to ensure a better stake in Kazakhstan's energy resources, a wider presence in other sectors is necessary. Expansion of business ties in sectors like banking and infrastructure will help to enhance the ease of doing

¹²⁶ *World investment report: Investment and new industrial policies*. (2018). In UNCAD. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/wir2018_en.pdf.

¹²⁷ *Business standard*. (2021). In Business Standard Union Budget. <https://www.business-standard.com/company/o-n-g-c-6068/information/company-history>.

¹²⁸ Sajjanhar, A.(2010) *India-Kazakhstan Relations: Opportunities for Future*.

¹²⁹ Bhatia, V K.(2009). *India-Kazakhstan Relations: Challenges and Prospects*., Vol. XLVII, No 38.

¹³⁰ Kazakhstan: Sector Competitiveness Strategy, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2011). In OECD. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/finance-and-investment/competitiveness-and-private-sector-development-kazakhstan-2010_9789264089792-en

business not only in Kazakhstan but also in other fast growing and resource rich countries in Central Asia. Secondly and diversification being a pressing priority of the Kazakh economy, lucrative opportunities are fast emerging in a number of non-energy sectors such as agri-business, fertilizer, logistical and other business service and information technology. (Ibid)¹³¹ In the context of future investment relations between India and Kazakhstan, it is interesting to note that India's intra-industry trade index is highest in mineral products (average compound growth rate of 19.01% in 2005) and it is also high in petro-based products (9.96%). (Burange, Chadda, 2008) (Grubel, Lloyd, 1975)¹³² Other than reaping the benefits of scale economies (increasing returns to scale production function under imperfect markets), intra-industry trade crucially depends on technological advancement for product differentiation. (Davis, 1995)¹³³ Given the profile of mineral products sector, there is a significant possibility of exploring intra-industry trade between India and Kazakhstan through bilateral investment and transfer of technology

Future Prospects of India-Kazakhstan Economic Relations:

For India, Kazakhstan offers the best possible opportunity as a gateway to the Central Asian region. Following are certain suggestions that may serve these goals:

- Keeping in mind the overall pattern and indices of Kazakh imports, key products and services sectors that are of importance for diversification of India's export basket to Kazakhstan are: machine tools, construction and building materials, processed food and spices, edible oils, engineering and construction services, business management and consultancy, agro-business services, public relations and advertising, travel services.
- Earmark specific funds in the annual supplements of India's Foreign Trade Policy for regular business delegation meeting in different cities in both the countries. There should

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Burange, L. G. and Sheetal J. Chaddha, Growth (2008). *A Note on India-Kazakhstan Trade and Investment Relations. Cuts International*

¹³³ Davis, D. R. (1995). *Intra-industry trade: A Heckscher-Ohlin-Ricardo approach, Journal of International Economics*, (pp. 201-226.).

be Business Consular Service Centres in Astana, Almaty, New Delhi and Mumbai and such institutions should be set up as public-private partnerships with business associations and other civil society groups.

- Economic diplomacy with Kazakhstan must take into account the larger goal of increasing better trade and investment ties with the CIS region. Increased bilateral ties would help to leverage the larger market potential of Belarus-Russia-Kazakhstan customs union as well as the combined market potential of CIS countries.
- All Central Asian states produce high quality cotton. Some major Indian textile companies should be considering setting up a few integrated textile plants in the region to manufacture good quality cotton & blended fabrics. Setting up textile units can be a highly profitable venture for Indian companies, since the lucrative European markets are only 10 to 12 days away by road transit freight from Central Asia (Dhanabhakya, 2007)¹³⁴.

¹³⁴ Dr. Dhanabhakya, M. (2007, August). Indian textile industry - An overview article.

India-Kazakhstan Energy Cooperation

India being the second largest populated country with a home to 1.2 billion people and accounts over 17% of the world's population, it faces lot of challenges in all aspects to achieve the status of developed country. Energy is one such vital sector which should be supplied uninterrupted to support unleash economic and commercial activities for promoting sustainable economic growth. On contrary, India botched to self sustain by failing to satisfy its unquenchable thirst for energy. This is because of unprecedented gap in demand and supply of energy sector. Energy sector is vital to sustainable development and poverty reduction efforts. It affects all aspects of development social, economic, and environmental including livelihoods, access to water, agricultural productivity, health, population levels, education, and gender-related issues. None of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹ can be met without major improvement in the quality and quantity of energy services in developing countries.

Energy Scenario in India, Rise in Energy,Reserves,Utility:

India is a rapidly growing economy which needs energy to meet its growth objectives in a sustainable manner. The Indian economy faces significant challenges in terms of meeting its energy needs. The Primary energy consumption in India grew by 7.9% in 2018 and is the third biggest after China and USA with 5.8% global share. In 2017-18, the per capita energy consumption in India was 558 Million tones (Energy Statistics, 2019)². Due to rapid economic expansion India has one of the world's fastest growing energy markets and is expected to be the second-largest contributor to the increase in global energy demand by 2035, accounting for 18% of the rise in global energy consumption (World energy outlook, 2019, November)³. Given India's growing energy demands and limited domestic oil and gas reserves, the country has

¹ The United Nations Millennium Declaration, signed in September 2000, commits world leaders to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women.

² Energy statistics. (2019). *New Delhi, Central Statistics Office: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.*

³ World energy outlook. (2019, November). IEA. <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2019>

ambitious plans to expand its renewable India energy security scenarios up to 2047 (IESS 2047), 2015, September 11)⁴ and most worked out nuclear power programme. During the year 2018, the total investment in energy sector by India was 4.1% (75 billion US Dollars) of 1.85 trillion US Dollars global investment⁵.

The total primary energy consumption from coal is 55.88%, crude oil is 29.55%, natural gas is 6.17%, nuclear energy is 1.09%, hydro electricity is 3.91% and renewable energy makes upto 3.40% in 2018 .Again In 2018, India's net imports are nearly 205.3 million tons of crude oil and its products coal which is equal to 46.13% of total primary energy consumption. India is largely dependent on fossil fuel imports to meet its energy demands (Rastogi, 2019, December 04)⁶. By 2030; India's dependence on energy imports is expected to exceed 53% of the country's total energy consumption.

Again About 80% of India's electricity generation is from fossil fuels. Since the end of calendar year 2015 (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2017, November)⁷, huge power generation capacity has been idling for want of electricity demand. The increasing energy requirements coupled with a slower than expected increase in domestic fuel production has meant that the extent of imports in energy mix is growing rapidly. Although India is increasingly dependent on commercial fuels, a sizeable quantum of energy requirements (40% of total energy requirement), especially in the rural household sector, is met by non-commercial energy sources, which include fuel wood, crop residue, and animal waste, including human

⁴ India energy security scenarios up to 2047 (IESS 2047). (2015, September 11)." *NITI Aayog, GoI*. Retrieved 29 August 2014.

⁵ Energy policy of India. (2019, May 15). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

⁶ Rasogi, S. (2019, December 04). How Can India Make A Sustainable Shift From Fossil Fuels To Cleaner Energy Sources? In youth ki awaaz. <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2019/12/how-can-india-make-a-sustainable-shift-from-fossil-fuels-to-cleaner-energy-sources/>.

⁷India's Energy Transition: Mapping subsidies to fossil fuels and clean energy in India, GSI Report. (2017, November). Canada: International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/publications/india-energy-transition.pdf>

and draught animal power. However, other forms of commercial energy of a much higher quality and efficiency are steadily replacing the traditional energy resources being consumed in the rural sector. India has a population of over 1.21 billion (2011 census) with 70% of total population living in rural areas. Out of these 1210 million people, 396 million (44.7% of the total rural population compared to 7.3% of urban population) does not have access to electricity and 592 million (rural- 62.5%; urban- 20.1%) (Area and population. Census data, 2001)⁸ people still use firewood for cooking. Majority of these people reside in rural areas and are still dependent on non-commercial energy sources, such as fuel wood, crop residue, and animal waste for their energy needs. Furthermore, about 80% of the population - which includes 28% of urban inhabitants - still relies on combustion of biomass fuels for cooking activities. The use of biomass for cooking also contributes to the indoor air pollution phenomenon, which caused 488,200 deaths in 2004 (Indoor air pollution from biomass fuel smoke is a major health concern in the developing world, 2008)⁹.

Energy Reserves in India:

In this backdrop India's energy policy can be defined on the basis of country's expanding energy deficit and increased focus on developing alternative resources of energy particularly nuclear, solar and wind energy.

Further to meet the demands of the world's second-largest population, India has been focusing largely on coal production, but the power potential of India's coal reserves is much lower than other fossil fuels — the majority of India's available energy exists in the form of natural gas and crude oil. India has also been looking to renewable alternatives for sustainable energy. In recent years, gains in wind, solar, and biofuels have taken a small burden off the consumption of fossil fuels.

⁸ Area and population. Census data(2001). India, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner : Ministry of home affairs, Government of India.

https://censusindia.gov.in/census_and_you/area_and_population.aspx

⁹ "Indoor air pollution from biomass fuel smoke is a major health concern in the developing world." (2008, September). *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 2008 Sep; Vol.102(9): pp. 843–851.

Coal and Lignite: Coal deposits are mainly confined to eastern and south central parts of the country. The states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Maharashtra account for 98.26% of the total coal reserves in the country. The State of Jharkhand had the maximum share (26.06%) in the overall reserves of coal in the country as on 31st March 2018 followed by the State of Odisha (24.86%). As on 31.03.18, the estimated reserves of coal were 319.04 billion tonnes, an addition of 3.88 billion tones over the last year in corresponding period. There has been an increase of 1.23% in the estimated coal reserves during the year 2017-18 with Odisha accounting for the maximum increase of 2.6%. The estimated total reserves of lignite as on 31.03.18 was 45.66 billion tonnes against 44.70 billion tonnes on 31.03.17. India has the world's 5th largest proven. In India, coal is coal reserves. It is primary energy contributor with 56.90% share equivalent to 452.2 Million tone (Mtoe) in 2018. (BP Statistical Review of World Energy, 2019)¹⁰ India is also the second-largest importer of coal 141.7 Mtoe in 2018 and the second-largest consumer of coal with 452.2 Mtoe in 2018. (Ibid 4)¹¹ India is also home to the world's largest coal company, Coal India Ltd, which controls 85% of the country's coal production(*Power Technology | Energy News and Market Analysis, 2019, August 19*)¹² with 7.8% production share of coal (including lignite) in the world. Top five hard and brown coal producing countries in 2013 (2012) are (million tons):China 3,680 (3,645), USA 893 (922), India 605 (607), Australia 478 (453) and Indonesia 421 (386) (International Business Publication, 2007)¹³. However, India ranks fifth in global coal production at 228 mtoe (5.9%) in 2013 when its inferior quality coal tonnage is converted into tons of oil

¹⁰ BP Statistical Review of World Energy. (2019). (68th ed.). London, UK: BP p.l.c.

<https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf>.

¹¹ Ibid 4

¹² “Who are the top five coal producing countries in the world?” (2019, August 19) . *Power Technology | Energy News and Market Analysis*.. Retrieved 16 January 2020.

¹³ *International Business Publication*. (2007). India, Energy policy, Lawsand Regulation Handbook. USA, India. Strategic information and Basic Laws. Vol. 1

equivalent. (Wikipedia, 2017, February 17)¹⁴ Coal-fired power plants account for 59% of India's installed electricity capacity. (Dr. Mugunthan, 2013, November)¹⁵ After electricity production, coal is also used for cement production in substantial quantity. (World coal institute, 2009, March)¹⁶ In 2013, India imported nearly 95 Mtoe of steam coal and coking coal which is 29% of total consumption to meet the demand in electricity, cement and steel production.¹⁷

Pet Coke availability, at cheaper price to local coal, is replacing coal in cement plants. (Rakshit, 2017, March 31)¹⁸ Gasification of coal or lignite or pet coke produces syngas or coke oven gas which is a mixture of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide gases. (Press trust of India, 2017, March 05)¹⁹ Coal gas can be converted into *synthetic natural gas* (SNG) by using Fischer tropesch process at low pressure and high temperature. (Ibid 11)²⁰ Coal gas can also be produced by underground coal gasification where the coal deposits are located deep in the ground or uneconomical to mine the coal. CNG and LNG are emerging as economical alternatives to diesel oil with the escalation in international crude oil prices. (Essar Oil & Gas

¹⁴ Electricity sector in India. (2017, February 17). In Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electricity_sector_in_India

¹⁵ Dr. Mugunthan, C. (2013, November). "Indian Journal of applied research".; *Electricity Generation Sector in India: Opportunities and Challenges*. Tamilnadu: World wide journals. Vol. 3. Issue 11.

¹⁶ The coal resource, a comprehensive overview of coal. (2009, March). London: World Coal Institute.
<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/4337952/the-coal-resource-world-coal-association>.

¹⁷ *Energy policy of India*. (2019, May 15).. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

¹⁸ Rakshit, Avishek. (2017, March 31). Why imported petcoke dampened Coal India's cement linkage auction. Kolkata: *Business standard union budget 2021*.

¹⁹ *Press trust of India*. (2017, March 05). Coal gas can help lower import bill by \$10 billion in 5 years: Coal Secy. New Delhi: *Business standard union budget 2021*.

²⁰ Ibid 11

gets green nod for shale exploration in Raniganj block, 2019, March 04)²¹ Synthetic gas production technologies have tremendous scope to meet the transport sector requirements fully using the locally available coal in India.²² Dankuni coal complex is producing syngas which is piped to the industrial users in Calcutta.²³ Many coal based fertiliser plants which are shut down can also be retrofitted economically to produce SNG as LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) and CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) fetch good price by substituting imports. (Coal India, GAIL to invest Rs9000 crore in Talcher plant, 2014, December 24)²⁴ Recently, Indian government fixed the natural gas price at producer end as US dollar 5.61 per million British thermal units on net calorific value (NCV) basis, which is at par with the estimated SNG price from coal. (The Economic Times, 2014, October 18)²⁵ Coal production in the country during the year 2017-18 was 675.40 million tonne (MTs) as compared to 657.87 MTs during 2016-17, registering a growth of 2.66%. Considering the trend of production from 2008-09 to 2017-18, it is observed that coal production in India was about 492.76 MTs during 2008-09, which increased to 675.40 MTs during 2017-18 with a CAGR of 3.2%. During the same period, the CAGR of Lignite was about 3.62% with production increasing from 32.42 MTs in 2008-09 to 46.26 MTs in 2017-18. The Lignite production during 2017-18 was 46.26 million tonnes which is 2.27% higher than the production during 2016-17 (45.23 million tonnes)²⁶. The estimated total consumption of raw

²¹ Essar Oil & Gas gets green nod for shale exploration in Raniganj block.(2019, March 04). New Delhi:Mint. <https://www.livemint.com/industry/energy/essar-oil-gas-gets-green-nod-for-shale-exploration-in-raniganj-block-1551649952836.html>.

²² Energy policy of India. (2014, August 25). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

²³ Energy policy of India. (2014, August 25). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

²⁴ Coal India, GAIL to invest Rs9000 crore in Talcher plant. (2014, December 24). New Delhi: Mint. <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/ZNHP1hOxbKWB0oRXdxbrKI/Coal-India-GAIL-to-invest-Rs9000-crore-in-Talcher-plant.html>

²⁵ Govt raises natural gas price to \$5.61 per unit. (2014, October 18). *The Economic Times*.

²⁶ Production and supplies. (2020-2021). Government of India: Ministry of coal. <https://coal.nic.in/content/production-and-supplies>.

coal by industry has increased from 549.57MT during 2008-09 to 896.34 MT during 2017-18 with a CAGR of 5.01% The annual growth rate from 2016-17 to 2017-18 is 7.06%. Consumption of Lignite increased from 31.85 MT in 2008-09 to 45.82 MT in 2017-18 registering a compound growth of 3.70% . Consumption of Lignite in Electricity Generation sector is the highest, accounting for about 83.7% of the total lignite consumption. The maximum consumption of raw coal is in Electricity generation, followed by steel industry. Industry-wise estimates of consumption of coal shows that during 2017-18, electricity generating units consumed 576.19 MT of coal, followed by steel & washery industries (58.50 MT), sponge iron industries (8.51 MT) and cement industries (7.70 MT) (TERI Energy & Environment Data Diary and Yearbook (TEDDY) 2017-18)²⁷.

Petroleum and Natural Gas:

In August 2020, crude oil reserves for India was 620 thousand barrels per day. Though India crude oil reserves fluctuated substantially recently , it tended to decrease through September 2019 - August 2020 period ending at 620 thousand barrels per day in August 2020. As of 31 March 2019, India had estimated crude oil reserves of 618.95 million tonnes (MT), increasing by 4.1% from 2018 (World data atlas, 2020, October)²⁸.

Geographical distribution of Crude oil indicates that the maximum reserves are in the Western Offshore (40%) followed by Assam (27%). Indian Oil Corporation Limited has 11 of the 23 refineries, present in India, under its control as of June 2020, largest refinery by volume being Panipat and Paradip, both with a refining capacity of 15 million metric tons per annum (Jaganmohan, 2020)²⁹. There are 18 in the Public Sector, 3 in the Private sector and 2 in Joint

²⁷ TERI Energy & Environment Data Diary and Yearbook (TEDDY) 2017-18. The energy and resource institute.

²⁸ India - Crude Oil including Lease Condensate Reserves. (2020, October). India: World data atlas. In Knoema. <https://knoema.com/atlas/India/topics/Energy/Oil/Crude-oil-reserves>

²⁹ Jaganmohan , M. (2020, November 16). Installed capacities of IOCL June 2020 by refinery. In Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1125274/iocl-installed-capacities-by-refinery/>.

Venture. Refinery production during April, 2020 was 14745.18 TMT which is 22.01% lower than the target for the month and 28.78% lower when compared with actual production in April, 2019 (Monthly Production Report April 2020)³⁰. In the Public Sector, the maximum increase in capacity utilization (30%) was at IOC, Paradip, Odisha. In the Private Sector the highest increase (1%) in capacity utilization was at RIL(DTA)³¹, Jamnagar, Gujarat. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the state owned corporation had highest refining capacity of 69.2 MMTPA (Million Metric Tonne Per Annum). All units of IOC together processed 69.001 MMT during 2017-18 as compared to 65.191 MMT during 2016-17. The capacity utilization of these refineries has increased to 99.7% in 2017-18 as against 94.2% in the year 2016-17. All the private refineries taken together processed 91.163 MMT during 2017-18 which is higher than 91.093 MMT processed in 2016-17. The capacity utilization of these refineries during 2017-18 was 114.0% which is 0.1% higher than its capacity utilization (113.9%) in 2016-17. the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) acquired shares in oil fields in countries like Sudan, Syria, Iran, and Nigeria – investments that have led to diplomatic tensions with the United States.³² Because of political instability in the Middle East and increasing domestic demand for energy, India is keen on decreasing its dependency on OPEC to meet its oil demand, and increasing its energy security. Several Indian oil companies, primarily led by ONGC and Reliance industries, have started a massive hunt for oil in several regions in India, including Rajasthan, Krishna Godavari Basin and the North eastern Himalayas.³³ India is

³⁰ *Monthly Production Report April 2020*. (2020, May). New Delhi: Government of India Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Economic & Statistics Division. <http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/mprapril2020.pdf>.

³¹ Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), Mumbai, has commissioned a benzene recovery unit (BRU) at the domestic-tariff area (DTA) refinery of its 1.24 million-b/d Jamnagar refining and petrochemical complex in Gujarat, India. Reliance Industries Ltd

³² Energy policy of India. (2008, May 27). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

³³ Energy policy of India. (2016, August 17). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

developing an offshore gas field in Mozambique.³⁴ The proposed Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline is a part of India's plan to meet its increasing energy demand (Curtis, Cohen, Graham, 2008)³⁵.

The estimated consumption of crude oil has steadily increased from 160.77 MMT during 2008-09 to 251.93 MMT during 2017-18 with CAGR of 4.59%. It increased from 245.36 MMT in 2016-17 to 251.93 MMT in 2017-18 registering a growth of 2.7%. India's domestic consumption of petroleum products increased 1.8% year on year to 4.2 million barrels per day in October 2020 (Dave, 2020, December 01)³⁶. India ranked third in oil consumption with 212.7 million tons in 2016 after USA and China, which accounts for about 4.6% of the world's total consumption of 97,103,871 barrels per day. (The Economic Times, 2017, June 20)³⁷ In November 2020, Oil imports were 6.27 billion US Dollars, as compared to 11.07 billion US Dollars in November 2019, a decline by 43.36%. Oil imports in April-November 2020-21 were 44.10 billion US Dollars, as compared to 85.99 billion US Dollars, showing a decline of 48.71% (PIB Delhi, 2020, December 02)³⁸. India has built surplus world class refining capacity using imported crude oil for exporting refined petroleum products. The net imports of crude oil is lesser by one fourth after accounting exports and imports of refined petroleum products. (BP

³⁴ Indian State Owned Energy Firms Plan \$6 bn Investment in Mozambique Gas Field, 2008, May 27. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

³⁵ Curtis, L; Cohen; A; Graham, O. (2008, May 30). The Proposed Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline: An Unacceptable Risk to Regional Security. Asia: The Heritage foundation. <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/the-proposed-iran-pakistan-india-gas-pipeline-unacceptable-risk-regional-security>.

³⁶ Dave, S. (2020, December 01). India's oil consumption jump marginally in October indicating mild economic recovery. *The Economic Times*.

³⁷ ET Bureau. (2017, June 20). Oil consumption grows fastest in India. *The Economic Times*.

³⁸ PIB Delhi. (2020, December 02). India's merchandise trade: Preliminary Data, November 2020 *Press Information Bureau*, Government of India: Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Statistical Review of world energy 2016, April)³⁹ Natural gas production was 29.2 billion cubic meters and consumption 50.6 billion cubic meters during the calendar year 2015.

To cut dependence on coal and liquid fuels, the government is targeting its share to rise to 15% by 2020-30. "Gas consumption has to rise to 600 million standard cubic metres per day for achieving 15 per cent share in energy basket" from current levels of 166 mmscmd (PPAC's Snapshot of India's Oil & Gas data, 2020 June)⁴⁰. The maximum use of Natural Gas is in fertilizers industry (27.78%) followed by power generation (22.77%) and 16.25% natural gas was used for domestic fuel for transport sector. Industry wise off-take of natural gas shows that natural gas has been used both for Energy (60.68%) and Non-energy (39.32%) purposes. Use of natural gas for heating, cooking and electricity generation is not economical as more and more locally produced natural gas is converted into LNG for use in transport sector to reduce crude oil imports.⁴¹ Renewable natural gas also becomes source of LNG forming decentralized base for production of LNG to cater to the widely distributed demand.⁴² There is possibility to convert most of the heavy duty vehicles (including diesel driven rail engines) into LNG fuelled vehicles to reduce diesel consumption drastically with operational cost and least pollution benefits. (Auto fuel vision and policy 2025, 2014, May)⁴³ The advent of cheaper marine CNG restrict LNG use in high end transport sector to replace costly liquid fuels leaving imported use for other needs.⁴⁴ As the marine CNG transport is economical for medium distance transport

³⁹ BP Statistical Review of world energy 2016 (2016, April). (65th ed.); BP.
<http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2016/ph240/stanchi2/docs/bp-2016.pdf>.

⁴⁰ PPAC's Snapshot of India's Oil & Gas data : Abridged Ready Reckoner (2020, June). New Delhi: *Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell , Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas*.

⁴¹ Energy policy of India. (2014, June 06). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

⁴² Energy policy of India. (2015, April 17). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

⁴³ Auto fuel vision and policy 2025. (2014, May). Report of the expert committee.
<http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/autopol.pdf>

⁴⁴ CNG carrier. (2017, March 17). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CNG_carrier.

CNG and has fast unloading flexibility at many ports without costly unloading facilities, they have become alternate solution to submarine gas pipelines. (Roche, 2021, January 31)⁴⁵ Natural gas/methane can also be converted cheaply in to hydrogen gas and carbon black without emitting any greenhouse gas for use in transport sector with fuel vehicle technology.⁴⁶ The maximum reserves of Natural Gas are in the Eastern Offshore (38.13%) followed by Western offshore (23.33%) (Exploration & Production)⁴⁷.

Natural gas production during November, 2020 was 2331.25 MMSCM (million metric standard cubic meters) which is 20.56% lower than the monthly target and 9.06% lower when compared with November, 2019. Cumulative natural gas production during April-November, 2020 was 18704.02 MMSCM which is 14.79% and 11.81% lower than target for the period and production during corresponding period of last year respectively (Monthly Production Report, 2020, November)⁴⁸. India's import of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) jumped 18 per cent to 33,680 Million Standard Cubic Meter (MMSCM) in 2019-2020, as weaker global prices of LNG prompted the local industry to consume more. Further The country's natural gas production during 2019-2020 declined 5 per cent to 31,180 MMSCM, the lowest recorded output in at least 18 years. The net import of LPG is 6.093 million tons and the domestic consumption is 13.568 million tons with Rs. 41,546 crores subsidy to the domestic consumers in 2012-13.(Indian PNG statistics, 2014)⁴⁹ The LPG import content is nearly 40% of total consumption in India. The affordable electricity retail price (860 kcal/kWh at 90% heating efficiency) to replace LPG (lower heating value 11,000 kcal/kg at 75% heating efficiency) in domestic cooking is 6.47

⁴⁵ Roche, E. (2021, January 31). India supplies 2 mobile harbour cranes to Iran for development of Chabahar port. New Delhi. *Mint*. <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-supplies-2-mobile-harbour-cranes-to-iran-for-development-of-chabahar-port-11612101626651.html>.

⁴⁶ Energy policy of India. (2019, May 28). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India

⁴⁷ Exploration & Production. <http://petroleum.nic.in/exploration-production/about-exploration-production>

⁴⁸ *Monthly Production Report*. (2020, November). New Delhi: Government of India , Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Economic & Statistics Division.

⁴⁹ Indian PNG statistics. Archived from the original (PDF) on 5 December 2014. Retrieved 25 April 2014.

Rs/kWh when the retail price of LPG cylinder is Rs 1000 (without subsidy) with 14.2 kg LPG content. Replacing LPG consumption with electricity reduces its imports substantially.

Total Installed Capacity of electricity (As on 30.11.2020) -

Sector	MW	% of Total
Central Sector	93927	25.1%
State Sector	103617	27.7%
Private Sector	176655	47.2%
Total	374199	

Source : Central Electricity Authority (CEA)

Kerosene: The domestic consumption of *Kerosene* is 7.349 million tons with Rs. 30,151 crores subsidy to the domestic consumers in 2012-13. The subsidised retail price of *Kerosene* is 13.69 Rs/litre whereas the export/import price is 48.00 Rs/litre. The affordable electricity retail price (860 kcal/kWh at 90% heating efficiency) to replace *Kerosene* (lower heating value 8240 kcal/litre at 75% heating efficiency) in domestic cooking is 6.00 Rs/kWh when *Kerosene* retail price is 48 Rs/litre (without subsidy).

Renewable energy resources:

There is high potential for generation of renewable energy from various sources wind, solar, biomass, small hydro and cogeneration biogases. The total potential for renewable power generation in the country as on 31.03.18 is estimated at 1096081MW . This includes solar power potential of 748990 MW (68.33%), wind power potential of 302251 MW (27.58%) at 100m hub height, SHP (small-hydro power) potential of 19749 MW (1.80%), Biomass power of 17,536 MW (1.60%), 5000 MW (0.46%) from biogases-based cogeneration in sugar mills and 2554 MW (0.23%) from waste to energy The geographic distribution of the estimated potential of renewable power as on 31.03.2018 reveals that Rajasthan has the highest share of about 15% (162238 MW), followed by Gujarat with 11% share 122086 MW) and Maharashtra with 10%

share (113933MW), mainly on account of solar power potential (PIB Delhi. , 2018, December 10)⁵⁰. India's power generation from renewable energy sources stood at 10.325 billion units (BU) in January 2020, a 9.46 % increase from 9.433 BU generated in the same month last year, according to provisional data released by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), an arm of the power ministry. Total power generation from conventional and renewable energy sources grew 2.65 per cent to 113.20 BU in January 2020, as compared to 110.280 BU of energy generated in the same month in 2019 (Koundal, 2020)⁵¹. India's renewable energy generation grew 9.46 % in 2020.

Bio-fuels: Gasification of bio mass yields wood gas or syngas which can be converted into substitute natural gas by methanation. Nearly 750 million tons of non edible (by cattle) biomass is available annually in India which can be put to higher value addition use and substitute imported crude oil, coal, LNG, urea fertiliser, nuclear fuels, etc. It is estimated that renewable and carbon neutral biomass resources of India can replace present consumption of all fossil fuels when used productively.

Electricity Generation: The total installed capacity for electricity generation in the country has increased from 174639 MW as on 31.03.2009 to 374.2 GW as of 31 December 2020, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.61% .The electricity generation target of conventional sources for the year 2020-21 has been fixed as 1330 Billion Unit (BU).The conventional generation during 2019-20 was 1250.784 BU as compared to 1249.337 BU generated during 2018-19, representing a growth of about 0.12%. India installed 2,308 megawatt (MW) of solar and 817 MW of wind energy generation capacity in the fourth quarter of 2019.

⁵⁰ PIB Delhi. (2018, December 10). India attains global 4th and 5th positions in wind and solar power installed capacities; India now at 5th global position for overall installed renewable energy capacity, A total of 101.83 billion units of power were generated in the country during the year 2017-18 from renewable energy, The Government has declared the trajectory of bidding 60 GW capacity of solar energy and 20 GW capacity of wind energy by March 2020,leaving two years' time for execution of projects
[.https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1555373](https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1555373)

⁵¹Koundal, A. (2020, March 02) India's renewable energy generation grows 9.46 per cent in Jan 2020 . *Economic Times*.

Around 15 GW of new capacity addition is expected in 2020 including 4 GW of wind installations and 11 GW of utility-scale solar installations. In 2019, the total thermal energy generated in India was 1261.8 Terawatt-Hours (TWh), higher than the energy production of 2018. (Press Trust of India, 2019)⁵²

Nuclear Energy: India boasts a quickly advancing and active nuclear power programme, though it currently stands as 9th in the world in terms of nuclear capacity. An Achilles' heel of the Indian nuclear power programme, however, is the fact that India is not a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This has many times in its history prevented it from obtaining nuclear technology vital to expanding its nuclear industry. Another consequence of this is that much of its programme has been domestically developed much like its nuclear weapons programme. The United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act seems to be a way to get access to advanced nuclear technologies for India.

India has been using imported enriched uranium and is under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, but it has developed various aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle to support its reactors. Development of select technologies has been strongly affected by limited imports. Use of heavy-water reactors⁵³ has been particularly attractive for the nation because it allows uranium to be burnt with little to no enrichment. India has also done a great amount of

⁵² Press Trust of India. (2019, May 21). How rural India can be made to switch to eco-friendly electric stoves. India : Business Standard India. Retrieved 22 May 2019.

⁵³ A pressurized heavy-water reactor (PHWR) is a nuclear reactor that uses heavy water (deuterium oxide D₂O) as its coolant and neutron moderator. PHWRs frequently use natural uranium as fuel, but sometimes also use very low enriched uranium. The heavy water coolant is kept under pressure to avoid boiling, allowing it to reach higher temperature (mostly) without forming steam bubbles, exactly as for pressurized water reactor. While heavy water is very expensive to isolate from ordinary water (often referred to as light water in contrast to heavy water), its low absorption of neutrons greatly increases the neutron economy of the reactor, avoiding the need for enriched fuel. The high cost of the heavy water is offset by the lowered cost of using natural uranium and/or alternative fuel cycles. As of the beginning of 2001, 31 PHWRs were in operation, having a total capacity of 16.5 GW(e), representing roughly 7.76% by number and 4.7% by generating capacity of all current operating reactors.

work in the development of a thorium centered fuel cycle⁵⁴. While uranium deposits in the nation are extremely limited, there are much greater reserves of thorium, and it could provide hundreds of times the energy with the same mass of fuel. The fact that thorium can theoretically be utilised in heavy water reactors has tied the development of the two. A prototype reactor that would burn uranium-plutonium fuel while irradiating a thorium blanket is under construction at the Madras/Kalpakkam Atomic Power Station. Uranium used for the weapons programme has been separate from the power programme using uranium from scant indigenous reserves.

Solar Energy : India's solar energy insolation is about 5,000 T kWh per year (i.e. 600 TW), far more than its current total primary energy consumption. (Muneer, Asif, Munawwar, 2005)⁵⁵ India's long-term solar potential could be unparalleled in the world because it has the ideal combination of both high solar isolation and a big potential consumer base density.⁵⁶ Also a major factor influencing a region's energy intensity is the cost of energy consumed for temperature control. Since cooling load requirements are roughly in phase with the sun's intensity, cooling from intense solar radiation could make perfect energy-economic sense in the subcontinent located mostly in the tropics. Installation of solar power PV plants require nearly 2.0 hectares (5 acres) land per MW capacity which is similar to coal-fired power plants when life cycle coal mining, consumptive water storage & ash disposal areas are also accounted and hydro power plants when submergence area of water reservoir is also accounted. 1.6 million MW capacity solar plants can be installed in India on its 1% land (32,000 square km). There are vast tracts of land suitable for solar power in all parts of India exceeding 8% of its total area which are unproductive barren and devoid of vegetation. (Waste lands atlas of India, 2011, 2014)⁵⁷ Part

⁵⁴ The thorium fuel cycle is a nuclear fuel cycle that uses an isotope of thorium, as the fertile material. In the reactor, this is transmuted into the fissile artificial uranium isotope which is the nuclear fuel. Unlike natural uranium, natural thorium contains only trace amounts of fissile material which are insufficient to initiate a nuclear chain reaction. Additional fissile material or another neutron source is necessary to initiate the fuel cycle

⁵⁵ Muneer, T; Asif, M; Munawwar, S. (2005). *Sustainable production of solar electricity] with particular reference to the Indian economy. Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews.*

⁵⁶ Solar LEDs Brighten Rural India's Future.

⁵⁷ Waste lands atlas of India, 2011. (2014, May 30). India. Department of land resources.

<https://dolr.gov.in/en/documents/wasteland-atlas-of-india>

of waste lands (32,000 square km) when installed with solar power plants can produce 2400 billion kWh of electricity (two times the total generation in 2013-14) with land productivity/yield of 0.9 million Rs per acre (3 Rs/kWh price) which is at par with many industrial areas and many times more than the best productive irrigated agriculture lands. (This Gujarat village is harvesting a sunny crop, 2016)⁵⁸

Hydro Electricity: India is endowed with economically exploitable and viable hydro potential assessed to be about 125,570 MW at 60% capacitor factor.⁵⁹ India ranked fourth globally by underutilized hydro power potential. In addition, 6,780 MW in terms of installed capacity from Small, Mini, and Micro Hydel schemes have been assessed. Also, 56 sites for pumped storage schemes (PSS) with an aggregate installed capacity of 94,000 MW have been identified for catering to peak electricity demand and water pumping for irrigation needs (The International journal on hydropower and dams, 2020)⁶⁰. It is the most widely used form of renewable energy but the economically exploitable hydro power potential keeps on varying due to technological developments and the comparable cost of electricity generation from other sources. The hydro-electric potential of India ranks 5th in terms of exploitable hydro-potential on global scenario. The installed capacity of hydro power is 45,700 MW as of 2020. (*Central Electricity Authority, Ministry of Power, Government of India, 2018*)⁶¹ India ranks sixth in hydro electricity generation globally after China, Canada, Brazil, USA and Russia. During the year 2017-18, the total hydro electricity generation in India is 126.123 billion kWh which works out to 24,000 MW at 60%

⁵⁸ This Gujarat village is harvesting a sunny crop. (2016, August 01). In Bighat.com.
<https://www.bighaat.com/blogs/news/this-gujarat-village-is-harvesting-a-sunny-crop>.

⁵⁹ Energy policy of India. (2017, November 30). In Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

⁶⁰ Hydropower and dams. (2020, May 14). “The International journal on hydropower and dams” ; Integrated pumped-storage schemes for India. <https://www.hydropower-dams.com/news/integrated-pumped-storage-schemes-for-india/>

⁶¹ List of Hydro Electric Stations in the Country. (2018, August 30). Central Electricity Authority, GoI.

capacity factor. Till now, hydroelectricity sector is dominated by the state and central government owned companies but this sector is going to grow faster with the participation of private sector for developing the hydro potential located in the Himalaya mountain ranges including north east of India. (*Central Electricity Authority, Ministry of Power, Government of India, 2014*)⁶² However the hydro power potential in central India forming part of Godavari Mahanadi and Narmada river basins has not yet been developed on major scale due to potential opposition from the tribal population.

Wind Energy : India has the fourth largest installed wind power capacity in the world. As of 31 December 2017, was 32,848 Mw an increase of 4148 MW over the previous year which in 2020 further rose to 38.124 GW. (Info Anew, 2013)⁶³ Wind power accounts nearly 10% of India's total installed power generation capacity and generated 52.666 billion kWh in the fiscal year 2017-18 which is nearly 3% of total electricity generation. India has the fourth largest installed wind power capacity in the world. Wind power capacity is mainly spread across the Southern, Western and Northern regions. (CEA Annual REPORT, 2018-19)⁶⁴ The capacity utilisation factor is nearly 16% in the fiscal year 2017-18. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) of India has announced a revised estimation of the potential wind power resource (excluding offshore wind power potential) from 49,130 MW at 15% capacity factor to 60000MW in 2022 (Renewable Energy and Green Growth in India)⁶⁵.

Hydrogen Energy: Hydrogen Energy programme started in India after joining the IPHE (International Partnership for Hydrogen Economy) in the year 2003. There are nineteen other

⁶² List of Hydro projects under execution (2014, August 21). *Central Electricity Authority, Ministry of Power, Government of India*.

⁶³ Wind farm. (2013, August 17). In info anew. https://infoanew.com/wikipedia/Wind_farm.

⁶⁴ CEA Annual REPORT (2018 – 19). New Delhi: Central electricity authority . Ministry of power. Government of India.

⁶⁵ Renewable Energy and Green Growth in India . New Delhi: The Energy resources institute. *TERI*.
<https://www.teriin.org/projects/green/pdf/National-RE.pdf>

countries including Australia, United States, UK, Japan, etc. (Guynn, Freeh, Olson, 2004)⁶⁶ This global partnership helps India to set up commercial use of Hydrogen gas as an energy source. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is the focal government agency associated with hydrogen energy development in India. (Guynn, Freeh, Olson, 2004)⁶⁷ Hydrogen is a carbon neutral fuel. Solar electricity prices in India have already fallen below the affordable price to make hydrogen economical fuel by sourcing from electrolysis of water to replace petrol/gasoline as transport fuel.⁶⁸ Vehicles with fuel cell technology based on hydrogen gas are nearly twice more efficient compared to diesel/petrol fueled engines. (Report on Hydrogen production in India, 2016)⁶⁹ Hydrogen can also be generated cheaply by splitting methane using electricity without emitting any green house gas. (IEA, 2019)⁷⁰ A luxury FCEV car generates one litre of bottled quality drinking water for every 10 km ride which is a significant by product. (Siler, 2014)⁷¹ Also FCEV does not emit any particulate matter but removes particulate matter up to PM2.5 from the ambient air. (Hanwha Energy Celebrates Its Completion of the World's First

⁶⁶ Guynn, Mark D. ; Freeh, Joshua E.; Olson, Erik D. (2004). Evaluation of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Powered Blended-Wing-Body Aircraft Concept for Reduced Noise and Emissions. Hampton, Virginia: National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

⁶⁷ Guynn, Mark D. ; Freeh, Joshua E.; Olson, Erik D. (2004). Evaluation of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Powered Blended-Wing-Body Aircraft Concept for Reduced Noise and Emissions. Hampton, Virginia: *National Aeronautics and Space Administration*.

⁶⁸ *Energy policy of India*. (2017, November 30). In Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

⁶⁹ Report on Hydrogen production in India. (2016). New Delhi: Sub-Committee on Research, Development & Demonstration for Hydrogen Energy and Fuel Cells of the Steering Committee on Hydrogen Energy and Fuel Cells Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India

⁷⁰ International Energy Agency. (2019, June). The future of hydrogen. https://www.capenergies.fr/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/the_future_of_hydrogen.pdf.

⁷¹ Siler, S. (2014, November 17). 2016 Toyota Mirai fuel cell sedan debuts with fancy tech, tire fire styling. In Car and Driver <https://www.caranddriver.com/news/a15107957/2016-toyota-mirai-fuel-cell-sedan-photos-and-info-news/>

and Largest Byproduct-Hydrogen-Fuel-Cell Power Plant, 2020)⁷²Any medium or heavy duty vehicle can be retrofitted in to fuel cell vehicle as its system power density (watts/litre) and system specific power (watts/kg) are comparable with that of internal combustion engine.⁷³ The cost and durability of fuel cell engines with economies of scale production line are comparable with the petrol/diesel engines.⁷⁴

The excess power generation capacity available in India is nearly 500 billion units/year presently and another 75,000 MW conventional power generating capacity is in pipeline excluding the targeted 175,000 MW renewable power by 2022.⁷⁵ The hydrogen fuel generated by 500 billion units of electricity can replace all diesel and petrol consumed by heavy and medium duty vehicles in India completely obviating the need of crude oil imports for internal consumption. (Caranbike team, 2017)⁷⁶ Use of hydrogen as fuel to replace jet fuel by the aircraft's is also promising proposition. (Slav, 2020)⁷⁷ Converting petrol/diesel driven road vehicles in to fuel cell electric vehicles on priority would save the huge import cost of crude oil

⁷² Hanwha Energy Celebrates Its Completion of the World's First and Largest Byproduct-Hydrogen-Fuel-Cell Power Plant. (2020, July 28). In Hanwah. https://www.hanwha.com/en/news_and_media/press_release/hanwha-energy-celebrates-its-completion-of-the-worlds-first-and-largest-byproduct-hydrogen-fuel-cell-power-plant.html.

⁷³ Mahindra e2o. (2016, August 28). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahindra_e2o.

⁷⁴ Energy policy of India. (2017, November 30). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

⁷⁵ Energy policy of India. (2017, November 30). In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_policy_of_India.

⁷⁶ Caranbike team. (2017, January 25). Tata Motors reveals India's first hydrogen fuel cell bus. In Car and Bike. <https://www.carandbike.com/news/tata-motors-reveals-indias-first-hydrogen-fuel-cell-bus-1652559>.

⁷⁷ Slav, I. (2020, May 17). Is Hydrogen The Jet Fuel Of The Future? In Oil price. Com. <https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Is-Hydrogen-The-Jet-Fuel-Of-The-Future.html>.

and transform the stranded electricity infrastructure in to productive assets with major boost to the overall economic growth.

**Total Generation and growth over previous year in the country during 2009-10 to 2020-21
Upto November 2020 (Provisional),**

Year	Total Generation (Including Renewable Sources) (BU)	% of growth
2009-10	808.498	7.56
2010-11	850.384	5.59
2011-12	928.113	9.14
2012-13	969.506	4.46
2013-14	1020.200	5.23
2014-15	1110.392	8.84
2015-16	1173.603	5.69
2016-17	1241.689	5.80
2017-18	1308.146	5.35
2018-19	1376.095	5.19
2019-20	1389.102	0.95
2020-21*	901.035	-4.75

Source : CEA

Total Installed Fuel Capacity (As on 30.11.2020) -

Fuel	MW	% Of Total
Total Thermal	231321	61.8%
COAL	199595	53.3%
LIGNITE	6260	1.7%
GAS	24957	6.7%
DIESEL	510	0.1%
Hydro(renewable)	45699	12.2%

Nuclear	6780	1.8%
Other Renewable Energy Sources	90399	24.2
Total	374199	

Source: Central Electricity Authority

Other Renewable Energy Sources (Small Hydro Project, Biomass, Industrial and Urban Waste Power , Wind energy , Solar energy)

In general, India's strategy is the encouragement of the development of renewable sources of energy by the use of incentives by the federal and state governments. (Bloomberg, 2020)⁷⁸ With the abundant solar energy resource combined with adequate high head pumped hydroelectric energy storage potential, India is capable to meet its ultimate energy requirements of its peak population from its renewable energy sources alone. (Wernick, 2017)⁷⁹ A long-term energy policy perspective is provided by the Integrated Energy Policy Report 2006 which provides policy guidance on energy-sector growth. (Badrinarayana, 2010)⁸⁰ Increasing energy consumption associated primarily with activities in transport, mining, and manufacturing in India needs rethinking on India's energy production.⁸¹ The following trends are manifested in the

⁷⁸ Bloomberg. (2020, March 20). How low can oil go? One forecast sees \$5 a barrel. The Economic Times.

⁷⁹ Wernick, A. (2017, September 09). "Science Friday"; An entirely renewable energy future is possible. North America, United States: The World.

⁸⁰ Badrinarayana, D. (2010, July). India's Integrated Energy Policy: A Source of Economic Nirvana or Environmental Disaster? Washington DC: Environmental Law Institute.

⁸¹ Electricity sector in India. (2016, October 26). In Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electricity_sector_in_India.

energy policy to achieve self sufficiency, least pollution and long term sustainability. (Wernick, 2017)⁸²

Energy and Sustainable Development: For any development to be sustainable, it must not compromise the prospects of future generations. Conventional sources of production and consumption of energy are not sustainable by this definition. They are linked to significant environmental, social, and health problems not only to the present but also to the many more future generations.

- **Energy and Environment**: The environmental effects of energy use, occur at almost all levels from the household to the global and have consequences such as desertification, acidification, climate change, air, soil, water pollution. Although energy and environmental concerns were originally local in character - for example, problems associated with extraction, transport or lethal emissions - they have now widened to cover regional and global issues such as acid rain and the green house effect. The more efficiently we can use our energy, the less carbon dioxide will be released into the atmosphere. Energy sector and in specific electricity contributes 40 % of green house gas (GHG) emissions in India during 2007. Total GHG emissions, including from land-use change, reached a record high of 55.3 GtCO₂e (Giga tonnes of Carbon dioxide equivalent) in 2018. Fossil CO₂ emissions from energy use and industry, which dominate total GHG emissions, grew 2.0 per cent in 2018, reaching a record 37.5 GtCO₂ per year (Greenhouse gas emissions factsheet, 2019)⁸³. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown across India, carbon emissions are predicted to fall by around 8% in 2020
- **Energy and Economy**: The increase in concerns about environmental issues has led to revision of policies and regulations. Approaches such as pollution control tools such as polluter pays principle, using taxes to discourage pollution, incentives in the pollution

⁸² Wernick, A. (2017, September 09). "Science Friday"; An entirely renewable energy future is possible. North America, United States: The World.

⁸³ Greenhouse gas emissions factsheet (2019, January 31). India: Climate links.
<https://www.climatelinks.org/resources/greenhouse-gas-emissions-factsheet-india>.

control industry gives the beneficial relationship between environmental pollution control measures and the rate of unemployment and economic growth. Energy conservation yields savings and boosts the economy when spent on the other goods and services. A sustainable energy future is compatible with strong economic growth. Moreover, pursuit of a sustainable energy path facilitates the realisation of sustainable socioeconomic growth over the longer-term.

- **Energy and Poverty:** Energy is a necessary input to improve the quality of life beyond the basic needs of house hold members, either through reducing time and manual labour required to perform task or by enabling income generating activities. Poverty is more than a lack of income. Therefore per capita income (usually measured by per capita GDP) has been widely used to indicate the degree of economic development. People often use the energy in inefficient ways due to lack of access of information, financial resources and technology.

The main issue is to design and implement energy systems that meet all the objectives of sustainable development at the same time. Accomplishing energy systems is possible by improving energy efficiency, reliance on renewable energy and cleaner utilization of fossil fuels. The challenge is therefore to formulate and implement policies that will bring about such desirable energy futures considering the demand based on populations as well as economic growth rate. Though the primary energy supply of India is far below than the counterparts, substantial efforts are required in all three arenas as these three basic approaches are mandatory to achieve sustainable solution. The approaches are :

- Increase supply (Scientists/Technicians/Managers) .
- Reduce demand (Economists and Policy makers) .
- Alternative sources (Scientists and Economists)

In other terms, energy for sustainable development refers to those energy approaches and solutions that provide the energy services which address the following major challenges:

- The secure supply of energy for economic growth and sustainable development

- The two billion people cooking on traditional fuels, of which 700 million (Pervaiz, 2021)⁸⁴ reside in India and more than a hundred million women spending hours a day carrying fuel and water.
- The environmental challenges, including indoor air pollution, urban air pollution, acidification and climate change.

Further with this comes the Strategies to Meet the Necessary Demand of Power which may be adopted to meet the additional power demand:

- 1) Energy efficiency: Energy efficiency is a critical component of our efforts to reduce load-shedding, enhance energy security, and mitigate climate change. Pune City-based Prayas Energy group studies claimed that they haven saved about 57,000 million units (MU) in 2013 (Ensuring electricity for all, 2017)⁸⁵ by using energy efficient appliances like fans, air conditioners, televisions, tube lights and refrigerators. It would defer the need for generating 20,000 MW power over a period of five years or setting up one ultra-mega power plant per year.
- 2) Reduction in Transmission and Distribution (T & D) Losses: T & D losses in India are very high of about 32% against normal loss of 10% (India Energy Handbook 2011). Reduction in T & D losses by 1% could result in saving capacity of about 800 MW. Hence all the essential measures have to be taken to reduce T & D losses to the desired value (Electrical India, 2018)⁸⁶.
- 3) Cogeneration: It is estimated that cogeneration potential in Indian industrial sector is about 8000 MW. About 50% of it is from sugar industries. Other major sources are

⁸⁴ Parvaiz, A. (2021, February 19). Environment in India, an indoor health crisis. New Delhi: Inter press service news agency. <http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/03/in-india-an-indoor-health-crisis/>.

⁸⁵ Ensuring electricity for all: Ultra mega power project (UMPP) for the poor. (2017, June). Pune International Centre : Prayas Energy Group.

⁸⁶ “Electrical India”; Transmission losses in India. (2018, September 17). <https://www.electricalindia.in/transmission-losses-in-india/>.

fertilizer industries, petrochemical industries, cement industries, paper industries etc (Cogeneration, 2006)⁸⁷.

- 4) Captive Units: Captive Units in industries is used to supplement the power drawn for grind and as a standby in case of power cut. In 1996 installed Captive Units generation capacities of industries and railways was about 12,000 MW and more than half the Captive Units power was added in 1980's. With looming power shortage, similar burst is expected in near future (Dasgupta, 2020)⁸⁸.
- 5) Renovations & Modernisation: Renovation & Modernization of Power plant will help the energy scenario in terms of extra picking capacity and additional availability of power (Government of India: Ministry of power)⁸⁹.
- 6) Tapping Unconventional Energy Sources: Tapping unconventional energy sources like, solar, wind, tidal, geothermic and hydroelectricity in large scale. MNRE (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy) has an estimated renewable energy potential of around 85,000 MW from commercially exploitable sources, i.e., wind, 45,000 MW; small hydro, 15,000 MW and biomass/bio energy, 25,000 MW. In addition, India has the potential to generate 35 MW per square kilometre using solar photovoltaic and solar thermal energy (Small hydro power programme. Ministry of new and renewable energy.)⁹⁰.
- 7) Artificial Leaves For Sustainable Energy : constructing artificial leaves by mimicking photosynthesis to capture solar energy, split water into hydrogen and oxygen, and convert atmospheric carbon dioxide, thus producing various forms of environmentally clean

⁸⁷ Cogeneration (2006). India: Devki Energy Consultancy Pvt. Ltd., pp. 1-75.

https://nredcap.in/PDFs/BEE_manuals/BEST_PRACTICE_MANUAL_COGENERATION.pdf

⁸⁸ Dasgupta, S. (2020, December 10).” Financial Express”; Captive to inefficiencies: What our policy should be towards captive units. <https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/captive-to-inefficiencies-what-our-policy-should-be-towards-captive-units/2146840/>.

⁸⁹ Renovation and modernization. Government of India: Ministry of power.
<https://powermin.nic.in/en/content/renovation-and-modernization>.

⁹⁰ Small hydro power programme. Ministry of new and renewable energy. Retrieved from <https://mnre.gov.in/small-hydro/schemes>.

fuels, is of high significance. The gases are then sent to a fuel cell, which in turn could produce a wireless current of electricity and this device is about 10 times more efficient at carrying out photosynthesis than a natural leaf (Mertinez, 2017)⁹¹. So developing countries like India and Africa can afford this technology.

India is facing an enormous challenge in meeting its energy requirements in the recent years to sustain its economic growth rate of 9%. This problem demands the strong commitment towards a new sustainable development model that allows the growth in all the three arenas of economy, society and environment in hands in hands. It desires the paradigm shift in policy drafting and implementation that targets efficacy and affordability. Therefore the new roadmap to sustainable development requires the framework that provides holistic planning and action towards sustainability i.e. towards a better tomorrow.

India's Energy rise, A Global Affair:

India's demand for energy is set to double by 2040, and its electricity demand may triple, according to the report (IEA) (India's Share Of Total Global Primary Energy Demand Set To Double To 11% By 2040., 2019)⁹². The country's oil consumption is expected to grow faster than that of any other major economy. India is highly dependent on import of crude oil. Net imports of crude oil have increased from 132.78 MTs during 2008-09 to 220.43 MTs during 2017-18. There has been an increase of 3.04% in the net imports of crude oil during 2017-18 over 2016-17, as the net import increased from 213.93 MTs to 220.43MTs. India imported 57.0

⁹¹ Martinez, Gracia J. (2017, June 26). Artificial Leaf Turns Carbon Dioxide Into Liquid Fuel: Technology that mimics photosynthesis converts carbon dioxide to fuels in a sustainable way. Scientific American. Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/liquid-fuels-from-sunshine/>.

⁹² India's Share Of Total Global Primary Energy Demand Set To Double To 11% By 2040. (2019, September 11). Business Standard. Retrieved from https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/india-s-share-of-total-global-primary-energy-demand-set-to-double-to-11-by-2040-119091100655_1.html.

mln tonnes of crude oil by sea, according to vessel tracking data from Refinitiv in 2020 compared to the 53.2 mln tonnes imported in 2019 (The Economic Times, 2019, May 05)⁹³.

The import of petroleum products have increased from 18.59 MT in 2008-09 to 35.46 MT during 2017-18, whereas the imports of petroleum decreased in 2017-18 by 2.28% over the previous year. Petroleum imported in 2019-20 was 9,250.31 billion (Energizing India's progress: Annual report 2019-2020. 2019)⁹⁴.

The gross import of natural gas has increased from 8.06 BCM in 2008-09 to 19.87 BCM in 2017-18, recording a CAGR of 9.44%. The gross import of electricity has decreased at 0.5% during the period 2008-09 (5897 GWh) to 2017-18 (5611GWh). Similarly, the export of electricity has increased from 58 GWh in 2008-09 to 7203 GWh in 2017-18. There is decline in net import of electricity during 2008-09 to 2017-18. For the second consecutive year net import of electricity has gone negative and percentage decrease in 2017-18 with respect to 2016-17 is 45.64% (Natural gas production and import, 2019, February 06)⁹⁵.

Kazakhstan Energy policy:

As a young sovereign state, Kazakhstan tries to conduct policy that makes it an equal partner among other countries of the world community. Rich deposits of oil and natural gas in the country and the Caspian Sea attract the interests of energy consuming states. At the same time, the landlocked position and weak infrastructure lead a more active foreign policy based on the energy factor thus making it the most important factor in Kazakhstan's external policy. Kazakhstan possesses huge hydrocarbon resources inside its territory and in particular in the coast of the Caspian Sea, which is equal to 33% of the whole coastline of this sea (BBC News,

⁹³ India's oil import dependence jumps to 84 per cent. (2019, May 05).The Economic Time.

⁹⁴ Energizing India's progress: Annual report 2019-2020. (2019). Ministry of petroleum and natural gas. Government of India. http://petroleum.nic.in/sites/default/files/AR_2019-20E.pdf.

⁹⁵ Natural gas production and import. (2019, February 06). New Delhi. Government of India. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Press Information Bureau. Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1562823>.

2018, August 12)⁹⁶. After Russia, Kazakhstan takes the second place in oil and gas resources among former Soviet states. Due to its complex geopolitical position and the development of the so-called Great Game among powerful countries like the USA, Russia, China, and the EU, Kazakhstan strives to achieve a balance and advantage from this situation.

Kazakhstan is a net energy exporter, with large reserves of uranium, oil and coal. Fossil-fired power plants are the basis of the electric energy. The energy policy aims to achieve energy independence through electric power production with maximum use of cheap, low-grade coal. Introduction of nuclear power is included as a necessary option for energy security. There are six gas pipelines that connect Kazakhstan to other central Asian republics and Russia, but the gas producing regions in the western part of Kazakhstan are not connected to the populous southeast and industrial north parts of the country. Kazakhstan has a major need for more gas pipelines. Kazakhstan is rich in natural resources, but its power sector needs considerable rehabilitation and upgrading to improve the efficiency of energy production and use. The TRACECA Program (Transport System Europe-Caucasus-Asia) is developing an East-West corridor from Central Asia, through the Caucasus, across the Black Sea to Europe (TRACECA)⁹⁷.

Kazakhstan is in the process of transition toward a free market, privatization in energy, and encouraging foreign investment to exploit the oil and gas resources of the country. In 1997, the government of Kazakhstan issued a decree on privatization and restructuring in the energy sector. Through this decree, all companies in the energy sector have gone through an incorporation process and are legally prepared for future privatization and restructuring (Energy, 2012)⁹⁸. The Ministry of Oil and Gas and Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Kazakhstan are the main government entity responsible for implementing the policy.

⁹⁶ Caspian Sea: Five countries sign deal to end dispute. (2018, August 12). BBC News.

⁹⁷ Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA). Asia regional integration centre. Retrieved from <https://aric.adb.org/initiative/transport-corridor-europe-caucasus-asia>.

⁹⁸ Energy. (2012). Global security.org. Retrieved from <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/centralasia/kazak-energy.htm>

Kazakhstan possesses enormous fossil fuel reserves as well as plentiful supplies of other minerals and metals. Kazakhstan's industrial sector rests on the extraction and processing of these natural resources and also on a growing machine-building sector specializing in construction equipment, tractors, agricultural machinery, and some defence items. Power plants fuelled with coal and crude oil are the basis of Kazakhstan's electrical energy. Coal is the country's largest industry, with planned further development if corresponding investments are secured. Coal reserves are estimated at 64 billion tons. Annual hard coal production is about 111.8 million tons; brown coal production is estimated at 4.6 million metric tons (IAEA, 2019)⁹⁹. Kazakhstan also has a well-developed oil and gas industry. More than 1,600 oil and gas fields have been located in Tengiz and Karachaganak, containing more than 2.9 billion tons of conditional fuel. Kazakhstan has begun building a major oil pipeline, 1,200 km from the west to the east. Construction of three new oil refineries is planned (Background Reference: Kazakhstan. 2019, January 07)¹⁰⁰. Every year, about 25 million tons of liquid hydrocarbons and 7 billion tons of natural gas are extracted. About 20% of the world's uranium reserves are in Kazakhstan (Uranium and Nuclear Power in Kazakhstan. 2021, February)¹⁰¹.

Decision Making Process of Electricity System of Kazakhstan (Electric Energy):

To ensure sustainable and balanced growth of the economy through the effective development of the power industry, the following tasks are implemented:

- Modernization, reconstruction of existing generating capacity and construction of new generating capacity.
- Construction, modernization and reconstruction of power facilities.

⁹⁹ Country Nuclear power profits. (2019). Kazakhstan: IAEA. <https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/cnpp2019/countryprofiles/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan.htm>.

¹⁰⁰ Background Reference: Kazakhstan. (2019, January 07). Retrieved from https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Kazakhstan/background.htm

¹⁰¹ Uranium and Nuclear Power in Kazakhstan. (2021, February). Retrieved from <https://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/kazakhstan.aspx>

- The development of the coal industry.
- Improving the structure of the electricity market:
- Entering the market power;
- The development of the spot market through legislative recognition norms sale-purchase certain volumes of electricity in spot trading.
- Involvement in the balance of renewable energy sources.

The total length of electric lines of all voltages is more than 460,000 km. The first section of the international Siberia-Kazakhstan-Ural transmission line (1,900 km) is operational. This line is expanded to the south to connect north and south Kazakhstan and the power grids in Central and Middle Asian countries (Aktyubinskiye, 2020)¹⁰². The biggest producers of electricity in Kazakhstan are - the "Euro-Asian Power Corporation" (in 1998 14% of total power production), the Joint-stock Company "GRES-2" Pavlodar Region (8.9%), the "Kazakhmis Corporation" (8.5%), the Closed Joint-stock Company "Almaty Power Consolidated" (7.8%), the Open Joint-stock Company "Ispat-Karmet" (6.8%), LLP, "Karaganda Power" (4.4%) and the Joint-stock Company "Aluminium of Kazakhstan" (3.9%) (Energy , economic and electricity information, 2003)¹⁰³.

Nuclear Energy:

The nuclear scientific-industrial complex in Kazakhstan was established as a unified part of the atomic industry and science in the former Soviet Union. Kazakhstan's uranium industry consists of uranium prospecting firms, a number of natural mines using mining and underground leaching techniques, and a metallurgical plant producing fuel pellets for NPP fuel assemblies. The power plant at Aktau (MAEC) was shut down in June 1999. It consisted of natural gas units and a nuclear unit. The latter unit is a BN-350 sodium cooled fast neutron reactor. On the territory of the former Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site three research reactors are engaged in testing and development of nuclear space engines and safe nuclear power plants (NPP). The

¹⁰²Aktyubinskiye, M. (2020). Kazakhstan Electricity Grid Operating Company KEGOC. Retrieved from <https://www.kegoc.kz/en/company/national-power-system/branches/aktyubinskiye-mes>.

¹⁰³ Energy , economic and electricity information (2003). Kazakhstan. Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/>

fourth research reactor is located at the RSE Institute of Nuclear Physics, near Almaty (IAEA, 2020)¹⁰⁴. The following enterprises are involved in the nuclear industry:

- RSE "Institute of Nuclear Physics," situated in Almaty;
- NNC, situated in Kurchatov, has the following branches:
- "Institute of Atomic Energy"
- "Institute of Radiation Safety and Ecology";

BN-350 reactor facility - fast neutron sodium-cooled reactor - is located near Aktau city in the part of the eastern Caspian Sea shore belonging to the Republic of Kazakhstan. It was designed and built for electricity generation and seawater desalination for the Aktau region. As the decision on the reactor decommissioning was adopted before the end of scheduled operation (2003), the plan to decommission the BN-350 reactor had not yet been developed (Sodium-Cooled Fast Reactors)¹⁰⁵. To determine the activities required for ensuring reactor safety and preparation for decommissioning, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan had developed and approved a "Plan of priority measures on BN-350 reactor decommissioning". This plan has the status of managerial and ruling document and defines the activity on provision of safety for the BN-350 and preparation of decommissioning while the "Project of BN-350 Decommissioning" is being approved (Country Nuclear Power Profile, 2012)¹⁰⁶. All spent nuclear fuel had been transferred from the interim spent fuel storage facility at the BN-350 site to the long-term spent fuel storage facility at B aikal-1 site. Drainage of primary radioactive sodium has been carried out and is in storage vessels. Secondary nonradioactive sodium is drained and utilized. Technical design of the Liquid Radioactive Waste Processing Facility has been developed. Technical task for the Solid Radioactive Waste Processing Facility design has been developed. The main works on Combined Engineering and

¹⁰⁴ Country Nuclear Power Profiles. (2020). Kazakhstan:IAEA. Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/cnpp2020/countryprofiles/Kazakhstan/kazakhstan.htm>

¹⁰⁵ Sodium-Cooled Fast Reactors. Afrikantov OKBM. Retrieved from <http://www.okbm.nnov.ru/en/business-directions/fast-neutron-reactors/>

¹⁰⁶ Country Nuclear Power Profile – Kazakhstan. (2012). Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/>

Radiation Survey (KIRO) of systems and components of primary and secondary cooling circuits, as well as of other reactor plant engineering systems and external communications have been completed (Country Nuclear Power Profile, 2016)¹⁰⁷.

Kazakhstan has three research reactors at the National Nuclear Centre and one research reactor at Institute Nuclear Physics where the following research is carried out:

- radiation material science; study of the interaction between construction materials and coolants; investigation of fission produced emission from fuel rods, its precipitation and filtration under different conditions;
- safety of nuclear power plants; fuel assemblies and rod tests at transition and break-down modes of operation; simulation of reactor core fragment melting and interaction of melted material with coolant;
- development and implementation of nuclear physics methods and technologies; production of isotopes for different applications, for example, thallium-201 chloride for early diagnostics of heart disease (Country Nuclear Power Profile, 2016)¹⁰⁸.

Kazakhstan Governmental Resolution 925 dated August 20, 2002 adopts the development concept for uranium industry and nuclear power engineering of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the years 2002-2030. Then President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed an amendment into law in October 2007 that allows the government to unilaterally break contracts with oil companies. Another amendment to the country's subsoil law in 2005 extended the government's power to buy back energy assets by limiting the transfer of property rights to strategic assets in Kazakhstan. The tasks put by in the concept aim at transformation of Kazakhstan power engineering into a high-tech, science intensive, dynamically developing branch that would become a solid basis of forced and sustainable development of the national economics and the nation's prosperity

¹⁰⁷ Country Nuclear Power Profile – Kazakhstan. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/https://cnpp.iaea.org/countryprofiles/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan.htm>

¹⁰⁸ Country Nuclear Power Profile – Kazakhstan. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/https://cnpp.iaea.org/countryprofiles/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan.htm>.

improvement. Now, a national program of RK nuclear industry (Country Nuclear Power Profile, 2016)¹⁰⁹ and power engineering development is under elaboration:

- The Program covers the period 2000 to 2030 and defines a strategy of the first stage in creating and developing the national nuclear power. One of the first steps in carrying out this program was to conduct a feasibility study for construction of nuclear power plants. The NNC RK specialists performed a great work to conduct feasibility studies for building nuclear power plants in certain regions (South Kazakhstan NPP), to validate investments in construction of low-power atomic plants in Leninogorsk and Kurchatov, to develop feasibility proposals on use of nuclear power sources in order to solve problems of Almaty heat-and-power supply.
- A successful development of the nuclear power is impossible without solving problems of its safe operation. To create reactors of enhanced safety and systems for localizing design and out-of-design accidents there is a need for detailed analysis of processes related to core melting, fuel, material and nuclear reactor structure behavior in transient and accident modes. One of the directions to validate nuclear power safety is experimental simulation of processes accompanying specific phases in evolution of NPP(Nuclear Power Portal) severe accidents that involve reactor core melting.
- The uniqueness of NNC RK experimental base, results and experience gained through studying the behavior of nuclear reactor fuel, material and structure in simulating transient and accident operation modes cause interest of specialists from different countries. The most important studies in recent years are those on two projects: experimental studies to validate light-water reactor safety (COTELS project) and experimental studies to validate safety of fast reactors (EAGLE project) (Kharai, 2001)¹¹⁰. It is the joint activity of Japan with Kazakhstan.

¹⁰⁹ Country Nuclear Power Profile – Kazakhstan. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www-pub.iaea.org/cnpp/iaea.org/countryprofiles/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan.htm>.

¹¹⁰ Kharai, K. (2001). Cooperation between Japan and Kazakhstan in the nuclear technology domain. Kazakhstan: INIS, Vol. 37, Issue 20. https://inis.iaea.org/search/search.aspx?orig_q=RN:37047707

Natural Gas: Kazakhstan holds much smaller proven natural gas reserves (1,82 billion cubic meters or 1,0% of the world's total) and in 2010 it produced 32,2 billion cubic meters or 1% of the world's total (Ismailova, 2011)¹¹¹. Four characteristics of the Kazakh natural gas industry can be identified:

1. Almost all of the country's gas is "associated" gas found in oil fields. Most of the Kazakh gas produced from two major oil fields: Tengiz and Karachaganak.
2. Much of the gas is reinjected in oil fields to maintain reservoir pressure and enhance oil output. Gas is also used in power generation but on a small scale.
3. As in some other countries, natural gas was largely unutilized. Indeed, much of the Kazakh gas was being flared and the country was one of the largest gas flares in the world. Since 2005 the government has ordered oil companies to avoid natural gas flaring.
4. Much of the gas is produced in the western part of the country, while the main consumption centers are in the south. As a result, these population and industrial centers in the south depend on imported gas suppliers. Since 2007 Kazakhstan has been exporting a small volume of natural gas (Bahgat, 2011)¹¹²

The civilization experiences a qualitatively new stage, both correlation and interdependence strengthen. Kazakhstan is thinking over the ways of future development for it accepts the necessity of a universal model of well-balanced coexistence at our planet. The base of the vital activity of the planet is energetics. That is why the issues relating to the energy preparedness are essential for any of future existence model. An inevitable growth of power consumption due to the growing economy of the developing countries is seen. As a result there is development of a resource base of the global power industry. Today, more than 80% of the energy resources consumed consist of the following organic, fossil fuels: coal, oil, gas. In spite

¹¹¹ Ismailova, D. (2011). "European Journal of Business and Economics"; Some trends in energy policy in Kazakhstan. Vol. 3.

¹¹² Bahgat, G. (2011). Energy security - An Interdisciplinary Approach. Washington DC, USA: A John Wiley and Sons, Ltd Publication. pp. 142-145

of the active steps aiming at the implementation of new power resources, the second half of the 21st century will have these resources as key ones for the global power industry.

Energy preparedness is the opposite notion to, what is called, national energy egoism, which can be of common practice both by the production countries, consumption countries and the countries with their economy in transition. The power market has become of a global rank for a long period of time. That is why there is global energy preparedness rather than the national security of “the favorite countries”.

The structure of the present global power market and the degree of its integrity make impossible the reliability due to the misbalance of the global power system. Power saving is considered to be a high- priority direction for the national policy of many countries for more than thirty last years. The implementation of power saving activities shows that the following factors can satisfy the demands of the global community and consequently stable global development:

- i. The rational usage and saving of such organic fuel resources as coal, oil and natural gas, upgrading of the final consumption at all the economic sectors, development of the renewable energy sources and other resources.
- ii. Power usage is of fundamental importance for the social and economic development, improvement of such areas as: living standards, accommodation, transportation means, and facilitation of labor, etc.
- iii. The large- scale and increasing power consumption has always been one of the fundamentals both in the production and consumption of the products. In some of the countries such factors as environment damage, harm to the human health caused by the power production are at the warning stage. Both power production and usage is connected with substantive problems and restrictions:
- iv. Power security in Eurasia depends on such factors as: resources of the countries in the region, economic availability of power resources, ecologic and technologic validity of their usage. Assurance of power security became the most important issue of the European Union agenda, which has the biggest power resources delivery among the regions of the world, approximately 16% of the global market. Here are the problems aggravating the problems of the power balance preservation: inevitable

depletion of hydrocarbon sources, results of the global climate changing, quick growth of the power sources prices.

- v. The main risks for the power security assurance in Eurasia are the uncovered demand for the power resources coupled with the geographical irregularity, fuel and power demand and supply imbalance. Insufficient level of power transport infrastructure prevents from the stabilization of the demand and supply by means of international power sources market and results in the instability of the prices. Both the overheating of the thriving economics of the Asian countries and ailing of the innovational energetic of the main of the fuel and power oriented European countries also prevent from the factor mentioned above. To define these risks and ensure power preparedness of the countries in the region it is necessary to develop power and transport infrastructure of Eurasia, first of all on the territory of Kazakhstan and Central Asia. It could facilitate the international trade, international power and transport projects, investments which are restrained by the political and economical risks. Both the increase of the informational transparency of the Eurasian power sector and recognition of the mutual standard are the main condition for the agreement of the power programs and policies of the import and export countries. One of the most important parts of the power preparedness is the ecological stability. This problem requires its consideration when working out of the power programs and projects. The causes of such approach application are the following: the significant impact of the power sector on the environment, on one hand increasing role of this sector in the economy, upon the other hand new ecologic problems.

Taking into consideration the ecological factor, power preparedness should consist of three components:

- Stable power supply for the own development .
- The policy of “double reward”, which allows getting the maximal economical profits from the power resources under the improvement of the ecological situation .
- Lessening of the ecologic influence of the power sector.

There is no sense in the artificial growth rate reduction under the present social and economical situation in the country. However, it is necessary to increase the effectiveness of this sector. The

energetics development is closely connected with the primary global ecological problems, so, there is a necessity to explain the choice from two options of the natural capital of Central Asia such as: resourceful, supplying the Central Asian countries and the whole world with the power resources and ecosystem resources which support the biosphere of the planet.

In the last time Kazakhstan witnessed an economic boom conducted by hasty growth of consumption of electric and heating energy. However, Kazakhstan energy system was created in the Soviet period and reached the end of its opportunity. Having realized of the upcoming issues the government intended to lead a large-scale modernization of current project reconstruction in 2015-2030 (Kazakhstan: On the Road to a Renewable Energy Market, 2017)¹¹³.

In the beginning of November Iteca Company organized Power Kazakhstan 2008 conference, the Ministry of Energy confirmed that despite of world financial crisis and aroused inner problems, plans of Kazakhstan in developing industry are unchangeable. Secretary of State of the USA Condoleezza Rice visited Kazakhstan in October, 2005, she was impressed by beauty and a large-scale project constructions in Astana, a new capital of our state. Kazakhstan is a single country which is called a main partner and allied member, even a single strong allied member both in the USA, Russia and also in China and India (Ismailova, 2011)¹¹⁴. Perhaps, no countries have not reached yet such a great diplomatic achievements for the last years and have no such relationships with all important countries in the world. Achievements of Kazakhstan are great and undeniable.

After fall and crisis aroused by collapse of the USSR in 1991-1996, Kazakhstan managed to raise faster the whole Commonwealth of Independent States and to provide a steady progress to the whole directions. Yearly growth of GDP output in Kazakhstan amounted about 10% per annum in 2000-2005 (The World Bank)¹¹⁵. In 2005 only Kazakhstan and Belorussia

¹¹³ Kazakhstan: On the Road to a Renewable Energy Market. (2017, January 12). Retrieved from <https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/kazakhstan-on-the-road-to-a-renewable-energy-market/>

¹¹⁴ Ismailova, D. (2011). Some trends in energy policy of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan: Scribd. Vol. 3

¹¹⁵ GDP growth(annual %)- Kazakhstan. (1991-2019). The World Bank. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=KZ>

exceeded production level and rate of GDP per capita which was obtained in 1990. Taking into consideration the estimation of the World Bank, Kazakhstan enters the list of twenty states attracting investments and playing a great role among the developed countries. *Investors like stability of the state and Kazakhstan is considered to be a responsible and reliable supplier of energy resources which makes a great contribution to the energetic balance of world economy.* According to experts' opinion Kazakhstan have a high potential for a further development of energetic resources. Especially great demand for Kazakhstani oil exists in China. Kazakhstan-China petroleum pipeline is the first pipeline of China history which connects it with the foreign reserves of oil (Martinez, Cesar, 2016)¹¹⁶.

The basis of Kazakhstan economy today is the oil industry. It is oil prospecting and oil production. It is oil processing into the petrol and other products. There are also oil and gas equipment, pipelines, tankers manufacturing and oil pumping stations service. Major part of foreign investments goes to the oil and gas industry of Kazakhstan. Oil is the main wealth of Kazakhstan. Oil is the main source of many problems of the Kazakhstan society (ICLG, 2021)¹¹⁷. Growth of the world economy and economy of Asian countries is conducted by substantial increase of energy resources consumption, improvement of competition on the market outlets and electric energy consumption. The contest of leading world players is aggravated in oil and gas sector in order to have access to the hydro carbonic resources of Central Asia. There appeared a sense in assuring the power preparedness of the countries by means of creation of the regional power markets. At the same town, the power preparedness becomes more and more political issue. Asian power policy is to bring to minimum this political influence and be based on the economical priority principles only. The Asian power strategy is to facilitate the economical growth of the countries in the region. Power market integration demands the development of the transparency for the power policy of the participating countries.

¹¹⁶ Martinez A & Cesar B. (2016, January 01). "Journal of international affairs"; China-Kazakhstan Energy Relations Between 1997 and 2012. Columbia: SIPA.

¹¹⁷ Kazakhstan: Oil and gas laws and regulations 2021. (2021, February 05). ICLG. Retrieved from. <https://iclg.com/practice-areas/oil-and-gas-laws-and-regulations/kazakhstan>

Here are the steps to take in order to make the power market transparent and liberalize it:

- creation of the mutual information fund and free access to it,
- creation of the mutual electronic power stock exchange including electric and power, oil, gas and coal stock exchanges.

Kazakhstan Republic's development strategy till 2030 contains the domination of the energy direction (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan)¹¹⁸. Three main directions determined in this strategy are:

1. Kazakhstan Republic's fluent promotion to the world energy markets by means of the involvement of foreign oil monopolies to gas-oil projects, foreign business circles, big investments and the best world technologies.
2. Creating the system of export pipelines for gas and oil transportation in order that it should be possible to liquidate the transport and monopolistic price dependence from the consumers.
3. The strategy of the state upon the using the fuel resources determines the interest of the world community countries to Kazakhstan as to the supplier of energy feedstock.

Kazakhstan Republic's foreign-policy strategy in the sphere of energy determines the great involvement of foreign investments for the guarantee of the country safety. (Utegenova, 2011)¹¹⁹

The aim of Kazakh energy policy is the maximum effective use of nature fuel energy resources and potential of energy sphere for the development of economics and improvement of the quality of the country population life, determination by the way of the progress to the qualitatively new condition of fuel energy complex, the development of competitiveness of its products and services in world market, based on using the potential and determination of priorities of complex development, measures and mechanisms of state energy policy accounting the future results of its realization.

¹¹⁸ The strategy for development of the republic of Kazakhstan. President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Retrieved from https://www.akorda.kz/en/official_documents/strategies_and_programs

¹¹⁹ Utegenova, Ailuna R. (2011). Kazakhstan's 2030 Development Strategy: Significance and Results. Baden. Pp. 133-143.

India –Kazakhstan Cooperation:

The fight for hegemony in Central Asia has existed for ages. Strategically placed between two nuclear powers—Russia and China—and geopolitically located at the heart of Eurasia, Central Asia has always remained in global limelight. Even after the disintegration of the USSR, the geopolitical importance of Central Asia never waned down, instead emerged as a grand chessboard for regional and extra-regional player for the immense opportunities it has offered in the form of widely untapped natural resources and geostrategic leverages. Importantly, it has emerged as the latest geological landscape for the energy crunch countries as potentially new and non-OPEC source of oil and natural gas.

In the quest for energy security and diversity of supply sources by the energy consumers, the heartland region has witnessed a new great game in the scramble for resources. This accentuated struggle for oil and energy in the region has further led to aggressive foreign policy formulations and strategic calculation by countries like the United States, China, European Union, Japan, Israel, Iran, Pakistan and India, to which many now call as the New Great Game for not just controlling but administering the energy resources of the region. The bottom line of the New Great Game unlike the previous version is essentially played out around petropolitics and pipeline diplomacy (Ramakrushna Pradhan, 2019)¹²⁰.

The Central Asian Region is considered to be India's 'extended neighbourhood. The concept of security plays a vital role in formulating the domestic and foreign policy of a state. The security has broader connotation than the terms, self-preservation, survival, defence preparedness, guiding one's frontiers etc., though they are often interchangeably used. It relates not only to the ultimate desire of the survival of state but also to live without serious external threat to its interests or values that are regarded as important or vital. Today, security concerns not only the defense of the territory but also the problems of access to raw materials at reasonable prices and how to alter and satisfy the expectations of social and economic stability

¹²⁰ Ramakrushna Pradhan, (2019). Petropolitics and Pipeline Diplomacy in Central Asia: Can India Afford to Wait in the Wings? *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 75(4), (pp. 472-489).

(UN, Dept. of Economic and social affairs,)¹²¹. However, the economic stability and viability of any country largely depends on the durable and long term availability of energy. In fact the notion of **energy security** exemplifies the availability of energy at reasonable and affordable prices to the users according to their needs of the consumers.

According to (IEA 2020)¹²² energy security has many aspects; long term energy security and short term energy security. Long term energy security is mainly linked to timely investments to supply energy in line with economic developments and environmental needs. Short term energy security focuses on the ability of the energy system to react promptly to sudden changes in the supply demand balance.

More than 60% of the increase in energy consumption by 2040 comes from non-OECD Asia, which includes China and India. Demand in the residential and transportation sectors grows more rapidly. The industrial sector still accounts for over 50% of delivered energy consumption in 2040. Transportation energy use rises by nearly 30% between 2015 and 2040 with almost all of the growth occurring in non-OECD regions (EIA 2020)¹²³. Energy security not only ensures the stable political development but also constitutes a critical component of national security.

Energy security in India has been mainly protected by the Central Asian region particularly from the Kazakhstan region. India cannot ignore the importance of the Central Asia as in future, it will have to depend on this region for meeting its energy need. By looking at

¹²¹ Economic and social challenges and opportunities.(2020). United Nations: Department of Economic and social affairs. https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/RECOVER_BETTER_0722-1.pdf

¹²² World energy outlook. (2020). In IEA. <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2020>

¹²³ What is EIA 2020? How does it water down the existing policy? (2020, August 10). In The Week Magazine. <https://www.theweek.in/news/biz-tech/2020/08/10/explained-what-is-eia-2020-how-does-it-water-down-the-existing-policy.html>

energy importance of Central Asian region for India Patnaik (Vaid, 2016)¹²⁴ argues in three respects:

- first, markets have to be very attractive not just in commercial terms but also in terms of legal institutional frameworks for business;
- secondly, chances to repatriate our profit and
- thirdly, institutionalized economies.

In the era of faster economic growth, energy security emerged as a key determinant in defining the policy of any country. In this regard Central Asian region play very supreme role in appeasing India's energy demand. However, it has argued that India's engagement with energy exporting states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan is quiet significant. It is also estimated that the three Central Asian republics have about 300 trillion cubic feet of gas and 90 to to 200 billion barrels of oil (Wani, 2020)¹²⁵. Among all the energy exporting countries, especially Kazakhstan has huge potential of energy reserve and it helps in fulfilling the India's increasing energy demand. The importance of Kazakhstan for India has been highlighted by three relevant factors: ***Geostrategic location, Economic potential, especially its energy resources and multi-ethnic and secular structure.***

India recognized the independence of Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992. In this perspective India has sought to increase its commerce and strategic ties with Kazakhstan, which is the largest nation of the former Soviet republics and occupies a major expanse of territory in Central Asia with extensive oil, natural gas and mineral reserves. However, both the nations tried to develop economic and commercial ties. India's emergence as an economic and military power has enabled to play an active role in its 'extended neighbourhood' in pursuit of its economic and security interests. Nonetheless, to continue their

¹²⁴ Vaid, M. (2016, 22). India's energy diplomacy in Central Asia could challenge China's monopoly. Observer Research Foundation (NGO).

¹²⁵ Wani, A. (2020, February 17). India and China in Central Asia: Understanding the new rivalry in the heart of Eurasia. Observer research foundation. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-and-china-in-central-asia-understanding-the-new-rivalry-in-the-heart-of-eurasia-61473/>

economic modernization and sustained growth, India and Kazakhstan rely strongly on energy imports and exports, respectively.

In the present economical and political scenario, the relations between Kazakhstan and India are assuming interests by their direct influence on the region for maintaining stability in the Eurasian continent in broader canvass. India was the fourth largest energy consumer in the world after the United States, China and Russia. But, India's economy grew at an annual rate of approximately 7 % since 2000 and proved relatively resilient to the 2008 global financial crisis (Gupta & Blum, 2018)¹²⁶. The India's energy policy largely focuses on:

- securing energy resources to meet the need of its growing economy.
- To sustain its economy strongly and emphasizes on Kazakhstan for its energy resources. Kazakhstan is a fast emerging key player in Eurasia region. Hydrocarbon rich Kazakhstan is located in India's extended neighbourhood, presents alluring prospects of supply diversification for energy starved India because it is the sixth largest energy consumer in the world with coal, oil, and gas. However, looking at the increasing importance of energy it was highlighted that Kazakhstan is the fourth largest proven reserve of uranium and is going to play a vital role in the world energy security in the coming years.

From the outset of its independence, Kazakhstan has pursued development of friendly and mutually beneficial ties with all countries of the world. And India became one of our key political and economic partners. India attaches immense importance to Kazakhstan in the field of energy security. After Russia, Kazakhstan is the only country which is endowed to help and to meet India's energy security. This includes nuclear fuels and hydrocarbon. (Joshi, 2012)¹²⁷ argues that India was a key actor on the energy scene of Central Asia particularly in Kazakhstan's oil and gas sector. In this regard, (Muzalevsky ,2013) ¹²⁸ views that on 15-16 April

¹²⁶ Gupta, P & Blum, F. (2018, April 12). India's remarkably robust and resilient growth story . World Bank.org

¹²⁷ Joshi, N. (2012) . India-Central Asia Energy Cooperation. In P.L. Dash eds. India and Central Asia: Two Decades of Transition, India: Oxford University Press

¹²⁸ Muzalevsky, R. (2013). India, Kazakhstan bolster ties. Asia Times Online, Accessed 17th August 2013

2011, the Indian former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev adopted a “Road Map” for strengthening strategic partnership between the two countries, signing seven agreements in various areas such as energy cyber security, space exploration education and development of technology. Thus, India’s policy makers sharply drew the attention towards the energy security of the country.

Moreover, from the nuclear energy perspective the Embassy of India in Kazakhstan observed that India and Kazakhstan also actively cooperate in the energy sector under the aegis of multilateral organizations including CICA, SCO and the UN organizations in the field of energy security. CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) has been involved in the dialogue over ***three significant issues-military-political affairs, socioeconomic development and humanitarian concerns***. India has the larger objectives and goals which have been achieved through these multilateral organizations. On the other hand, strong India-SCO relationship bring major trade and investment opportunities for India with other SCO states, as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is gradually realizing its ambitious through economic integration agenda, including formation of a free trade zone and setting-up rules for the free movement of goods, services and technologies within SCO member states. India’s interest in SCO has been primarily in engaging the relatively younger Central Asian Republics. This is partly so, because both Russia and China have had active bilateral interactions. Due to this reason India is making a value adding to the SCO’s multilateralism. Thus, accentuating the role of SCO in India (Sachdeva 2006)¹²⁹ argues that India has a positive perception of the potential of SCO as an instrument for promoting regional economic integration, trade and ensuring energy security. Nevertheless, both SCO and India share common interest in disrupting terrorist networks in and around Afghanistan, as both SCO and India view Afghanistan as a crucial strategic challenge.

¹²⁹ Sachdeva, G. (2006) India’s Attitude towards China’s Growing Influence in Central Asia. In: China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Vol. 4 (3):pp. 23-34

India also focused to build a “*development partnership*” in the region not only by extracting resources but also developing human capital. (Singh 2011)¹³⁰ observed that India attaches immense importance to Kazakhstan in the field of energy security. India faces formidable challenges in meeting its energy needs. Moreover, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh *identified energy security as one of the major challenges to the national security of India*. Beyond the challenges of energy security and stability, Kazakhstan and India share certain critical, political, cultural values and commitments along with the imperative for energy cooperation, which should become the cornerstone of India’s partnership with Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan could become a good partner for India in the area of energy security. It also seems to have achieved a sense of worth and as such, it seeks due political recognition.

North South Transport Corridor

In order to access oil, gas, uranium and other minerals from the Central Asian republics and also to open up market for Indian businesses, the government of India is pressing ahead with two large connectivity projects. The most important of these is the **International North South Transport Corridor**, the agreement for which was reached between Russia, Iran and India 17 years ago. The project, which is now backed by 13 countries, envisages opening a sea route from Mumbai to Iran’s Bandar Abbas port and then on to Bandar-e-Anzali on the coast of the Caspian Sea. From here, road and rail transport will carry the material to Central Asia via Russia. Most importantly from India’s perspective, the route bypasses Pakistan and completes the journey from Mumbai to Central Asia in 25-30 days compared to 45-60 days that it currently takes goods shipped via the Suez Canal (Ramachandran, 2019)¹³¹.

The second route runs through Iran’s Chabahar Port from where a road and rail corridor will help transport goods shipped from Mumbai to Central Asia. Incidentally, Japan has expressed interest in partnering India and Iran on this project.

¹³⁰ Singh, M. (2011) ‘PM’s Valedictory Address at the Seminar on the Occasion of Golden Jubilee of National Defence College. Prime Minister’s Office, Press Information Bureau, Government of India.

¹³¹ Ramachandran, S. (2019, January 14). North south transport corridor (INSTC). The Diplomat.

Bridging the Connectivity Gap

The International North-South Transport Corridor is a 7200 km-long multimodal transportation network that links the Indian Ocean to the Caspian Sea via the Persian Gulf onwards into Russia and Northern Europe. Launched as a joint initiative by India, Iran and Russia in 2000 and ratified by the three in 2002, the corridor has now expanded to include eleven more members, namely, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Syria, Belarus, Oman and Bulgaria (observer status). The 2000 agreement was set in motion with the objectives of simplifying and developing transportation services, enhancing access to global markets and coordinating transit policies while also ameliorating route security. India's accession to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2017 and the Ashgabat Agreement in 2018 have only increased these connectivity prospects.

Although the original agreement envisaged connecting India and Iran to Central Asia and Russia, the potential of the corridor to gradually envelop the Baltic, Nordic and even the Arctic regions is no longer far-fetched. *The first or the central branch of the corridor of the INSTC begins from the Mumbai port in the Indian Ocean Region and connects to the Bandar Abbas and Chabahar ports on the Strait of Hormuz and then passing through the Iranian territory via Nowshahr, Amirabad and Bandar-e-Anzali, runs by the Caspian Sea to reach the Olya and Astrakhan Ports in Russia. The second or the western branch connects the railway network of Azerbaijan to that of Iran via the cross-border nodal points of Astara (Azerbaijan) and Astara (Iran) and further to India via sea route. The third or the eastern branch of the corridor connects Russia to India through the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Notably, the INSTC is multimodal in nature, encompassing sea, road and rail routes in its network to offer the shortest route of connectivity for Eurasian cargo transport.* Bereft of the INSTC, cargo between India and Russia moves either through the Netherlands' port of Rotterdam or China's Qingdao port which takes over 50 days for transit. The INSTC in its completion cuts this transit time down to about 16-21 days. It also offers a considerably shorter route than the Suez Canal transit passage which, besides being overloaded, is also much more expensive than the former. This was made apparent by the dry run conducted by the Federation of Freight Forwarders' Association of India (FFFAI) in 2014 with the objective of discerning structural problems and missing links in the corridor. The study demonstrated that the INSTC

was 30 percent cheaper and 40 percent shorter than the traditional Suez route, slashing the transit time to an average of 23 days for Europe-bound shipments from the 45-60 days taken by the latter. Although the study identified streamlining and coordination with allied agencies as some of the pitfalls, it ascertained that the corridor did not pose infrastructural or security hurdles in the maiden dry run. The second dry run, reportedly conducted in 2017, generated a similar sense of optimism (Sharma, 2018)¹³².

With an estimated capacity of 20-30 million tons of goods per year, the corridor facilitates transit and bolsters trade connectivity. But besides the more obvious benefits of increased trade, the time and cost savings coupled with access to new markets also translate into increased competitiveness in exports. This holds particularly true for the INSTC because unlike the BRI, the INSTC nations have a level-playing field, allowing for benefits to be distributed more evenly. For India, the corridor also augments its 'Make in India' initiative. Access to nations of the Eurasian Economic Union alone can offer it a market of 173 million people. Additionally, the corridor facilitates free trade agreements, opens new opportunities to engage with more regional trading blocs and in harmonising policies while bringing about a more uniform legal climate and enhances regional stability.

Geopolitical Geometries

The INSTC acts as a gateway for India to reconnect with the resource-rich nations of Central Asia and Eurasia. It makes for one of the most salient aspects of India's Connect Central Asia policy which was initiated by Indian policy makers in 2012 in a bid to revamp its ties with Central Asia. In a way, the INSTC serves the more proactive stance that the Indian foreign policy has come to adopt in recent years. For a long time, India's westward connectivity had been disrupted by its contentious relations with Pakistan. In providing a direct link to the Iranian ports of Chabahar and Bandar Abbas, the INSTC allows the nation to bypass the Pakistan hurdle. Furthermore, it presents India with an opportunity to re-engage with Russia which, in the light of India's increasingly cordial relations with the United States, has been advancing its relations with Pakistan. In 2018, bilateral trade between India and Russia stood at 8.2 billion US Dollars, a

¹³² Sharma, Hriday C. (2018). Turning the International North-South Corridor into a 'Digital Corridor. Comparative Politics Russia, Vol. 4.

dismal amount compared to the envisaged target of US \$30 billion in bilateral trade by 2025. The need to re-energize trade coupled with the lack of a coterminous border renders the INSTC imperative for the two.

The INSTC also makes way for India to offset growing Chinese presence in the region. The partly Indian-built port of Chabahar in Iran is not only central to India's connectivity to Central Asia but also holds significant strategic importance. Located just 72 kilometres west of the Pakistani port of Gwadar which has been developed under the BRI, Chabahar allows India to counter the Chinese strategic foothold in the Indian Ocean Region. The port is also pivotal for land-locked Afghanistan to unlock its trade potential and reduce its dependence on Islamabad. In this context, it is worthwhile to note that, positioned at the crossroads of the North-South and East-West transit corridors, Iran is the lynchpin to the success of the INSTC. Isolation of Iran in the wake of the U.S. sanctions then can inevitably put the actualisation of the INSTC in jeopardy. However, the signing of an MoU between the state-backed Container Corporation of India (Concor) and Russian Railways Logistics Joint Stock Company (RZD) in 2020 to transport cargo via the INSTC despite the threat of U.S. sanctions indicates a promising outlook for the full operationalisation of the corridor.

The geopolitical geometries of the INSTC are complicated not only by tangled relations with extra-regional players but also amongst the members themselves. Azerbaijan's accession to the INSTC in 2005 spurred the corridor's spread in the Caucasus and heralded the bridging of missing links like the Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway line. Anticipating up to seven million tons of cargo transit through its territory in the medium term, Azerbaijan has agreed to finance 500 million dollar for the project. But besides the economic benefits, the corridor also makes for a geopolitical asset for Azerbaijan in offering an opportunity to further isolate Armenia with which the country shares adversarial relations. The INSTC undermines Armenia's own underfunded regional railroad initiative by providing more suitable economic dividends and linking Iran with Turkey via Georgia's Black Sea Ports while bypassing those of Armenia with the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars route. Notably, for Armenia, the completion of the Armenia-Iran Railway Concession Project would bring colossal direct benefits for its economy by allowing it to avoid the Turkey and Azerbaijan blockade. However, given the paucity of funds, the Armenian project has remained only on paper. Another case in point is the possibility of friction in Russia-Iran

relations in the future if a sanctions-free Iran makes headway in becoming an energy hub and gaining larger shares in the oil and gas markets of Europe which has been striving to reduce its dependence on Russian gas. Moreover, realities of the INSTC's geopolitical geometries may complicate even further if the corridor expands to include countries from the Baltic and Nordic regions along with other interested states like Japan under its ambit. Nevertheless, given that the main argumentation behind the corridor is to reap commercial benefits, it is unlikely for the geopolitical rationale to override economic reasoning.

The INSTC and BRI: A Harmonious Grid?

The INSTC and China's BRI are both colossal multi-modal undertakings which enhance economic connectivity and promote infrastructural growth. However, conceived almost a decade before the launch of the BRI, the INSTC is a much older project. Unlike the BRI where China plays the role of the foreman, it follows a much more multilateral approach with multiple stakeholders participating on a level playing field. INSTC proposals are also devoid of 'debt-trap' fears which have often plagued the appeal of the BRI. While this makes the INSTC much more transparent and reliable and thereby increases its tenability in the long run, it also implies more constraints in its development process. The shortage of funds for constructing missing links in the corridor is one such example. As the helmsman of the BRI, China is not only willing to invest large sums into the project but is also willing to risk markedly low returns on its long-term investments. This, however, points to the concern that the entire project is a decisive strategic manoeuvre. For India, this holds particularly true for the CPEC stretch on the BRI whose Gwadar port is seen as a catalyst for China to gain a strategic foothold in the Indian Ocean Region. China's bid to extend ties into Afghanistan and Iran have stirred these tensions further. Nonetheless, it is important to note that Iran's growing ties with China need not necessarily come at the cost of India-Iran relations. Besides, the North-South axis of the INSTC can, in fact, complement the East-West axis of the BRI to make for a more cohesive transport grid in Eurasia. Although the INSTC and China's BRI initiative are often pitted against each other, it must be understood that the two are not entirely incompatible with each other.

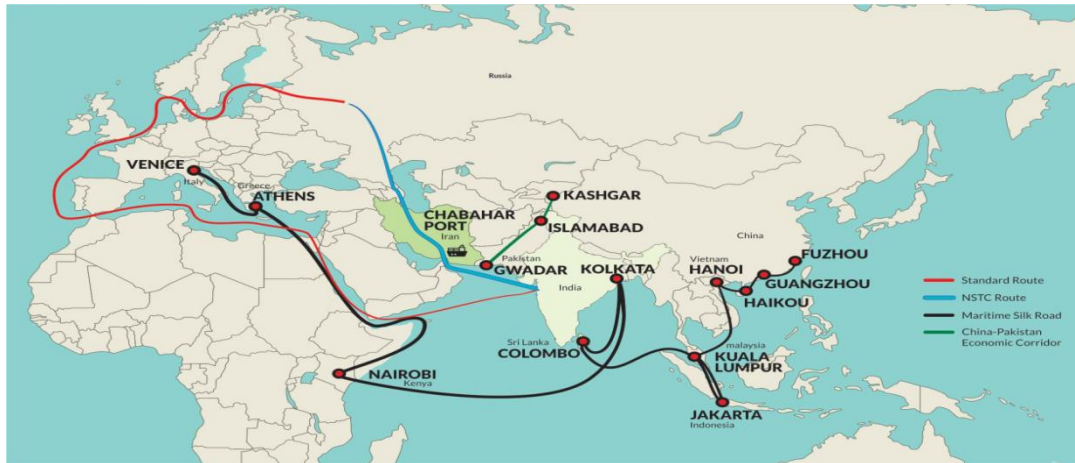


Figure 3 The Map showing maritime and land routes

The figure 1 shows the standard maritime route (Red line) of India through Suez Canal which is much more expensive than the North South Transport Corridor (Blue line) through which India shall enter Central Asia through Chabahar Port which is a contemporary to the route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (Green Line) making Pakistan's Gwadar Port as the entry zone. The Map also shows the Maritime Silk route (Black Line) surrounding India.

Bottlenecks and Constraints

Progress on the INSTC has taken place in fits and starts. Following the progress made in the first few years of its inception, development on the corridor slowed down from 2005 to 2012. Progress picked up the pace again after the sixth meeting of the INSTC members in 2012 and the project has been gradually gaining momentum since. Coincidentally, this was the same year in which India launched its 'Connect Central Asia' initiative. One reason behind the sluggish pace of progress was the imposition of sanctions on Iran which isolated it on the global stage. The other major stumbling block has been the lack of financial backing. None of the three main participants has pockets deep enough to ensure unwavering funds for a project of this scale. Different stakeholders are funding different sub-projects creating structural and technical problems for the corridor owing to its disjointed nature. One such problem is the break of gauge issue. The standard railway gauge used by Iran, a central transit hub, is different from the broad gauge used by Russia and the Central Asian nations. For instance, the Rasht-Astara rail link requires a change of gauge from the standard one as the line crosses from Iran into Azerbaijan. This necessitates the need for more change of gauge facilities. The presence of multiple

stakeholders creates other problems like customs control and documentation issues, lack of harmony in transportation laws and improper insurance coverage (Roy, 2015)¹³³. Moreover, the project still lacks an information exchange platform. This points to the absence of adequate digitalisation and private sector participation in the INSTC. Although the corridor has garnered interest from some companies like Deutsche Bahn, private sector involvement in the corridor has largely remained dormant owing to their concerns for steady returns on investment and security fears. The corridor passes through regions with critical security risks — be it instability in the conflict-ridden Caucasus, extremism in Afghanistan, domestic discord or forms of transnational organised crime like drug trafficking. This puts the security of cargo transit into question and few companies are willing to gamble with this risk, putting the project's economic viability in jeopardy.

The Path to the Future

While the North-South Corridor holds immense potential, its full realisation is contingent on the resolution of the bottlenecks and constraints impeding its progress. Addressing these challenges requires closer cooperation with government agencies and private enterprises at both regional and international levels. First, it is imperative to understand that the main selling point of the corridor is commercial gain from increased connectivity. To this end, the INSTC members must avail and make practical and effective use of its complementarity with the existing grid of transnational corridors in Eurasia owing to the North-South axis that the corridor operates on. Synergy with other corridors will allow the INSTC to create additional positive economic spillovers. Synchronisation with corridors of the Trans-European Transport Network such as the North-Sea Baltic corridor, with organisations like the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and other nations like Japan, Myanmar and Thailand can significantly enhance the outreach of the project. Second, the INSTC members must incorporate new digital technologies, launch a web portal for information exchange and build digital nodes along the corridor to turn it into a fully integrated networking system. One way of achieving this is to have India, with its robust IT sector, take the lead in the digitalisation of the corridor. The other is to push for greater

¹³³ Roy, Singh M. (2015, August 18). International North-South Transport Corridor: Re-energising India's Gateway to Eurasia. IDSA issue briefs. Manohar parrikar institute for defence studies and analysis.

participation from the private sector which is significantly more efficient in advanced technologies (Sharma, 2018)¹³⁴. Third, infrastructural and technical issues must be resolved. Integration of logistics assets, provision of visa facilities, ease of gradients, aggregation of cargo bound in the return direction and increasing availability of change of gauge facilities are some steps in this direction. Fourth, it is equally important to work towards greater harmonisation of policies. This necessitates the creation of high-level working groups and adept integration of policies and laws. It is, however, important to ensure that changes introduced in the direction of legal harmonisation must not be integrated with local laws unexpectedly in a trice but rather in a step-by-step manner to ascertain a smooth transition. Only once these steps are undertaken and the existing bottlenecks removed, can the INSTC members expand the ambit of the project to include new domains like smart energy, blockchain technology, pipeline connectivity, and consider the prospects of extending the corridor to areas like North Africa and the Arctic region.

The International North-South Transport Corridor was initiated based on the vision of India, Russia and Iran to enhance strategic partnership and economic cooperation by augmenting connectivity through Central Asia. Although the initial progress was slow, the project has expanded dramatically to potentially increase its reach up to Northern Europe. Extending its geographical stretch to such an extent and tapping into its vast potential, however, is bound to be a time taking process. Questions over sanctions on Iran and Russia, the mustering of adequate economic wherewithal and lack of private participation still linger. Nonetheless, it would be unwise to judge the corridor's capacity to deliver before it becomes fully operationalised. Given that development on the corridor is still underway, it can be easily modified to overcome structural problems. Cargo exchange and private participation are also bound to drum up further as Asia slowly develops into a larger consumer market itself. While this presents a positive outlook for the corridor's future, its actualisation rests on the ability of the member states to maintain sustained efforts.

¹³⁴ Sharma, H.C. (2018) "Comparative politics journal. "Turning the International North-South Corridor into a 'Digital Corridor, Russia. Vol. 9(4). (pp. 124-138).

TAPI(The Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline)

Energy security, defence ties, trade and geo-politics dictates the future of India's relationship with the five States of Central Asia. The TAPI pipeline will play a major role in this by tying up a part of Turkmenistan's gas revenues to India's continued growth. It will also give that country a stake in India's future. More deals for the exploitation and supply of oil and gas are likely with this country and its neighbours. The Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline (TAPI), also known as Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline, is a natural gas pipeline being developed by the Galkynysh – TAPI Pipeline Company Limited with participation of the Asian Development Bank.

The pipeline will transport natural gas from the Galkynysh Gas Field in Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India. Construction on the project started in Turkmenistan on 13 December 2015, work on the Afghan section began in February 2018, and work on the Pakistani section was planned to commence in December 2018. Officials from the TAPI Pipeline company said that construction of the Afghan section would begin in early 2021 upon the completion of land acquisition. Meanwhile, India has already completed its part of the project. Turkmenistan, on its part, has laid and welded 206.9 km out of 214 km of pipe within its section of TAPI as of March 2020 (Mausava, 2020)¹³⁵.

The abbreviation TAPI comes from the first letters of those countries. Proponents of the project see it as a modern continuation of the Silk Road. The pipeline project referred to earlier is by far the most serious economic engagement that India has with the region and could set the tone for more investments and closer business relations. The economic and energy security aspects apart, there is also a strategic intent behind India seeking closer business links with the region. India is keen on procuring gas from Turkmenistan's Galkynysh gasfields – the world's

¹³⁵ Mausayev, A. (2020, September 05). TAPI Gas Pipeline Gets Boost After Turkmen, Afghan Officials Ink Deal. The Caspian News.

fourth largest (India-bound gas pipeline TAPI breaks ground on Afghan section, 2018)¹³⁶. It has to ensure that China, which is building its One Belt One Road project through Turkmenistan and is the largest buyer of the country's gas, does not swoop in and grab the project, which is being financed by the Chinese Development Bank.



The figure 4 depicts The TAPI Pipeline project and IPI project along with Domestic networks.

Kazakhstan is interested in taking part in the multilateral natural gas pipeline project extending east from Turkmenistan. The governments of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan created a joint venture project to steer the development of the 1,000-mile pipeline, which has financial backing from the Asian Development Bank. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said during a Tuesday visit with his counterpart in Turkmenistan that his government stands by and is ready to take part in the project, described as part of a "new Silk Road."

Kazakhstan is one of the region's largest oil producers and much of its natural gas reserves are associated with those deposits. The U.S. Energy Information Administration

¹³⁶ India-bound gas pipeline TAPI breaks ground on Afghan section. (2018, February, 24). The Mint. <https://www.livemint.com/Industry/T9y2CAjkhkT2WtxDStcVP/Indiabound-gas-pipeline-TAPI-breaks-ground-on-Afghan-sectio.html>.

estimates the country has proven natural gas reserves of 85 trillion cubic feet. The so-called TAPI pipeline would draw from the Galkynysh natural gas field in Turkmenistan, which itself has commercial reserves of as much as 14 trillion cubic feet. Kazakh political analyst Eduard Poletayev told that TAPI offers Kazakhstan a way to diversify an energy sector isolated during its Soviet era. Political and economic developments in Central Asia mean their respective energy needs are on the rise. TAPI is favored by Western powers over a similar rival project planned by Iran. The four parties to the pipeline want to have a credible operator in place for the 10 billion dollar project.

Hydro –Carbon Cooperation:

India is considering expanding hydrocarbon cooperation with resource-rich Kazakhstan including exploration and production of hydrocarbons and participation of Indian companies in the oil and gas sector of Central Asia's biggest country. While India also explore the possibility of implementing a petrochemical project in Kazakhstan , Astana has expressed interest supplying gas to India. This was decided at the 13th meeting of the Indo-Kazakh Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on trade and economic, scientific, technical, industrial and cultural cooperation held in Astana. India and Kazakhstan also decided to explore the possibility of cooperation in the field of delivery of nuclear fuel and its components. The two sides further agreed to identify joint projects on the application of nuclear science in the fields of medicine, industry and agriculture.

Kazakhstan is one the suppliers of uranium to India. In addition, India invited Kazakhstan to join the International Solar Alliance. It was decided to deepen cooperation in the coal, mining and mineral sectors of the economy. India has also proposed to organize training and capacity building programs with the help of the Geological Survey of India and the Indian Bureau in the field of exploration and mining regulation for the staff from Kazakhstan.

The two sides continues to actively cooperate in the space sector in the development of communication satellites; the launch site and launch vehicles; Earth observation satellites, terrestrial segments and applications. The Ministers also discussed possibilities of implementing joint projects to build / lease or purchase of terminal facilities in the western ports of India

(Mundra and Mumbai) and the creation of optimal transport schemes between Kazakhstan and India.

Conclusion

Kazakhstan is a strategic hub in the vast Central Asian-Caspian basin zone, a region with rich energy resources and potential gates for trade and communications between Europe and Asia. Energy has emerged as the most important factor in shaping the geopolitics of Kazakhstan. The geostrategic location and its natural resources have yielded the geopolitical significance of the region. Energy resources allow Kazakhstan to balance the engagement of major powers (example of India and China) in the country and make it a subject of geopolitics rather than an object.

China's energy policy in Kazakhstan is a part of its broader geopolitical approach towards the region that includes economic and infrastructure links, fight against the so-called three evils (terrorism, separatism and extremism), and using multilateral organization like the SCO. While China is seeking to extend its sphere of influence as a regional power in order to enhance its economic and energy security but not seeking territorial expansion into the regions of Central Asia. *Notwithstanding India's limited economic role in Central Asia in general, its recent willingness to be associated with multilateral organizations like the CICA, being member of SCO in 2017 and enter into bilateral Custom Union arrangement have opened prospects for expanding India-Kazakhstan energy cooperation.* Further, India's aim of obtaining energy security could be served through SCO forum which might not be possible in isolation. The time has come to put energy firmly on the agenda in India's relationship with her extended neighbourhood. If India does not get into the act quickly, Kazakhstan may well sign off all its forthcoming production to western firms.

Furthermore The IEA (International Energy Agency) commends India for its continuous pursuit of market opening and greater use of market-based solutions through ambitious energy sector reforms. Increased access to affordable energy has raised the living standards of all segments of the population. India now has the institutional framework it needs to attract more investment for its growing energy needs. The IEA welcomes the government's decisions to allow private-sector investment in coal mining, and to open up the country's oil and gas retail markets.

The creation of functioning energy markets will ensure economic efficiency in the management of the coal, gas and power sectors, which is critical to achieving energy security and supporting the country's economic growth. This will be increasingly important in the future, as energy demand and investment needs increase in line with India's economic expansion. Reform of India's electricity sector needs to be comprehensive to achieve these goals. The IEA welcomes the reforms proposed by the Central Energy Regulatory Commission (CERC) and progress made towards improved real-time markets. A country-wide wholesale market is very much needed as a backbone for the national grid. Key to this success will be building a joint vision and a common reform roadmap among a broad range of central government agencies, state authorities, system operators and utilities.

India also faces the challenge of ensuring the financial health of its power sector which is dealing with surplus capacity, lower utilisation of coal and natural gas plants, and increasing shares of variable renewable energy. The government is working to improve the financial viability of the power sector. Faced with the challenge of some "stressed assets" in coal and gas-fired generation, it has been implementing a package of measures to enhance the economic efficiency of coal and gas supply for power generation and the availability of finance. The creation of a competitive wholesale power market will be vital for improving the utilization of India's generation capacity.

Non-Traditional security issues in India-Kazakhstan Relations.

What is Non Traditional Security Threat and Issues: Security has always been an integral part of any country's national as well as its foreign policy. The traditional concept of security is too narrow and includes military security alone, and the state was its only and ultimate reference point. On the other hand advocates of "non-traditional security threats" shifted the reference point of security to individual and the ultimate objective of both security and state is to provide human beings with an environment within which he can be at his best self. A host of issues related to an individual's societal, economic, and political lives thus became part of the new security discourse threatening to dilute the concept of security in a traditional—military sense (An Introduction to Non-Traditional Security Studies – A Transnational Approach, 2016)¹. Despite ideological differences, certain issues were regarded to have direct consequence for individuals sharing all political ideologies and all value systems. These issues are transnational in nature and entail a transnational approach to address the non-traditional security concerns.

Drugs and trafficking in drugs, terrorism, and armed conflict are such issues that as a threat to human life transcend national boundaries. Trade in illicit drugs has the largest societal, political, and economic consequences and threatens the fabric of societies through addiction, crime, and disease. It exacerbates corruption in weak states and impairs their economic and political functioning.

Therefore being a victim of terrorism emanating out of separatism, armed conflict have not only ruined economies of Central Asian Republics themselves but has also taken innumerable innocent lives globally. The growing international drug trafficking, Islamic extremism which pose serious threats to the Central Asian Republics in particular has a greater impact to its larger region, including China, India, and Russia. Thus in this context "Non Traditional Security issues finds its ground which may be defined as challenges to the survival and well being of peoples and states that arise primarily out of non military sources"—Professor Mely Caballero –Anthony (Secretary General , Consortium on Non Traditional Security Studies in Asia) such as Climate Change, resources scarcity, infectious diseases, natural disasters,

¹ *An Introduction to Non-Traditional Security Studies – A Transnational Approach.* (2016). London : Sage Publications London.

irregular migration, food shortage, people smuggling, drug trafficking and transnational crime. These dangers often defy unilateral remedies and requires comprehensive –political , economic , social – responses as well as humanitarian use of military force. Non Traditional Security focuses on Non-Military threats with some characteristics like these threats are transnational in nature with regards to their origins, conception and effects which do not stem out from competition between states or shift in the balance of power, but are often defined in political and socio-economic terms. (Anthony, 2016)²

Prelude:

India always had historical linkages with Soviet Republics and later had developed bilateral linkages with each of the independent states formed out of the disintegration of Soviet Union. While India never had any common border with any of the nation state in Soviet and Post Soviet era, still India always shared harmonious and friendly relations with the Central Asian Republics in soviet era as well as in post soviet era. Security has figured out to be most prominent interest in India Central Asia Policy. For Central Asia and India alike, the greatest security concerns – such as the Kashmir question, India- China relations, Indo –Pakistan relations, religious extremism and terrorism are interlinked. Hence India believes that security situation in Central Asia directly affects its own security through Pakistan cross border terrorism which results in striving captive power by coercive means resulting in civil strife and turbulence having spillover effect on Kashmir. In the immediate context, Indian concerns are related to the volatile security scenario that is emerging in the neighborhood. The dangers arising from non-traditional threats pose a serious danger not only to the integrity of India and the Central Asian States, but also to the very existence of democracy and open societies. Religious extremism, fundamentalism and terrorism continue to pose challenges to Central Asian societies as well as its regional stability. Central Asian republics face serious threat from illegal drug trade emanating from Afghanistan. These forces are well entrenched in the common neighborhood, i.e. the Afghan-Pakistan borderlands. India has formalized its security relations by establishing Joint Working Groups on counterterrorism and has signed defense cooperation agreements with some of the Central Asian States. The compatibility of security interests between India and Kazakhstan

² Anthony,M C. (2016, February 24) . *An introduction to Non Traditional Security Studies-A Traditional Security Studies-A Transnational Approach* . London: Sage Publication.

was evident when the two countries signed a Declaration of Strategic Partnership in 2009. India's policy towards Central Asia is becoming energized and proactive, unlike in the past, when it was reactive. The following chapter thus discusses in details about Non-Traditional Security issues and how it affects India-Central Asia relations at large and India-Kazakhstan relations in particular.

Central Asia as a regional formation: (Historical Backdrop)

A number of factors determined the regionalization of the late Soviet and then post-Soviet territory since the late 1980s. On one hand, the political and economic connections within the Soviet Union gradually weakened at that time and on the other hand, the weakness of state and statehood of the post-Soviet republics hampered their entering into the international community. Therefore, on the initial stage, regionalization was connected with efforts to form some kind of commonwealth of union republics with the purpose of preserving the economic relations, as well as ensuring mutual political support. In the early 1990s, it can be observed that the endeavors to “overcome economic issues quickly and seamlessly, and to arrange mutually beneficial regional integration and to ensure effective cooperation in the field of strengthening regional security and peace (Burnashev, 2015)³ were initiated for the regionalization of Central Asia thereby considering it to be a region.

The first regional construction proposed for the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan was the concept of “Muslim Republics of the Soviet Union” (Burnashev, 2015)⁴ It included six republics correspondingly, with Azerbaijan among them. In the beginning of the 1990s, certain internal and external forces led to strong efforts for the consolidation of a number of post-Soviet countries on a cultural-linguistic basis, striving to form a union of Turkic states with a leading role assigned to Turkey. The first stage of search for a regional construct was finalised in 1993, when the heads of state and government of the Central Asian countries and Kazakhstan proposed the creation of a new commonwealth of Central Asian states. In addition to economic reasons, the “traditionally close world view, way of life and culture” and the willingness ‘not’ to be a

³ Burnashev, R. (2015). *Security challenges in Central Asia*. Centre international de formation européenne.

⁴ Burnashev, R. (2015). *Security challenges in Central Asia*. Centre international de formation européenne.

Central Asian extension of Russia were considered the basis of such a formation. Considering Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as the region of Central Asia remained the dominant idea during the entire 1990s that resulted in several stages of institutionalization: the Common Economic Space since 1994, the Central Asia Economic Community since 1998 and, finally, the Central Asian Cooperation Organization since 2002.

In Central Asia the most inclusive and prominent regional, or more properly macro regional, consultative framework with a security dimension is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO: termed the Shanghai Five until July 2000 and then the Shanghai Forum until June 2001). Its membership includes Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as Uzbekistan since June 2001. Since the summit in Bishkek in August 1999 it has maintained an emphasis on collective efforts to combat religious and separatist extremism and the international flow of drugs. The SCO has developed a strong focus on such trans-border as well as intrastate security issues, and in June 2001 grandly proclaimed the ‘Shanghai Covenant on the *Suppression of Terrorism, Separatism and Religious Extremism*. A decision to hold regular meetings of the defence ministers of member states was agreed at the Bishkek summit, but there is little information on the output of any such meetings (Mamadshoyev, 2000)⁵. This summit also approved a Kyrgyz proposal to create a regional anti-terrorist centre based in Bishkek, which has, however, been rather ineffective and has been moved to Tashkent. Its first meeting in this new location was held in October 2003. The more the SCO expands as a macro regional structure, the less likely it is to have an operational role in security policy, or to correspond with the common concerns out of which a Central Asian security identity might emerge. This is the lesson provided by the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), modelled on the (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) OSCE’s principle of consensus and including not only Russia and the Central Asian states (except Turkmenistan) but also China, Turkey, India, Pakistan and other Asian states. Until 2001 CICA issued bland lowest-common-denominator resolutions on strengthening peace, stability and cooperation in Asia; thereafter more emphasis was given to broad, non-traditional

⁵ Mamadshoyev, M. (2000, July 07). The Shanghai G-5 becomes the Shanghai Forum. *Eurasia Insight*. www.eurasianet.org

security threats (Kozhikhov, 2001)⁶. In the last summit meeting of CICA, held in June 2002 in Kazakhstan, an active proponent and initiator of this framework, called loftily for action against panoply of such threats and for the elaboration of confidence-building measures. But it failed to identify the specific, practical contribution CICA could make in pursuit of these ends (Allison, 2004)⁷. While Kazakhstan view CICA as another vehicle helping it to promote its Eurasian self-image and to create a common security platform with Russia and China, as well as major Asian states, Uzbekistan is sceptical towards such an approach, as in the case of the SCO with its more exclusive membership (Khamraev, 2002)⁸. The dialogues conducted in the SCO and CICA show that the Central Asian states involved view themselves as part of macro regions extending to their east and south, a view encouraged by the prevailing discourse on transnational terrorism. But apart from limited coordination over terrorism, these dialogues have done little to address the complex security problems among and within the Central Asian states themselves.

Securitization: Its Problems and Progress:

Central Asian region has emerged as a key region with significant security challenges. In recent years the five Central Asian states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan—have experienced conflicts over borders, political revolutions, violent labour unrest and inter-ethnic violence. There are concerns about the growth of transnational extremist networks that link Central Asia to neighbouring states, notably Afghanistan. The problems of authoritarian regimes, crime, corruption, terrorism, ethnic conflict and civil tensions jeopardize the security and independence of all the new states of Central Asia.

In accordance to the assumptions of the regional security complex theory, the internal dynamics of such complexes are determined by the degree of amity or animosity among its members. There are three types of security complexes which can be placed on a scale between these two ends:

⁶ Kozhikhov, A. (2001). *Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia*. Almaty: Centre for Foreign Policy and Analysis.

⁷ Allison, R. (2004, May). "Regionalism, Regional Structures and Security Management in Central Asia". *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-). Vol. 80(3), (pp. 463-483).

⁸ Khamraev, F. (2002). "Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia: prospects and potentials". *Central Asia and the Caucasus*. (pp. 54–8).

- (1) conflict formations, where the interdependence is based upon the perception of the other countries as rivals and menace;
- (2) security regimes, where the states conclude agreements to reduce their mutual threat; and
- (3) pluralistic security communities, where the states no longer expect to use force against each other (Buzan, 1997)⁹.

The Central Asian countries neither consider each other as potential enemies, nor as allies in terms of traditional (military) security. Consequently, there are no amity/enmity relations and no tendencies of regional structuring; regional security is simply not considered in terms of a security dilemma. Thus, terms such as conflict formation, security regime or pluralistic security community are neither applicable, nor can Central Asia be considered a regional security complex.

In practice, Westphalian norms of the modern international relations system protect the Central Asian countries against traditional security threats among each other and neighbouring countries (Bilgin & Morton, 2002)¹⁰. None of the conflicts in Central Asia and its surroundings exceeded state borders. They had no interstate or regional coverage. In this regard, the following conflicts are representative: The civil war in Tajikistan (1992–1997), with limited involvement of the other Central Asian countries as peacemakers; – The confrontation between Taliban and the Northern Alliance in 1994–2001 in Afghanistan had only limited influence on the Central Asian countries, e.g. a small number of refugees and the dislocation of the United Tajik Opposition on the territory of Afghanistan; – The conflict in the Southern oblasts of Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, from which even the Uzbek government distanced itself and temporarily only accepted a limited number of refugees, although it would have had enough reason to intervene directly.

Furthermore, the ‘*new security threats*’ are internationally securitized. These threats relate to the activities of non-governmental actors which are considered to be of international nature, as it is the case in terrorism, religious extremism and illegal drugs trafficking. Additionally, *a peculiarity of such threats in Central Asia is that they are perceived as being*

⁹ Buzan, B. (1997, March 01). *Rethinking security after the cold war*. London : Sage Publication.

¹⁰ Bilgin, P.; Morton, Adam D. (2002). *Historicising representations of 'failed states': beyond the Cold-War annexation of. Third world quarterly*. Vol. 23(1), (pp. 55-80).

mainly connected with the situation in Afghanistan, which is not considered part of the region. Thus, the main source of threats and challenges is located outside the region and it is seen to be an external danger. **Therefore, Central Asia can be described as a 'security quasi-complex'**, as a nominal complex which is arranged rather by an idea or a term than by a regional security structure or a strong pattern of securitization.

Countries that compose a quasi-complex describe the main challenges to its security as originating from outside the region, while, actually, these challenges have domestic nature. **Security challenges of the Central Asian countries are significantly determined by their statehood, in particular as they are considered to be weak states.** The issue of weak states and their security has been actively reflected upon since the 1970s and 1980s, primarily within the framework of strategic studies, neorealist and post-colonial or 'third world' security studies. Weak states are analysed with the following characteristics:

1. Relatively low infrastructural capacities and limited ability of state institutions to exercise critical tasks and control the situation within the territory of the country;
2. Limited ability and preparedness of the state to use force against threats towards authorities;
3. Low association of the society with the state and poor acceptance of its role as legitimate authority.

A number of studies and indexes (Burnashev, 2005)¹¹ characterize the Central Asian countries as weak states, which is empirically substantiated in various ways:

- For one thing, the ruling elites hold an exceptional and transcendental position in relation to the population and to their formal powers (Foucault, 1991)¹². The concept of state is substituted by a concept in which the state is regarded as a regime. Priority in terms of security is the protection of the regime from coup d'état. State security issues, such as the provision of effectively functioning governmental structures and institutions, or the maintenance of the state as a socio-political unity with a legal framework and individual liberties, pale into insignificance.

¹¹ Burnashev, R. and Chernykh, I. (2005) . *Conditions for Securitization of International Terrorism in Central Asia. in Connections.* Vol. 4,(pp. 131-142.)

¹² Foucault, M. (1991). *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality.* United States of America: *The University of Chicago Press.*

- Secondly, this situation is aggravated because the Central Asian states lack a dominant concept of state; in other words: the state does not exist as a hegemonic idea. Being typical weak states, the Central Asian countries have the distinction of a fragmented field of discursively, where the dominating discourse is hardly associated with the state, but with the regime (Mendonca, 2014)¹³.
- A third manifestation of the weakness of statehood in the Central Asian countries is that, their internal structure of power is not following a ‘centre-periphery’ scheme, but consists of multiple competing centres trying to preserve and protect their dominant position (Laclau, Mouffle, 1960)¹⁴. Each social group—ethnic, religious, or interest group—representing one of the centres of power, strives to increase its own security, which is perceived by the other groups as a security challenge or threat to their own position. Increasing security of one group results in a growing insecurity of the entire system. Since the regime represents one of the social groups, any attempt to reinforce its own security or to install an effective administration will result in its endangerment. Other influential social groups react to the regime’s increasing security, which results in a further destabilization (Burnashev, 2015)¹⁵. This situation is described as ‘insecurity dilemma’ (Holisti, 1996)¹⁶.

There are traditional methods for governments of weak states to resolve the insecurity dilemma internally (Burnashev, Chernykh, 2013)¹⁷. They all have been applied by the regimes of the Central Asian countries. These are in particular: *repressive actions; to breed discord between security agencies and related social groups; the establishment of a patronage system; the manipulation of ethnic and other identity discrepancies; and the manipulation of the democratic process*. At the international level, the methods for mitigation of the insecurity dilemma actively

¹³ Mendonca, Daniel D. (2014) *The place of normativity in the political ontology of Ernesto Laclau*. Brazil. Universidade Federal de Pelotas. Vol. 8(1)

¹⁴ Laclau, E & Mouffle, C. (1960). *Haegemony and socialist starategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. (2nd ed.), London, New York: Verso.

¹⁵ Burnashev, R. (2015). Security challenges in Central Asia. *Centre international de formation européenne*.

¹⁶ Holisti, Kalevi. J. (1996). *The State, War, and the State of War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. xiv, 254

¹⁷ Burnashev, R. & Chernykh, I. (2013, January). “Regional Conflict: Scenario for Central Asia. Kazakhstan”. *Central Asia’s Affairs*.

used by the regimes of the Central Asian countries include the following: *setting-up 'strategic partnerships' with important external actors, such as Russia and the USA, as well as with the EU, China, and Japan to a lesser extent; initiating a 'quasi-integration' process at the regional level; and pursuing of 'multi-vector policies'.*

Developing narratives is an important method for regimes to mitigate the insecurity dilemma. This is considered to be the fourth feature of weak statehood in Central Asia. In Uzbekistan, for instance, the narrative of 'national independence' includes the value of state independence and the perception of the state as main reformer. The Turkmen regime developed a narrative combining 'independence' and 'neutrality'—frequently reduced to isolationism—with a certain ethnic ideologue. The main element of this ideology is the cult of personality of the head of state that reached its maximum during the rule of Saparmurat Niyazov, who obtained the title of Turkmenbashi and the status of president for life. A similar level of personalisation can be found in Kazakhstan, where Nursultan Nazarbayev has a status of the First President allowing to be regularly re-elected, and the status of National Leader. Apart from that, there is no strong ideological base for the regime in Kazakhstan. It persists mainly through 'buying its electorate' by ensuring relatively high living standards through exporting natural resources, and through providing freedoms that have no influence on the regime's security. In Tajikistan, the issue of regime stability is substantiated by reference to the 1992–1997 civil war that shall never repeat. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan has the weakest position, as its ruling regime has no strong ideological basis. However, the most widespread mechanism is securitization, which is the fifth feature of weak statehood in Central Asia.

Securitization is a remedy used by the regimes to strengthen their control of all spheres of life, which becomes an object of manipulation through a maximum limitation of personal and social—and thus non-politicised and non-securitised—space. Politics is as non-transparent and non-public as possible. To some extent private and public spaces change places in the Central Asian countries—private issues such as ethnicity, religious belief and sexual orientation become public issues and subject of state control, whereas issues that should be public, such as elections

and politics, are concealed and become private matters of a small group of people. One of the most representative examples is the securitization of Islamism (Burnashov, 2014)¹⁸.

The limitation of personal and social spaces as well as the lack of a public political arena, narratives alternative to the dominating ones, leads to a situation in which security is characterized as silence. With the institutionalization of Islamism, Separatism became crucial factor which posed challenge to its Security Policy. Though to varying degrees, Kazakhstan has faced the potential of separatism in northern Kazakhstan where ethnic Russians are dominant, although this threat has appeared to ebb in recent years with the emigration of hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians. Tajikistan faces threats from economic mismanagement and the possibility of separatism, particularly by its northern province region (Sughd formerly Leninabad). In Kyrgyzstan, northern and southern regional interests vie for influence over central political and economic decision-making. Turkmenistan faces clan and provincial tensions and widespread poverty that could contribute to instability. Uzbekistan faces escalating civil discontent and violence from those whom President Islam Karimov labels as Islamic extremists, from a large ethnic Tajik population, and from an impoverished citizenry ¹⁹. All the states are harmed by drug and human trafficking and associated corruption and health problems.

Despite these problems, Turkmenistan's oil and gas wealth could contribute to its long-term stability. Also, its location at a locus of Silk Road trade routes potentially could increase its economic security. Uzbekistan's large population and many resources, including oil, natural gas, and gold, could provide a basis for its stable development and security. Kyrgyzstan's beleaguered civil society might eventually succeed in reducing authoritarianism and boosting entrepreneurial activity and good governance, which eventually might permit the country to increase its budgetary expenditures for defense and security. It would seem that affinities among the current regional elites would facilitate cooperative ties. Many of the officials in the states learned a common language (Russian) and were Communist Party members. Religion (Islam) and ethnicity (Turkic or Persian) are other seeming grounds for links among most in the region.

¹⁸ Burnashev, R. (2014). Why the challenge from Islamists is not the most important regional security challenges for Central Asian states, in ISAF's Withdrawal from Afghanistan – *Central Asian Perspectives on Regional Security*. Stockholm: FOI, pp. 56-65.

¹⁹ . Ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz clashed in 1990 in the Fergana Valley. This fertile valley is divided between Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, and contains about one-fifth of Central Asia's population

In actuality, regional cooperation has been halting since the vast majority of the first few years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the gap widened between the rich and poor, accentuating social tensions and potential instability. Social services such as health and education which were inadequate during the Soviet period, declined further. In the new century, however, negative trends in poverty and health have been reversed in much of Central Asia but quality of life remains far below than the Western Countries, according to one World Bank report (Alam, 2005)²⁰. Economic difficulties associated with the world financial crisis that began in 2008 could exacerbate social tensions, separatism, and extremism, although large %ages of the states' populations remain employed in the agricultural sector where economic gyrations have been somewhat buffered. This sector has a surfeit of manpower, but cannot readily absorb new workers as the populations continue to increase. In the past, substantial out-migration by many workers to Russia and the return of remittances to relatives in Central Asia somewhat eased poverty and tension and raised the national GDPs.

Islamic Extremism and Terrorism:

For over twenty years, the Central Asian states have faced periodic challenges of violent extremist groups and radical ideologies. These have varied among the countries, in terms of intensity, motivation, and methods, requiring the states to adjust their counter-measures accordingly. Calling for government to be based on Sharia (Islamic law) and the Quran are supported by small but increasing minorities in most of Central Asia. Most of Central Asia's Muslims appear to support the concept of secular government, but the influence of fundamentalist Salafist and extremist Islamic groups is growing.²¹ Tajikistan's civil conflict, where the issue of Islam in political life contributed to strife, has been pointed to by Central Asian leaders to justify crackdowns. They also point to Russia's conflict with its breakaway Chechnya region and other areas in Russia's North Caucasus as evidence of the threat. In many cases, government crackdowns ostensibly aimed against Islamic extremism have masked clan, political, and religious repression. In some regions of Central Asia, such as Uzbekistan's portion

²⁰ Alam, A. et al. (2005). Growth, Poverty, and Inequality: Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. *The World Bank*.

²¹ Most Central Asian Muslims traditionally have belonged to the Sunni branch and the Hanafi school of interpretation. Islamic Sufiism has been significant, as have pre-Islamic customs such as ancestor veneration and visits to shrines.

of the Fergana Valley, some Uzbeks kept Islamic practices alive throughout the repressive Soviet period, and some oppose the secular-oriented Uzbek government. Islamic extremist threats to the regimes may well increase as economic distress fails to dissipate or widens as a result of the global economic crisis. Heavy unemployment and poverty rates among youth in the Fergana Valley are widely cited by observers as making youth more vulnerable to recruitment into religious extremist organizations. (Rashid, 2002); (Jeremy, 1998); (Niyaz, 1998)²²

Although much of the attraction of Islamic extremism in Central Asia is generated by factors such as poverty and discontent, it is facilitated by groups in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere that provide funding, education, training, and manpower to the region. Some of these ties were at least partially disrupted by the U.S.-led coalition actions in Afghanistan and the U.S. call for worldwide cooperation in combating terrorism. (Baran, Frederick, Svante, 2006)²³

The Central Asian states impose several controls over religious freedom. All except Tajikistan forbid religious parties such as the Islamic Renewal Party (IRP) (Tajikistan's civil war settlement included the IRP's legalization), and maintain Soviet-era religious oversight bodies and approved clergy. The governments censor religious literature and sermons. According to some analysts, the close government religious control may leave a spiritual gulf that underground radical Islamic groups seek to fill. Officials in Uzbekistan believe that the country is increasingly vulnerable to Islamic extremism, and they have been at the forefront in Central Asia in combating this threat. Reportedly, thousands of alleged Islamic extremists have been imprisoned and many mosques have been closed. Restrictions were tightened when the legislature in 1998 passed a law on "freedom of worship" banning all unregistered faiths, censoring religious writings, and making it a crime to teach religion without a license. The Uzbek legislature also approved amendments to the criminal code increasing punishments for setting up, leading, or participating in religious extremist, separatist, fundamentalist, or other illegal groups. Public expressions of religiosity are discouraged. Women who wear the hijab and young men who wear beards are faced with government harassment and intimidation. As recommended by the U.S.

²² Rashid, A. (2002). *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*. Yale: Yale University Press.;
Jeremy, T. (1998). Gunn, Sociology of Religion, Fall 2003. Pinar Akcali, *Central Asian Survey*, pp. 267-284;
Niyazi, A. (1998, March). *Religion, State & Society*, pp. 39-50.

²³ Baran, Z; Frederick, S, Svante; Cornell, E. (2006). *Islamic Radicalism in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Implications for the EU*. Central Asia-Caucasus Institute.

Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), then-Secretary Rice in November 2006 designated Uzbekistan a “country of particular concern” (CPC), where severe religious and human rights violations could lead to U.S. sanctions.

Since 2000, USCIRF also has recommended that Turkmenistan be designated as a CPC.²⁴ Uzbekistan and other Central Asian states have arrested many members of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT; Liberation Party, a politically oriented Islamic movement calling for the establishment of Sharia rule), sentencing them to lengthy prison terms or even death for pamphleteering, but HT reportedly continues to gain adherents. Uzbekistan argues that HT not only advocates terrorism and the killing of apostates but is carrying out such acts.²⁵

- *Terrorist Activities:*

Terrorist actions aimed at overthrowing regimes have been of growing concern in all the Central Asian states. Some analysts caution that many activities the regimes label as terrorist—such as hijacking, kidnapping, robbery, assault, and murder—are often carried out by individuals or groups for economic benefit or for revenge, rather than for political purposes. Also, so-called counter-terrorism may mask repressive actions against religious or political opponents of the regime. Terrorist activities of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and similar groups in the region were at least temporarily disrupted by U.S.-led coalition actions in Afghanistan, where several of the groups were based or harbored.²⁶ Many observers, however, warn that terrorist cells have re-formed and are expanding in Central Asia and that surviving elements of the IMU and other terrorist groups are infiltrating from Afghanistan,

²⁴ U.S. Department of State. International Religious Freedom Report , September 15, 2006. U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Annual Report, May 2, 2005; Annual Report, May 3, 2006; Annual Report, May 1, 2007; Annual Report, May 1, 2008; Annual Report, May 1, 2009. USCIRF first urged that Uzbekistan be designated a CPC in its 2005 report.

²⁵ Cheryl Bernard has argued that HT writings borrow heavily from Marxism-Leninism and rely much less on Islamic principles. HT publications have stated that the movement “has adopted the amount [of Islam] which it needs as a political party,” that the Islamic world is the last hope for establishing communism, and that terrorist acts against Western interests are appropriate. Hizb ut Tahrir—Bolsheviks in the Mosque, RAND Corporation, nd.

²⁶ Also, Russia’s military operations in its breakaway Chechnya region after 1999 may have helped disrupt Al Qaeda plans for Central Asia. The terrorist group was operating terrorist training camps in Chechnya in the late 1990s that it planned to use in part as launching pads for establishing new cells and camps throughout Central Asia. Defense Intelligence [Agency] Report Details al Qaeda’s Plans for Russia, Chechnya & WMD, Judicial Watch, Press Office, November 16, 2004. The declassified Intelligence Information Report is dated October 1998.

Pakistan, and elsewhere.²⁷ Ominously, the IMU and its splinter group, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), have become even more closely allied with international terrorist groups, particularly Al Qaeda. Moreover, the IMU and IJU have expanded their activities beyond Central and South Asia to other areas of the globe. Uzbekistan's unilateral efforts to delineate and fortify its borders with Kazakhstan in the late 1990s led to tensions. In September 2002, however, the Kazakh and Uzbek presidents announced that delineation of their 1,400 mile border was complete, and some people in previously disputed border villages began to relocate if they felt that the new borders cut them off from their "homeland." (Nichol, 2009)²⁸ However, many people continued to ignore the new border or were uncertain of its location, leading to several shootings of Kazakh citizens by Uzbek border troops. In one case, transit between the villages of Arnasay and Kostakyr in South Kazakhstan and the rest of Kazakhstan was cut off when an area of the sole roadway from the towns was ceded to Uzbekistan. Residents complained that Uzbek border guards were constantly arresting them for violating the border, while Kazakh officials called for the residents to relocate. (Nichol, 2009)²⁹ The Uzbek and Tajik presidents signed an accord in October 2002 delimiting most of their 720- mile joint border. Contention has continued over about 15-20% of the border (Nichol, 2009)³⁰. In October 2006, the head of the Tajik border guard service complained that demarcation was being hindered by Uzbekistan's peremptory placement of border markers, barbed wire and fences. Some Tajiks have raised concerns that Uzbekistan wants to redraw borders in

²⁷ CEDR, March 6, 2003, Doc. No. 217. In testimony in October 2003, then-Assistant Secretary of State Elizabeth Jones stated that "there is a resurgence of the ability of the IMU to operate" in Central Asia and that it "represents a serious threat to the region and therefore to our interests." U.S. Congress. House International Relations Committee .Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, Hearing, October 29, 2003.

²⁸ Nichol, J. (2009, February). Central Asia's Security : Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests, Congressional Research Service.

²⁹ Nichol, J. (2013, June 21). Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests. Congressional Research Service. CRS report of Congress. Research Gate.

³⁰ Nichol, J. (2013, June 21). Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests. Congressional Research Service. CRS report of Congress. Research Gate.

order to take possession of the Farhod reservoir on the Syr Darya River. (Naumova, 2009).³¹

Besides border claims, other problems revolve around whether borders are open or closed. Open borders within the Central Asian states after the breakup of the Soviet Union were widely viewed as fostering trafficking in drugs and contraband and free migration, so border controls increasingly have been tightened in all the states. After terrorists carried out several attacks in Uzbekistan in May 2009, Uzbekistan alleged that they had entered the country from Kyrgyzstan, and built more concrete walls, trenches, and ditches along the border³². The Kyrgyz Border Service stated in June 2009 that Uzbekistan was violating bilateral accords that stipulated that such border fortifications should not be built “until the delineation and demarcation of the Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan state borders are completed.” Uzbek officials reportedly alleged that they were forced to make unilateral decisions about the location of borders while emplacing fortifications because Kyrgyzstan had refused to meet to demarcate borders. One trench reportedly was moved to accommodate Kyrgyz concerns.(Naumova, 2009).³³ Tajikistan was among the Central Asian republics least prepared and inclined toward independence when the Soviet Union broke up and since September 1992, stability in Tajikistan remains fragile inspite of having peace keeping operations.

According to some estimates, there are some 4,000 IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) fighters in Afghanistan. Pakistan reported in November 2006 that it had arrested IJU (Islamic Jihad Union) members who had placed rockets near presidential offices, the legislature, and the headquarters of military intelligence in Islamabad. Reportedly, the IJU was targeting the government because of its support

³¹ Naumova, V. (2009, April 18). Tajikistan, Uzbekistan to Hold Next Border Delineation Negotiations in Late April. *Asia-Plus; CEDR*. .

³² Nichol, J. (2010, March 11). CentralAsia's Security : Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests, *Congressional Research Service*.

³³ Naumova, V. (2009, April 18). Tajikistan, Uzbekistan to Hold Next Border Delineation Negotiations in Late April. *Asia-Plus; CEDR*. .

for the United States.(BBC, 2006)³⁴ Pakistani media reported in March-April 2007 that dozens of IMU members had been killed in northern Pakistan when local tribes turned against them, possibly reducing their strength or forcing them to move into Afghanistan and Central Asia. More alleged IMU and IJU members were reported killed by Pakistani forces during fighting in North Waziristan in October 2007. Indicating a widening of the IMU's focus, Tohir Yuldash(the leader of IMU) called in January 2008 for creating a Shariah state in Pakistan. Among other incidents:

- In January 2008, an IJU website seemed to indicate that Abu Laith al-Libi—an Al Qaeda official who had been killed by the United States in Pakistan—had been one of the leaders of the IJU. (Top al-Qaida leader 'killed' in Afghanistan.,2008)³⁵ (Steinburg, 2008)³⁶
- In March 2008, an IJU website claimed that one of its members—the German- born Cunyt Ciftci (alias Saad Abu Fourkan)—had assisted Taliban forces in Afghanistan by carrying out a suicide bombing that killed two Afghan and two U.S. troops and wounded several others. (Steinburg, 2009)³⁷ According to the IJU website and other sources, IJU is playing a more significant role in fighting in Afghanistan.
- In June 2008, an IJU video claimed that one Uzbek IJU member had taken part in the 1999 attack in Kyrgyzstan, and later had fought in Afghanistan against the Northern Alliance and then against U.S. and NATO forces. Another Uzbek member had been trained in Chechnya by Khattab in 1998 and also had fought against U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan. (CRSReport, 2008, August 13- 2009, March 03)³⁸
- In July and September 2009, ISAF and the Afghan military reportedly carried out operations in the northern Konduz province against IMU terrorists who supposedly

³⁴ *BBC Monitoring South Asia*, November 4, 2006.

³⁵ *Top al-Qaida leader 'killed' in Afghanistan*. (2008, February 05). The Guardian. London. Retrieved January 31, 2008.

³⁶ Steinberg,G. (2008). A Turkish al-Qaeda: *The Islamic Jihad Union and the Internationalization of Uzbek Jihadism*, Center for Contemporary Conflict. U.S. Senate. Select Committee on Intelligence. Prepared Testimony of Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell: The Annual Threat Assessment.

³⁷ Steinberg,G. (2009, February 16). *The Evolving Threat from Jihadist Terrorism in Turkey*. Real Instituto Elcano.

³⁸ Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008: *Context and Implications for U.S. Interests*. (2008, August 13- 2009, March 03). Every CRSReport. <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL34618.html>.

had moved into the province after being forced out of Pakistan (Binnie & Wright, 2009)³⁹.

- Tohir Yuldash allegedly was killed in Pakistan by a U.S. predator missile on September 26, 2009. A Russian Tatar, Abdur Rakhman, allegedly became the new leader of the IMU (The long war journal, 2010, August 16)⁴⁰.
- On October 11, 2009, 10 terrorists attacked the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, resulting in 20 deaths. The government alleges that three of the attackers belonged to the IMU (Ibid 39)⁴¹.
- In late October 2009, Pakistani armed forces reportedly were attacking an IMU base in the town of Kaniguram in South Waziristan.
- In February 2010, Pakistani media reported that a U.S. predator missile killed several terrorists in North Waziristan, including four Uzbek citizens. The terrorists were said to be linked to Al Qaeda (In The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, 2010)⁴².
- In February 2010, alleged IMU terrorists attacked a police station in Bannu, North West Frontier Province, Pakistan, killing 15 police and civilians. Some officials in Central Asia have warned that the crackdown on the IMU and IJU in Pakistan and Afghanistan may be forcing some of the terrorists to return to Central Asia. Other officials have stated that a large-scale influx has not yet occurred (Pakistani Timeline, 2017)⁴³.

Kazakhstan on Counter Terrorism , Separatism and other Security aspects:

Countering terrorism and conditions conducive to it, is of special significance for Kazakhstan. Since the first days of its independence, Kazakhstan has been overwhelmed by security issues involving its neighbors. It also recognized a number of conventional and

³⁹ Binnie, J. & Wright, J. (2009, August). *The Evolving Role of Uzbek-led Fighters in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. Vol. 2; Issue 8

⁴⁰ Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan leader Tahir Yuldashev killed Confirms. (2010, August 16). *The Long War Journal*.

⁴¹ Ibid39

⁴² Pakistan : Reported US strikes, 2010.(2010). In *The Bureau of Investigative Journalism*. <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/drone-war/data/obama-2010-pakistan-strikes>.

⁴³ Pakistani Timeline. (2017). <https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/Pakistan/timeline/index.html>

unconventional security threats that might undermine stability and development in the region, as well as in the republic. One of the first official documents produced by the Kazakhstan government was the *Strategy of Establishment and Development of Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State*, initiated by President Nursultan Nazarbayev in May 1992 (official site of the President of Kazakhstan, 2021)⁴⁴. Although specific security threats in Kazakhstan were obvious (as the direction post-Soviet security, military arrangements and the CIS had yet to be determined), three sections of this document dealt specifically with security issues, albeit in relatively vague form. In the document, President Nazarbayev highlighted the fact that the national security of Kazakhstan had a regional dimension, and that relations with CIS members and other states with interests in Central Asia were very important. He stressed particularly that his country needed a military doctrine to “prevent and defend against (external) military threat.” It took several years for this concept of national security to be clarified and conceptualized in a comprehensive document, the *Law on National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan*.

Historical Backdrop: An Internal aspect From Separatism to Unification:

More than any other non-Russian country in the post-Soviet space, Kazakhstan faces separatist challenges that were structured into it by Joseph Stalin in the 1920s and 1930s, when he included large and predominantly ethnic-Russian-populated regions in the north within the republic’s borders (Goble, 2017)⁴⁵. The Soviet dictator did so to prevent the Kazakhs from combining with other Central Asians against Moscow. He recognized that Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan would never join together with giant Uzbekistan unless the latter was counter-balanced by Kazakhstan, a possibility Stalin was committed to preventing. Indeed, Stalin and the Soviets always referred to the entire region as “Central Asia and Kazakhstan” rather than just “Central Asia,” as most in Russia and abroad have done since 1991.

Demographic changes have reduced some of this particular historically induced threat—ethnic Russians have not formed a plurality in Kazakhstan since 1986, and represent an ever-declining share of the population—but it has not been eliminated. According to Kazakh analysts,

⁴⁴ *The strategy for development of the republic of Kazakhstan until the year 2030*. (2021). The Republic of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan, Akorda: Presidential Residence. In the official site of the President of Kazakhstan. https://www.akorda.kz/en/official_documents/strategies_and_programs

⁴⁵ Goble, P. (2017, October 17). “Kazakhstan Faces Three Kinds of Separatist Threats:Publication”: *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Vol. 14 Issue: 131 .

their country now faces other separatist challenges as well. Kazakhstan is currently confronted by three different kinds of separatism, which, if unaddressed or not countered, could easily reinforce one another. First of all, there is *ideological separatism*, driven by neo-imperialist or radical Islamist ideas. Recent events in Turkey and Ukraine, show how quickly Kazakhs could “become victims not only of a foreign information war or foreign propaganda but of a foreign identity.” To counter this, Kazakhstan must promote a Kazakh identity; but that can emerge only on the basis of economic and political reforms and not by dictate from the government. Second, Kazakhstan faces what could be called “*economic ‘separatism,’*” that is, the desire of regions to have more authority than they are granted by the Constitution, which defines the country as a unitary state. Those regions that are doing well—either due to their own efforts or because of the foreign investment—increasingly view the central government as a problem because it takes resources from them to support lagging regions. This policy can generate separatist ideas as well. The third risk, which often arises as a result of the coming together of the first two, is “*classical territorial separatism.*” In such a scenario, a region and its population come to view that their interests have been ignored by the central government. Kazakhs began to talk about this threat after the (Moscow-driven) outbreak of war in Donbass (Gussarova, 2017) ⁴⁶. Some have even concluded that they might have become victims (or in some cases beneficiaries) of a similar Russian strategy directed against Kazakhstan. The government in Astana, as re-iterated by Kazakhstani political scientist Dosym Satpayev has responded by introducing more draconian punishments against anyone calling for changes to the country’s borders or against those who participate in separatist movements in eastern Ukraine. But the authorities have not taken sufficient actions to address regional differences in the economic situation, which can trigger such separatist challenges (Mirovalev, 2021)⁴⁷. Therefore the creation of educational clusters and economic development zones in the poorest areas is essential.

A second Kazakhstani political scientist, Rasud Zhumaly, is even blunter about a different source of the threat. Kazakhstan has all the laws it needs to counter separatism arising at home, he says; but it has failed to take a tough enough line against foreign—predominantly

⁴⁶ Gussarova , A. (2017). *Kazakhstan and Ukraine: Common Future or Separated Fates?*. Central Asia Institute of Strategic studies and Friedrich Ebert stiftung, Almaty .

⁴⁷ Mirovalev, M. (2021, January 13). *Should Kazakhstan fear a crime style Russian innovation?* In TRT World. <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/should-kazakhstan-fear-a-crimea-style-russian-invasion-43218>

Russian—support for separatist ideas inside the Central Asian Republic (Goble, 2017)⁴⁸. “The foreign ministry must be very tough and categorical” about this, Zhumaly declares, but “unfortunately, it still conducts itself in too soft way, despite provocative declarations from Russian politicians”. *Astana, he argues, must do three things to counter the three threats:*

- It must conduct its own sophisticated information and ideological work among its people, underscoring the fact that “Kazakhstan is a unitary state, a single country, and the motherland of all the peoples and ethnic groups living there.”
- It must introduce severe limits on foreign information providers, so that they cannot sway portions of the population against the country. And perhaps especially important, Zhumaly says,
- It must work to ensure the balanced development of the country’s regions, so that some are not well off and others left behind. “In Kazakhstan,” he continues, “the lion’s share of investments and budget spending is concentrated in two or three regions, while the remainder suffers from inadequate funding.” As a result, “internal migration is growing” and entire regions are being left depopulated, which represents “a threat not only from the point of view of separatism but also from the point of view of the development of the state.” (Goble, 2017)⁴⁹

Kazakhstan on Extremism: its Foreign Policy Approach:

Kazakhstan have had the longest period of stability with respect to separatism emanating out to extremist threats. The government has a greater capacity to address this concern, largely because it is able to take advantage of significant revenues from its hydrocarbon wealth. This means that the military and other security forces are better equipped and prepared to address terrorist actions, if the need arises. On a practical level, these forces are specifically trained in counter-terrorist methods, include Special Forces units of the Kazakhstani military. However, the

⁴⁸ Goble, P. (2017, October 17).Kazakhstan Faces Three Kinds of Separatist Threats:Publication: *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Vol. 14 Issue: 131 .

⁴⁹ Goble, P. (2017, October 17).Kazakhstan Faces Three Kinds of Separatist Threats:Publication: *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Vol. 14 Issue: 131 .

performance of such units during the unrest in Zhanaozen, suggests that more work needs to be done⁵⁰. On an ideological front, President Nursultan Nazarbayev has taken on the issues of religion and extremism head on, attempting to frame a pluralist national narrative. The “Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions,” was established in 2003. Official Kazakh sources regularly note that Kazakhstan is a “multi-faith” nation.

While recognizing the importance of Islam to the country, the views of other faiths that exist in the country are stressed. In public opinion polls and other studies, it appears that a sense of moderation is central to the Kazakhstani identity. This is not to say that there is complete freedom: salafist groups and ones advocating a more conservative expression of Islam are monitored and often banned, as are other organizations deemed “cults,” such as Jehovah’s Witnesses (2016 Report on International Religious Freedom, 2016)⁵¹. In the name of security, the state is quick to designate opposition movements “extremists,” thus allowing for legal actions to be taken against them, if necessary (Omelicheva, 2011)⁵². According to Kazakhstan’s Foreign Policy Concept (FPC), its security policy is based on five documents: the Constitution (1995/2007), the Military Doctrine (2011), the Law on National Security (2012), the Kazakhstan-2050 Strategy (2012), and the Foreign Policy Concept (2014) itself (Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan , 1995)⁵³. With the exception of the 2050-Strategy, most countries publish the aforementioned types of security documents. The 2050-Strategy of Kazakhstan is the exception to the rule, presenting a comprehensive state program for all segments of society for the decades ahead. Usually, a state has an overall NSS (National Security strategy). The Kazakh Law on National Security mentions such a NSS; however, a foreign publication testifies that this document is classified (Dermott, 2012)⁵⁴. The reason for the classification of the NSS as

⁵⁰ Satpayev, D. & Umbetaliyeva, T. (2015, July 01). “Journal of Eurasian Studies” *The protests in Zhanaozen and the Kazakh oil sector: Conflicting interests in a rentier state*. London: Sage Journals.

⁵¹ 2016 Report on International Religious Freedom. (2016). Kazakhstan. Washington DC. U.S Department of State.

⁵² Omelicheva, Mariya L. (2011, June). Islam in Kazakhstan: A Survey of Contemporary Trends and Sources of Securitization. Central Asian Survey, Vol.30(2), (pp.243-256.)

⁵³ Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (30 August 1995, August 30). Voennaya doktrina Respubliki Kazakhstan . <http://www.parlam.kz/en/constitution> (accessed 7 November 2015).

⁵⁴ Dermott, Mc R. (2012, August). Kazakhstan’s 2011 Military Doctrine: Reassessing Regional and International Security. Fort , Lavenworth, Foreign Military Studies Office. p. 7.

confirmed by the high-ranking Kazakh military officers is probably because this document contains specific measures in response to violations of the national security of Kazakhstan, which the authorities do not want to disclose, to leave any adversary (internal or external) in doubt as to what to expect. However, Kazakhstan's Law on National Security covers all aspects of a NSS: security types, national interests, policy objectives, threats, and responsibilities for ensuring national security.

With regard to national views in its security documents, different from the common Central Asian assessments, Astana repeatedly focuses attention on the (delimitation of the) Caspian Sea (Emilia, 2012)⁵⁵. The energy resources in this basin are crucial for Kazakhstan's economy. Therefore, the borders of the Caspian littoral states need to be agreed on to avoid disputes that could disrupt the exploitation of the energy resources. For this reason — energy resources being a vital asset of its economic power — Kazakhstan also reiterates the protection of its energy sector.

- **Drug Trafficking:**

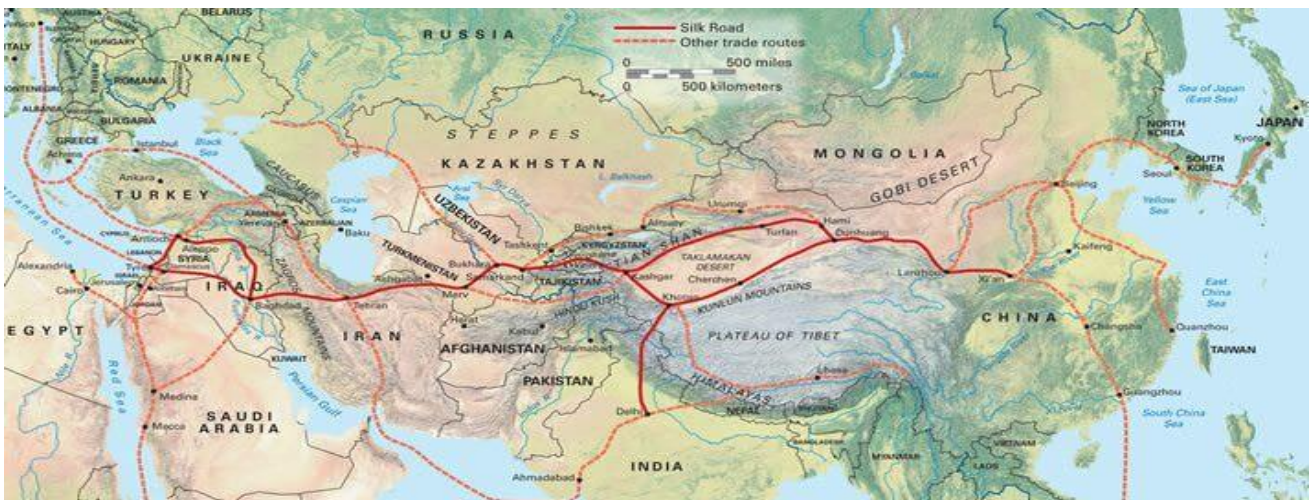


Figure 5 shows the Ancient Silk Route connectivity which is the route of Drug Trading at present

The Silk Road stretching from China to Constantinople was the route for trading valuable commodity of silk, spices and textiles has now become conduit for many illicit forms of trade.

⁵⁵ Emilia, R. (2012). *The Caspian Sea: Legal Challenges of Delimitation between Littoral States*. University of Tromsø. Faculty of Law.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the map of the world has been changed forever. New states have emerged, borders have opened, and new relations have been established. Unfortunately, this has also meant more opportunities for drug trafficking and proliferation mainly because the newly independent states of Central Asia cannot easily cut themselves off from the situation in Afghanistan.

Central Asia has recently emerged as a major international drug trafficking center. According to United Nations drug control experts, 80 % of heroin consumed in Western Europe originates in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Activities of the United Nations International Drug Control Program, 1999)⁵⁶. One half of these drugs (about 120 tons of heroin equivalent per year according to estimates) travels to Europe via Central Asia, a dangerous cargo to pass along the revived ancient Great Silk Road. Such drug trade is imperiling the health of these newly independent states in a number of different ways. The proliferation of drugs is undermining Central Asian society. It is a blight on the economic and social environment and a threat to the traditional system of values. Drug addiction damages the physical, psychological, and emotional health of whole pockets of society, wreaking particular havoc on the younger generation. Drugs undermine weak states, and the developing situation in Central Asia is following true to course. Deteriorating economic conditions throughout much of the region are tailor-made to the needs of the drug industry. Economic necessity makes police and border guards more receptive to bribes and ordinary citizens more willing to take the risks associated with the transport or cultivation of drugs. The presence of drugs brings with it organized crime. These criminal groups are sometimes able to find potential partners among some of the region's opposition forces. This is especially true of anti-system groups that have little or no chance of gaining political access to political power under the current circumstances. The most extreme Islamic radical groups are thus attracted to alliances with the drug trade, as are those that seek guns and other weapons. The increased presence of drugs in Central Asia has also created an expanded drug problem among the Central Asian population; this problem is fed in part by the fact that for the first time heroin is being refined in significant quantities in the region (Olcott, Udalova, 2000)⁵⁷. The growing

⁵⁶ *Activities of the United Nations International Drug Control Program*. (1999, March). Report of the Executive Director, E/CN.7/1999/6, p. 7.

⁵⁷ Olcott, Brill M. & Udalova, N. (2000, March). *Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road: The Security Environment in Central Asia*. Russian and Urasian programme. Carnegie Endowment for International peace.

drug problem puts a further burden on government budgets, increases crime rates and diminishes public safety, raises levels of domestic violence, child abuse, and costs of health care, stimulates the rapid spread of several deadly infectious diseases, and further decreases economic productivity. The Central Asian states lack the funds and technical expertise to wage a successful war against drugs. Most of the governments in the region also lack the will power to do so. Weak regimes are reluctant to take the political risks associated with tangling with a dangerous opponent, but the organized drug trade is rapidly becoming a more powerful presence in the area, and the political risks of engaging with them will only increase over time thus giving rise to a dangerous cycle. The flourishing drug trade in the region enables separatist, radical religious and terrorist movements that have already sprung up in Central Asia to become financially self-sufficient. The present day drug trade follows very similar routes to that of the historic silk road. The drugs that pass across Central Asia contribute to the drug epidemic in Russia but also contribute to the new opioid⁵⁸ epidemic in the United States, as Afghanistan is a major source of drugs consumed in the U.S.

A Region for Drug Domination, Production & Trading:



Figure 6 represents the Golden Crescent and Golden Traiangle , the hub of Drug trading and Drug Trafficking.

Geography and history make Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan attractive areas for drug traffic. These states are situated between the world's largest

⁵⁸ Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), codeine, morphine, and many others. Opioids are substances that, when reaching opioid receptors, have effects similar to those of morphine. Medically also used for anesthesia.

illicit opium producers and the most lucrative markets in Western Europe. The countries border or are located in close proximity to the countries of the Golden Crescent (Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran) and, via China, have access to the countries of the Golden Triangle (Burma, Laos, and Thailand), which are the world's largest producers of illicit opiates. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan border Afghanistan by far the region's and the world's largest opiate producer⁵⁹. Turkmenistan also has a 992 km border with Iran, and its loosely protected borders enable it to serve as a conduit of drugs between Afghanistan and Iran (which closely monitors its own Afghan border). In addition, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan border China. China offers a market for the selling of drugs and also serves as a supplier of ephedrine, which is legal in China but illegal in most of the world⁶⁰. These countries serve as a conduit, as well, for the output of heroin laboratories in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan (Doornbusch, 1999)⁶¹.

While some of the drugs are sent to India and Pakistan for local consumption, Europe is their main destination. Drugs travel several routes from Afghanistan to Western Europe—through Iran, Turkey, and the southern Balkans or via the Caucasus, Russia, and other western republics of the former Soviet Union⁶². It is more and more dangerous to transport drugs through Iran and Turkey as to deter drug trafficking, Iran built a system of channels, concrete dam constructions, sentry points, and observation towers, as well as a road alongside the entire eastern border. In addition, Iran regularly deploys 30,000 law enforcement personnel to guard this border and has introduced the death penalty for possession of more than 30 grams of heroin or over 5 kilograms of opium. As a result of increased official vigilance, more than 80 % of the global seizures of opium (raw and prepared) are made in Iran (Statistics and Analysis on Supply

⁵⁹ There has always been speculation about the size of the illicit drug harvest, and it is hard to feel much confidence in current international statistics. The UN and U.S. statistics are not in agreement. In 1999 the UNDCP estimated that opium production in Afghanistan was 4,581 metric tons, while the U.S. government estimates this figure to be slightly over 1,600 metric tons. Both sets of data do exhibit the same trend; however, there is a substantial possibility that both underestimate the scale of the problem.

⁶⁰ Ephedrine is a precursor to methamphetamine and methcathinone, powerful central nervous system stimulants.

⁶¹ Doornbusch, K. (1999, May). In 1997 the Chinese confiscated 27 tons of precursors bound for heroin laboratories in Pakistan. Presentation by Kasper Doornbusch, Chief Technical Adviser to UNDCP/UNOPS Project "Osh Knot," made at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

⁶² Calabrese, J. (2007, December 01). *Iran's War on Drugs: Holding the Line?*. In MEI @ 75 peace, prosperity, partnership. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/irans-war-drugs-holding-line>.

of and Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1996)⁶³. Turkey has also been determined to curb drug trafficking through its territory, and there are reports that both the cooperation and professionalism of Turkish law enforcement officers are increasing. In many ways the opposite situation is true in the north Caucasus, where there is a hospitable environment for drug dealers. The myriad of ethnic conflicts has created the unstable conditions upon which they seem to thrive. Borders can be made permeable if the price is right, and there are lots of potential arms buyers who are eager to find ways to finance their purchases⁶⁴. Many of the routes through these regions rely on transit are through Central Asia.

The Central Asian states are no strangers to drug cultivation and consumption, something that has made people at the grassroots level more willing to be drawn into the financial incentives of the drug trade. For example:

- Kazakhs traditionally served koknar, a drink consisting of a mixture of alkaloids of the opium group (morphine, codeine, narcotine, heroin, and dionine), along with hydrocarbon, protein, resin, oil, and pigments, during national and religious holidays or at funerals. These countries have the right kind of terrain and climate for cultivating narcotics.
- Cannabis production is very widespread, although no one is willing to make its eradication a priority. Cannabis is an easy-to-produce and lucrative cash crop. Tajikistan also collects two to three crops a season. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, the Philippines, and South Africa are important cannabis producers.
- The UNDCP(United Nation Drug Control Progrmme, though, is far more concerned with drug traffic than drug production, as the regional office for Central Asia maintains that opium cultivation is limited, although many informed observers in the region claim that international monitoring agencies have still not identified all the sources of illegal cultivation (UNODC, 2008)⁶⁵.

⁶³ Statistics and Analysis on Supply of and Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1996). Vienna: *UNDCP*, p. 21.

⁶⁴ Cengiz, M. (2017, April 05). *Turkey has a major drug problem—here’s how to get a handle on it*. Turkey: Brookings.

⁶⁵ Illicit drug trends in central Asia. (2008, April). The Paris pact initiative. A partnership to counter traffic in and consumption of Afghan opiates. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Central Asia.

- In Uzbekistan most poppies are cultivated in the Samarkand-Surkhandaria region on the border with Tajikistan. Kazakhstan has about 2,000 hectares of illicit opium poppy and is capable of producing about 30 tons of opium (Olzhas, 1999)⁶⁶.

Political Geography as a factor:

The Central Asian states inherited many of the preconditions for successful cross-border trade activities, both legal and illegal, and if not checked, its certain to increase in severity. The cross-border cooperation is a major factor for the proliferation of Drugs. The war in Tajikistan was another factor. A large portion of drugs that flow through the region enters via Tajikistan, which even before the war was Central Asia's poorest country. The pattern of cross-border ethnic relations has served as yet another powerful facilitator of the drug trade. The sale of drugs is more than just an economic livelihood for individuals; it provides entire groups with the economic means to sustain themselves and to advance their political causes. The Uzbeks and Tajiks of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance have been struggling to take power for nearly two decades, and have been in an ever-worsening situation since the rise of the Taliban. Organized drug groups prey on such situations and are interested in further destabilizing the situation to make drug trafficking easier and to scare off international observers and advisors. They find receptive audiences among some of Central Asia's opposition groupings. Despite the signing of peace accords, an atmosphere of lawlessness still pervades parts of Tajikistan, especially in the Pamir region and near the Afghan border. Just like in the neighboring Afghanistan, it appears that the warring factions in Tajikistan have turned to drug trafficking to raise money to finance their military campaigns. As the drug trade becomes more entrenched in the region, the Islamic opposition also seems to be spreading and becoming bolder. Uzbek opposition groups that were pushed out of Tajikistan as part of the reconciliation process, have now taken refuge in Kyrgyzstan, pulling the southern and mountainous part of that country into the whirlwind of drug related and other criminal activity.

⁶⁶ Olzhas, M(1999, May). Kazakhstan in the Drug Trade and Cultivation. paper presented at the May 1999 conference in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Poor Economy ,Unemployed Population as a factor:

The region's population is at present largely unemployed and certainly is financially strapped. It is also disproportionately young, and families are large. 45 % of the population are under the age of 15 (Paul & Russell, 2018)⁶⁷. The most convenient condition to trade Drugs and many of the citizens started to buy drugs in Afghanistan and moved them to Kyrgyzstan, thus becoming home for many drug trafficking groups. The amount of money that can be made by even the most lowly on the drug chain is very significant. But those at the bottom of the drug chain—the opium farmers, along with the drug runners in Tajikistan and Afghanistan—have only a tiny fraction of the money that drug production and sales generate. Those running drugs within Central Asia are able to realize a bit more and easily generate enough income to buy off many of the local security people. This reduces the transaction costs by offering the traffickers protection. The big money, though, goes to a very small number of people, some inside the region and many outside it, and the shadowy figures who serve as Central Asian intermediaries with the international drug trade are alleged to be able to wield strong influence, at least at the provincial if not at the national level. UNDCP estimates that heroin traffickers get 90 % of the “value-added” of heroin in the producer country, processors get 2 %, farmers 6 %, and opium traders 2 % (UNDCP, World Drug Report, 1997)⁶⁸. However, half of the total value is added at the distribution stage in the consumer countries. For example, should heroin be trafficked to the United States, 57 % of its value will be added there. The amount of money being made off drugs helps create a substantial imbalance between the capacities of the drug-traders and those charged with eliminating their practices.

Tajikistan being the primary transit country for Afghan narcotics going to Russia and Eastern Europe has received support from Russia, the USA, the OSCE, and the UN to improve

⁶⁷ Paul, S & Russell, Z. (2019, October 18). Societal Change Afoot in Central Asia. carnegie endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/10/18/societal-change-afoot-in-central-asia-pub-80086>

⁶⁸ UNDCP, World Drug Report (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 131. UNESCO also reports that distributors in consumer countries receive 54 %, carriers and international traffickers get 26 %, processors and national middlemen get 15 %, and producers get 2-5 %. “The Globalization of the Drug Trade,” UNESCO Sources, no. 111, April 1999. See <http://www.unesco.org/most/drugs.htm>

its border forces.⁶⁹ Central Asian states have adopted a joint declaration to strengthen efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking and abuse. Member countries of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sub-regional Drug Control Cooperation called for greater efforts to counter illicit trafficking of drugs and the abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances. The countries called for greater cooperation with international organizations and the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC). Uzbekistan's Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov in his speech at the opening of the 11th meeting of the member states to the MoU said:

“It is absolutely clear that in the modern global world no single state can alone withstand the challenges associated with drug trafficking. Only by combining efforts and resources, experience and knowledge, we can make progress in countering drug trafficking and related transnational threats,” (Xia, 2019)⁷⁰.

Kazakhstan on Drug Trafficking:

- ***Drug route:*** Kazakhstan lies directly transverse several main drug routes linking Central Asia to the Russian Federation and Europe. Indeed, all drugs smuggled via the “northern route” must transit Kazakh territory unless they are shipped by air or across the Caspian Sea. The numerous major road and railway links across the Kazakh-Russian border, as well as its length (7644 km) and topography make anti-trafficking efforts difficult. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan, due to its significant financial resources, is probably the best equipped of all Central Asian states to tackle the trafficking threat.

There are three main drug routes passing through Kazakhstan from Tajikistan. The first starts in Dushanbe, crosses over into Saryasa district in Uzbekistan's southernmost province of Sukhandarya and continues to Bukhara before reaching Tashkent and crossing the Uzbek-Kazakh border. From Shymkent (Southern Kazakhstan)

⁶⁹ R. Weitz, ‘The SCO and Afghanistan: Challenges and Opportunities’, *Afghanistan Regional Forum*, No. 3, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University (December 2012); A. Sodiqov, ‘Porous Border and corruption keeps drugs flowing through Tajikistan’, *EDM*, 9/123 (28 June 2012); ‘Two New Border Posts in Batken Opened With US Central Command Support’, *kabar.kg* (12 December 2014); ‘Uzbekistan poluchit amerikanskuyu texniku na 6-mln’, *vx.uz* (30 April 2015) <http://vx.uz/uzb/uzbekistan-poluchit-amerikanskuyu-texniku-na-6-mln.html> (accessed on 10th May 2020).

⁷⁰ Xia, L. (2019, May 03). *Central Asian countries vow to jointly fight drug trafficking, Asia & Pacific*. http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-05/03/c_138031757.htm accessed on 10th May 2020

the drugs flow eastward via the city of Taraz toward Almaty. From there, shipments move towards Karaganda, reaching Astana, then Kokshetau and lastly Petropavlovsk before arriving on Russian territory. The second route mimics the first one until it reaches Bukhara. It then crosses into Tashavuz (Turkmenistan) before coming back into Uzbekistan at Kungrad. From here, drugs are shipped via rail through Beineu (on the border with Kazakhstan) and continuing north crossing into the Russian Federation. The third route also starts in Dushanbe but crosses into Chorjou (Turkmenistan) from Bukhara via Bekdash railway crossing and continuing north through Atyrau and into the Russian Federation (Facts and details, 2019)⁷¹. There are also three routes transversing Kazakhstan from Kyrgyzstan. The first route starts in Bishkek before crossing the border into Korday (Kazakhstan) towards Almaty and onward to Ayaguz via Georgievka and Ust-Kamenogorsk into the Russian Federation. From Bishkek, the second route passes through Almaty then onwards through Saryshagan to Petropavlovsk before reaching the Russian Federation. The third route runs westward from Bishkek into Taraz via Symkent-Kyzylorda and Uralsk into the Russian Federation. From Uzbekistan, two routes move opiates into Saryagash followed by Shymkent and Taraz. From there, one route proceeds through the Shu valley into Karaganda before exiting the country via Pavlodar. The second branch of this route proceeds east into Taldykugan then moving to Georgievka and Ust-Kamenogorski before crossing into the Russian Federation. The third route from Uzbekistan begins in capital of Karakalpakstan, Nukus, moving into Beineu and Makat before reaching Atyrau and exiting the country through the small village of Ganyushkino (UNODCR, 2008 April)⁷². In addition to those mentioned above, trafficking from Turkmenistan across the border north into Kazakhstan is also likely. This route provides access to north and western Kazakhstan and facilitates onward trafficking

⁷¹ Illegal drug trade and production in Kazakhstan. Facts and details. http://factsanddetails.com/central-asia/Kazakhstan/sub8_4b/entry-4650.html. visited on 2019.

⁷² Illicit drug trends in central Asia. (2008, April). The Paris pact initiative. A partnership to counter traffic in and consumption of Afghan opiates. *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Central Asia*.

to areas such as Orenburg in the Russian Federation which has large numbers of drug users (Olcott, Udalova, 2000)⁷³.

Authorities have effected only minor seizures in oblasts neighbouring Turkmenistan – Atyrau and Mangystau – but a large volume of seizures is recorded in Western Kazakhstan, presumably of drugs leaving the country. More generally, the vulnerability of Kazakhstan’s western regions to trafficking should be acknowledged, because of its integration with the extra-regional transport infrastructure leftover from the Soviet period. Railways linking Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are considered important trafficking channels for drugs trafficking. It is estimated that most illegal shipments entering Kazakhstan by train cross at the border points of Arys and Biney on the borders with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan respectively. Drug trafficking using vehicles enters the country mostly across the borders in Shymkent, Zhambyl and Almaty provinces. Significant exit points on the Kazakh-Russian border include Astrakhan, Orenburg, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, and Novosibirsk (Ibid 71)⁷⁴.

- **Production and Seizure:**

As in other Central Asian countries, opium cultivation in Kazakhstan is relatively insignificant. UNODC survey conducted in 1999 found that there were illicit cultivation, the vast majority of which was reported to be in Southern Kazakhstan. 84% of cultivation was in remote, mountainous areas. In 2007, Kazakhstan officially reported a substantially lower cultivation of opium poppy and no production facilities for converting opium into heroin. Kazakhstan is Central Asia’s largest producer of cannabis, accounting for 97 % of the cannabis sold in Central Asia. Data collected from the last UNODC survey conducted in 1999 indicates that cannabis cultivation and wild growth was present in Zhambyl Eastern Kazakhstan, Western Kazakhstan, Almaty and Atyrau. Zhambyl was noted for producing cannabis with a higher THC which is preferred by traffickers. Cannabis is thought to grow wild throughout southern Kazakhstan with the largest single location being in the Chu Valley. Officially, the Kazakh government reports 0.23 hectares of wild

⁷³ Olcott, Brill M. & Udalova, N. (2000, March). *Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road: The Security Environment in Central Asia. Russian and Urasian programme*. Carnegie Endowment for International peace. Issue 11.

⁷⁴ Ibid 71

growth and 0.36 hectares of illicit cannabis cultivation in 2006. However, a 2007 UNODC mission to the Chu valley indicates that wild growth and cultivation was well above the 128,000 ha officially reported. Furthermore, over half of the cannabis is being harvested. Illicit cultivation is noted in Kiziklarda and Shimkent in 2007. Law enforcement circles in Kazakhstan are seriously concerned about the expansion of the synthetic drug market. In 2005, the Committee for National Security seized more than 36,000 ecstasy pills, all of which were produced outside the country. Given Kazakhstan's proximity to the Russian Federation where synthetic drug use is much more prevalent, it is thought that synthetic drugs might travel to Kazakhstan through the Russian Federation.

Kazakhstan is the only country in Central Asia to report Ephedra seizures. In 2006, the reported seizure volume was very low at 3.81 kg; however, the seizure of over 800 kg just four years earlier suggests that Kazakhstan might be used or has the potential to be used as a source of synthetic drug precursors. Kazakhstan does not report synthetic drug use as a category of registered drug users. However, of 7,857 registered drug users categorized as "other", it is likely that some are synthetic drug users. Despite the suspected increase in non-opiate narcotics, heroin, because of significant supply and the addictive nature of the drug, still remains the drug of choice in Kazakhstan. Results of the 2006 school survey "Lifetime use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances" suggest that, while drug use is still very limited, Kazakhstan has the highest level of drug use and the highest level of synthetic drug use among young people in Central Asia. There was a gender disparity with boys accounting for more use in all categories. In 2008, 2.4% of boys and 2 % of girls reported using inhalants while 2.3 % of boys and 0.7 % of girls reported using ecstasy. No other synthetic drugs reported use above 0.2 %.

In 2006, Kazakhstan law enforcement agencies seized 554.7 kg of heroin and 636.8 kg of opium, equal to 13 % of total opiates seized in the region. The largest heroin seizure volumes were in Southern Kazakhstan (151.1 kg), Western Kazakhstan (133.8 kg) and Almaty city (89.0 kg). The largest opium seizure volumes were in Almaty city (330.7 kg), Pavlodar (108.3 kg), and Eastern Kazakhstan (56.7 kg) (Ibid 71)⁷⁵. Large opiates seizures are conspicuously absent from Zhambyl oblast as it is contiguous with

⁷⁵ Ibid71

oblasts with high seizures, particularly Southern Kazakhstan oblast, and it is located on the main transport corridor between Bishkek and Almaty. Geographically, it is worth noting that there is not a regional concentration of seizures, which indicates that opiates transiting the country are bound for markets as far apart as London and Beijing and utilizing the maze of possible transit corridors through the country.

In most provinces, the volume of opiate seizures has been erratic from year to year. Heroin seizures, for example, decreased markedly in North Kazakhstan (79 %) and Eastern Kazakhstan (94 %) while increasing by over 5,000 % in Western Kazakhstan. Similarly, opium seizures have varied markedly with Southern Kazakhstan recording a 78 % decrease and Pavlodar recording an increase of over 200 %. This trend may be partially explained by the frequency of large volume seizures. Over the past decade, a very loose pattern differentiates the seizure trend between the Taliban and post-Taliban period. 2001 saw record low opiate seizures at 173 kg, followed by consistently rising seizures averaging 875.4 kg from 2002 to 2006 (an average annual increase of 88 %). UNODC estimates conducted in 2000 place annual cannabis use prevalence at 4.2 % of the adult population. In comparison, UNODC estimates in 2006 suggest that 1.02 % of the adult population use opiates. Results of the 2006 school survey “Lifetime use of alcohol, tobacco, and other substances” indicates that 16.8 % of boys and 7 % of girls have used cannabis in their lifetime, the highest prevalence of the three countries surveyed. The percentage of young people who had used cannabis ten times or more in their lifetime was 4.9 % for boys and 1.5 % for girls. Within the past 30 days, 7.4 % of boys and 2.6 % of girls reported using cannabis.

Kazakh law enforcement agencies recorded 320 crimes related to synthetic drugs in the first seven months of 2020 -- three times higher than in the same period last year, according to the Interior Ministry (MVD). Additionally, the volume of seized synthetic drugs grew 31 times from 2.6kg in 2019 to 81.7kg in 2020. The MVD has warned about the special danger of new synthetic drugs, which can cause someone to become addicted after the first dose. The ministry's methods of outreach include a film that shows the consequences of synthetic drug use.

“The problem is becoming serious. Today we're talking about not only the import and sale of synthetic drugs but also their production within the country, Synthetic drugs

are notable because they are inexpensive both to manufacture and sell. In addition, drug traffickers have begun to actively sell drugs via contactless methods, using websites and electronic payment systems," the MVD said in a statement published on September 28, 2020.

- **Drug Abuse and Crime:**

More than 1,300 of the town's 180,000 residents are HIV-positive, accounting for 80 percent of cases nationally. Most of those infected are injecting drug users who share needles. Kazakhstan has the highest rate of infection in Central Asia, with HIV cases reported in all its major cities (IFRC, 2007, February 27)⁷⁶. In the past decade, the number of those infected has risen to 6,616 from 548, although unofficially, the number is believed to be at least three times higher. Drug abuse is more widespread and growing faster in Kazakhstan than in any other Central Asian state. The prevalence of registered drug users in 2019 stands at 355 per 100,000 people, more than 200 % higher than any other state in the region (UNODC Research, 2020 June)⁷⁷. In comparison, UNODC estimates that 1.02 % of the adult population use opiates. The number of newly registered drug users increased 20 % in 2019, now standing at 70 per 100,000 people (Ibid 76)⁷⁸. Opium is the principle drug abused in Kazakhstan accounting for 47 % of all registered drug users and 72 % of all opiate users. In general, heroin is thought to be more harmful than opium given its link to injecting drug use. *In Kazakhstan drug users commonly ingest raw opium intravenously by creating an opium solution, for example, "compote" mixed with ephedrine.* Occasionally the blood of one person the "drug leader" is mixed with the opium preparation and is then injected by multiple people, leading to an increased risk of spreading HIV and other infectious diseases. Sub-nationally, drug abuse is most prevalent in the city of Almaty (8,839 registered users), and the oblasts of

⁷⁶ Sex and drugs in Kazakhstan. (2007, February 27). In IFRC. <https://www.ifrc.org/es/noticias/noticias/kazakhstan/sex-and-drugs-in-kazakhstan/>.

⁷⁷ Drug supply. (2020, June). Uninet Nation: United nation publication. UNODC research. https://wdr.unodc.org/wdr2020/field/WDR20_Booklet_3.pdf

⁷⁸ Ibid76

Karaganda (6,632), Zhambyl (5,251) and Eastern Kazakhstan (4,735) (Ibid 71)⁷⁹. These areas with high drug abuse rates are located along popular and well-established opiate trafficking routes, consistent with the assumption that drug demand is created along the supply chain to the Russian Federation and Europe. The highest increases in registered drug abusers in recent years have been reported in Atyrau and Mangystau oblasts where some of the highest rates of heroin abuse amongst drug abusers are reported. It is peculiar that the number of registered drug abusers declined in Southern Kazakhstan, also on a major drug route. The profile of the average Kazakh drug abuser is an unemployed, urban dweller. The majority of registered drug abusers were between 18 and 30 years of age (54 %) with a large secondary portion over 30 years of age (38 %). The primary drug used is heroin (47 %) followed by opium (18 %). The prevalence of risk practices amongst IDUs in Kazakhstan is extremely high. In a 2005 survey of IDUs, over 15 % of those surveyed reported not using a condom during their last sexual encounter with an irregular partner, 10 % reported using common syringes during the last month and over 90 % reported having practiced unsafe sex or injecting practices (Illicit drug trends in central Asia, 2008 April)⁸⁰.

Since 1996, Kazakhstan has reported the highest number and rate of drug related crimes per 100,000 people of any Central Asian country. At 68 drug related crimes per 100,000 people in 2006, Kazakhstan witnesses substantially more crime (66 % more) than the regional average (41 per 100,000). Of 10,423 criminal cases initiated in 2006, 9,191 cases were considered before the court and 7,322 persons were convicted. Most of these involved the intent to sell (4,678) rather than smuggling charges (437). 12 % of people convicted are women. Sub-nationally, the highest number of drug related crimes in 2006 took place in Almaty city (1,446), Karaganda (1,279), and Eastern Kazakhstan (887). These oblasts also have the first, second and fourth largest populations of registered drug users. Surprisingly, Zhambyl, which registers the highest volume of seizures, has a relatively low level of drug related crime. Kazakhstan most clearly demonstrates the regional inverted-U trend of increasing annual drug related crime

⁷⁹ Ibid71

⁸⁰ Illicit drug trends in central Asia. (2008, April). The Paris pact initiative. A partnership to counter traffic in and consumption of Afghan opiates. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Central Asia.

registered between 1990 and 2000 followed by decreasing annual drug related crime registered through 2005. In 1990, 4,165 drug related crimes were reported. This increased by an average of 20 % per annum between 1991 and 2000 (peaking at 23,340 incidences), followed by a period of decline, averaging 16 % per annum until 2005. 2006 has shown a modest 7 % increase in drug related crime (10,423 incidences). It is difficult to know if this trend is the result of fluctuations in the amount of drugs moving through the region or if it reflects the level of prioritization assigned to drug related crime by the Kazakh government.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Government of Kazakhstan signed five new regional drug demand reduction and drug control projects in Almaty. The UNODC is providing technical assistance to Kazakhstan in the areas of drug intelligence analysis, controlled deliveries, precursor chemical controls, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention. The UNODC also provide policy advice to the Kazakh, and other Central Asian governments. So far, the UNODC has completed two national projects in Kazakhstan for a combined value of 1,207,900 dollars. Among other things, these projects focused on institution-building and improvement of drug control measures. In addition, the UNODC has been implementing a regional project on diversification of HIV prevention and drug treatment services for injecting drug users.

On September 24, 2020 police seized a large batch of raw materials used to make mephedrone, a synthetic drug, and arrested the suspected organiser of a secret drug lab. The National Security Committee (KNB) and the MVD on July 30 conducted a joint operation to arrest four suspects accused of producing synthetic drugs in Nur-Sultan. Members of the criminal group allegedly sold the drugs on the secretive part of the internet, the Deep Web and Darknet, and made secret drops for buyers in the capital, according to a KNB press release. The KNB on July 27 arrested two alleged members of a criminal group in Almaty and seized 55kg of mephedrone worth about 3.5 million dollars on the black market, as well as cash, firearms and 1 tonne of precursor chemicals used to make synthetic drugs. While organised crime is involved in some cases of synthetic drugs, independent producers are on the rise. On May 17, KNB officers arrested a man in Nur-Sultan who allegedly was making drugs in a rented garage. They seized 3kg of the psychotropic substance worth 139,000 dollars on the black market. Kazakh

lawmakers amended legislation last year to make it possible to quickly add new synthetic drugs to lists of prohibited substances. Criminals are using modern technology to communicate with each other and their customers, making them difficult to find and expose.

Akzhan Bukenbayev, an investigator with the Nur-Sultan police department said: “Criminals negotiate on Telegram, use VPN [virtual private network] programmes to mask their IP [internet protocol] addresses, accept payments to e-wallets and send customers a geotag and photo of the place where drugs are hidden. Tracking them is very difficult,”

Further Ruslan Seksenbayev of Taraz, chairman of the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Beibit Aspan (Peaceful Sky) said: “This criminal black market is being conquered by synthetic drugs, which are sometimes even more harmful and dangerous than traditional drugs like cannabis and opium. Drug addiction is "getting younger" they are more affordable, and young people naively believe that synthetics are less harmful, as if using them won't make you a drug addict. This is a very dangerous delusion.” He further emphasized “All over the world the money received from the production and sale of drugs is often used to finance terrorism and extremist groups' activities. That's why there is a fight against the laundering of this criminal money received from narcotics sales. Kazakh specialists are improving their skills in countering terrorism financing, including with the support of international organisations” (Ashimov, 2020)⁸¹.

India – Kazakhstan : Convergence of Interest

India on the other hand has always been under the paws of Criminal Activities since independence principally because of its borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Afghanistan being the epicenter for Drug Trafficking and Pakistan being the hub of Terrorism has always challenged the Security of India. The Kashmir issue which involves a direct confrontation between Indian Army and Terrorists of Pakistan occupied Kashmir claiming it to be a struggle

⁸¹ Ashimov, A. (2020, October 13). Increase in domestic production of synthetic drugs alarms Kazakh authorities. https://central.asia-news.com/en_GB/articles/cnmi_ca/features/2020/10/13/feature-01

for independence has not only hampered Indian Economy at large but has also made the entire Kashmir valley and India bleed with innocent lives. Besides religious extremist threats and terrorism which lists to be the most prioritized Non-Traditional Security threat for India, drug trafficking, human trafficking, illegal migration, water scarcity, food security , environmental degradation, poverty, population influx, have always sensitized India for decades.

- *Terrorism:*

South Asia, including India, have been facing the challenge of terrorism and over the past few years there have been numerous acts of terror in the region. While India always faces challenges from borders of illegal migrants and illicit criminal activities but it was challenged directly with its ability to counter terrorism attacks since 1980s with the attack on Bengalis in Agartala by the tribal insurgents in the Mandai Massacre at Tripura⁸². But since 2001 the terrorist activities accelerated to an advanced level and started happening in leaps and bounds like December 22, 2000: Terrorist attacks on Red Fort in Delhi October 1, 2001: Jammu and Kashmir Legislative assembly car bombing in Jammu and Kashmir , December 13, 2001: Indian Parliament Attack in New Delhi, January 22, 2002: American Culture Centre attack, in Kolkata. March 30, 2002: Raghunath Temple attack in Jammu, March 7, 2006, Varanasi bombings: Three synchronized terrorist attacks in Varanasi in Shri Sankatmochan Mandir and Varanasi Cantonment Railway Station, July 11, 2006 2006 Mumbai train bombings: Series of 7 train bombing during the evening rush hour in Mumbai, September 8, 2006 Malegaon bombings: Series of bomb blasts in the vicinity of a mosque in Malegaon, February 18, 2007 Samjhauta Express bombings in Haryana, July 25, 2008 Bangalore serial blasts: 8 low intensity bomb blasts in Bangalore, November 26, 2008 Mumbai attack which initiated change, January 1, 2009 Guwahati bombings, April 6, 2010 Maoist attack in Dantewada Chhattisgarh, September 7, 2011 Delhi bombing, February 13, 2012 attacks on Israeli diplomats in Delhi, 2013 Patna bombings, 2013 Hyderabad blasts, 2013 Naxal attack in Darbha valley Chhattisgarh, 2014 Bomb blast at Church Street, Bangalore,

⁸² Mandai or **Mandwi massacre** refers to the general massacre of the [Bengalis](#) of Mandwi village near [Agartala](#) in the Indian state of Tripura on 8 June 1980, by tribal insurgents. According to official figures 255 Bengalis were massacred in Mandwi, while foreign presses, independent sources and eyewitnesses put the figure anywhere between 350 and 400. Many of the victims had their heads crushed and their limbs severed. The children were spiked through. Pregnant women had their stomachs slit open.

2015 Jammu attack, 2016 Pathankot attack in Pathankot Air Force Station, 2016 Handwara attack at rashtriya riffles camp Handwara in J&K, 2017 Amarnath Yatra attack Anantnag, Jammu & Kashmir, 2018 Sunjuwan attack Sunjuwan, Jammu and Kashmir, 2018 Sukma attack Sukma, Chhattisgarh , 2019 Gadchiroli Naxal bombing in Maharashtra, June 2019 Kashmir attack at Awantipora, Jammu & Kashmir, April 2020, Sopore terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir .

In August 2008, National Security Advisor M K Narayanan told that there are as many as 800 terrorist cells operating in the country (The Times of India, 2008, August 12)⁸³. As of 2013, 205 of the country's 608 districts were affected by terrorist activity. Terror attacks caused 231 civilian deaths in 2012 in India, compared to 11,098 terror-caused deaths worldwide, according to the State Department of the United States; or about 2% of global terror fatalities while it accounts for 17.5% of global population. SATP (South Asia Terrorism Portal) has listed 180 terrorist groups that have operated within India over the last 20 years, many of them co-listed as transnational terror networks operating in or from neighboring South Asian countries such as Nepal , Bangladesh and Pakistan. As of 2012, many of these were also listed and banned by the United States and European Union Many of these incidents are found to have complex international linkages and possible connections with transnational organised crime. Indian security agencies are effective in disrupting terror threats despite some gaps in intelligence and information sharing. In 2016, India and the United States signed an arrangement to exchange terrorism screening information, and India continues to work on implementation. The Seventeenth meeting of the U.S.-India Counter Terrorism Joint Working Group and the third session of the U.S.-India Designations Dialogue which was held virtually on September 9-10, 2020 highlighted their efforts to address pressing counter terrorism challenges, including countering the financing and operations of terrorist organizations, countering radicalization and terrorist use of the internet, cross-border movement of terrorists and prosecuting, rehabilitating, and reintegrating returning

⁸³ 800 Terror Cells Active in Country. (2008, August 12) *The Times of India*.

terrorist fighters and family members (MEA, 2020, September 10)⁸⁴. The two sides discussed mutual legal and extradition assistance, bilateral law enforcement training and cooperation. Terrorism is an evolving phenomenon, with terrorist organizations continuously changing their modus operandi, thereby adding to the complexity and challenges faced by criminal justice practitioners.

Why India is the target of so many terrorist attacks? India is embroiled in a number of low-intensity conflicts throughout its territory. Many terrorist incidents are the products of these clashes. The regions most affected are:

Kashmir: An Ideological Conflict Area for Pakistan:

Located at the northern tip of India's territory, this state has been the focal point of a territorial dispute dating back to 1947—when British colonial rule ended—involving India, Pakistan, and China. India claims the entire region as its sovereign territory, though it controls only about half of it. A third of the land is controlled by Pakistan, and China controls the remainder. The quarrel between India and Pakistan has touched off a number of military showdowns. Since the late 1980s, the region has been home to a number of militant groups seeking independence for the region. These groups have extensive support networks in Pakistan, and some accuse Pakistan of using these insurgent groups to wage a proxy war in the region. Over the last decade, this conflict has been linked to some two-thirds of all fatalities from terrorist attacks in India.

Pakistan has consistently projected Kashmir as the 'core issue' of conflict in South Asia. The fact, however, is that the conflict in South Asia cannot be resolved within Kashmir, through any of the projected solutions of communal bifurcation or partition along religious lines. Such 'partition' would, in fact, validate Pakistan's underlying ideology of religious 'ghettoisation', and would be only one stage in the process that can consistently end only with the 'liberation' of all of India's 150 million Muslim's from the 'oppression' of the unbelievers. Indeed, within the pan-Islamist ideology, such a possible outcome would only be a prelude to the wider jihad to bring the

⁸⁴ Joint Statement on U.S.-India Counter Terrorism Joint Working Group and Designations Dialogue(2020, September 10). Media centre. Ministry of External affairs, Government of India. <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/32959/Joint+Statement+on+IndiaUS+Counter+Terrorism+Joint+Working+Group+and+Designations+Dialogue>.

entire world of ‘unbelievers’ within the fold of Islam. The fact is, the confrontation between India and Pakistan is not about territory – in Kashmir or elsewhere. It is an irreducible ideological confrontation between a pluralist secular democracy, on the one hand, and a religious fundamentalist, intolerant and exclusionary ideology, on the other, that denies not only rights, but also basic humanity, to those who do not submit to its belief system. Any ceding of territories in Kashmir to Pakistan, or the creation of a separate Muslim majority state or quasi-state entity would create a vast and uninterrupted area of potential instability and Islamist extremist mobilization extending from West Asia through Central Asia and across Afghanistan and Pakistan into Kashmir. A very substantial proportion of this region, especially extending through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border areas, the Northern Areas of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, and much of any such territories that may be separated from the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir, comprise harsh, inhospitable and poorly policed terrain, which would provide an ideal safe haven for Islamist extremists and terrorists. Populations in the areas illegally occupied by Pakistan have never been granted civil, political or human rights by Pakistan, and remain economically backward and severely deprived even by Pakistani standards. The Northern Areas, particularly, have been separated from the rest of PoK and are not even given limited protection under the Pakistani Constitution. The Shia population who constitute a majority in the Northern Areas has been subjected to repeated and genocidal campaigns of repression – at least one of which was led by General (then Brigadier) Pervez Musharraf himself (South Asia Terrorism Portal, 2021, January 15)⁸⁵.

Andhra Pradesh:

Andhra Pradesh state along the Bay of Bengal coast has endured a number of attacks linked to a group known as Naxalites. Named for the town of Naxalbari where their movement began in 1967, Naxalites are revolutionary communists. Though not all are militant, Human Rights Watch estimates some 10,000 are members of armed militias, which continue to wage a low-intensity insurgency that

⁸⁵ Pakistan: The core issue. (2021, January 15). South Asia Terrorism Portal : *Islamist Extremism & Terrorism in South Asia*. <https://satp.org/islamist-extremism/data/Pakistan-The-Core-Issue>,

claims hundreds of Indian lives. Indian officials have reportedly organized vigilante groups to help oppose Naxalite influence, and human rights groups have criticized the government's methods. Over the years, the Naxalite influence has spread to thirteen of India's twenty-eight states. The swath passes through the woods and jungles of central India, where the group takes refuge and recruits from the region's impoverished population. The states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Orissa have witnessed high levels of Naxalite activity, but Chhattisgarh witnessed the most Maoist-related violence in 2006 with more than 360 deaths.

Northeastern states :

Violence has plagued several states in northeast India ever since the country now known as Bangladesh was partitioned off in 1947. Fighting has been particularly bad in the states of Assam and Nagaland, which over the years have received a large influx of immigrants. Shifting demographics in an area already prone to tribal friction have helped touch off a number of religious and cultural conflicts. Poverty is endemic in the region, and many groups are demanding independence, citing neglect and discrimination on the part of the Indian government as grounds for separation. Militant groups like the United Liberation Front of Assam have targeted politicians and infrastructure in an attempt to force out government influence.

India Counter's Back:

Fighting against terror is not a new to India, The ability to successfully address these challenges lies heavily on the capacity of national criminal justice systems to administer fair and effective justice for perpetrators of terrorist crimes. National actions, coupled with international and regional cooperation are key elements in addressing terrorism effectively. While earlier India was a passive victim of terrorism, with the Surgical strike against a terrorist group based in the then Pakistan-controlled Kashmir in 2016, Indian policymakers, who remained wary of launching a military offensive in fear of conflict escalating into nuclear warfare for which India hasn't been able to

deter jihadi groups and insurgency in Kashmir from launching terror strikes against its territory now changed her own definition and attitude of Combating Terrorist activities. India has been sending a clear message to sponsors of jihadi terrorism in Pakistan. In what is seen as a major change in attitude, the Indian Air Force has been employing Mirage 2000 aircraft in Balakot to bomb terror camps suspected of housing JeM terrorists, trainers, and senior commanders (Patil, 2020)⁸⁶. India is unambiguously demonstrating its resolve to strike Pakistan should it fail to remove the terror camps that reside within its territory. More importantly, the strikes signify India's strong determination to hold Pakistan accountable for its alleged attacks despite knowing the potential risks involved. It also reflect New Delhi's confidence in its military to address Pakistan-based terror groups engaged in sub-conventional warfare and to punish those who have been nurturing and supporting them. The airstrikes apparently saw the Indian military deftly suppress Pakistan's air defence, denying it the opportunity to even react. As a result, India successfully avoided any nuclear escalation during this period of conflict. India finally seems to be consolidating a strategy that combines military action with other tools in its statecraft artillery while slowly learning the 'intricate art' of deterring sub-conventional threats under a nuclear overhang. By placing the onus of nuclear escalation on Pakistan, India seeks to limit its options.

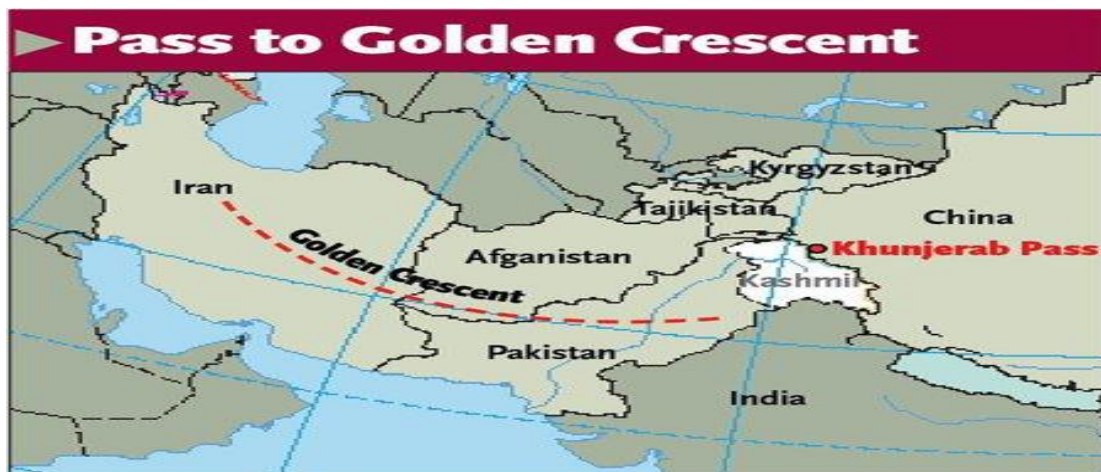
Recently in the BRICS summit, the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) have elaborated this Counter-Terrorism Strategy with the aim of strengthening the security of the BRICS countries. The objective of BRICS counter-terrorism cooperation is to complement and strengthen the existing bilateral and multilateral ties among the BRICS countries, and to make a meaningful contribution to the global efforts of preventing and combating the threat of terrorism. The BRICS countries reaffirm that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and that any act of terrorism, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever motives and purposes, is a crime and has no justification. The BRICS countries also recognize that acts,

⁸⁶ PATIL, K. (2020, MAY 12). *India's new Template for counter Terrorism* . Asia & The Pacific Policy Society. <https://www.policyforum.net/indias-new-template-for-counterterrorism/> .

methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening territorial integrity, security of States, and that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism, including cross-border movement of terrorists. They are also convinced that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group (MEA, 2020, November 07)⁸⁷.

- **Drug Trafficking:**

India has been enduring the menace of drug trafficking for four decades. Although India has been a traditional consumer of opium and cannabis derivatives, the trends and patterns of drug trafficking demonstrate that there is a gradual shift from traditional/natural drugs towards synthetic drugs that are being trafficked and consumed in the country.



Graphics: GT

Figure 7 showing the route of Drug Trading through Golden Crescent

Being closer to the Golden Crescent⁸⁸ and Golden Triangle⁸⁹, India has been vulnerable to the trafficking of narcotics and drugs such as heroin, hashish, and synthetic drugs

⁸⁷ BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy. (2020, November 17). Media Centre. *Ministry of External Affairs*: Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/33204/BRICS_CounterTerrorism_Strategy.

⁸⁸ The Golden Crescent is the name given to one of Asia's two principal areas of illicit opium production (with the other being the Golden Triangle), located at the crossroads of Central, South, and Western Asia.

produced in these areas. Heroin was first trafficked into India in the mid-seventies from the Golden Triangle, which picked up by eighties. However, the quantity of the trafficked heroin through the India-Myanmar border into the Northeast has always been very small as it is meant for local consumption only. The Golden Crescent, on the other hand, has remained the primary source of trafficked heroin in the country since the early eighties when traffickers started rerouting heroin from this region through India following the Iran-Iraq war. Although the end of the war and reopening of the Balkan trafficking route in the late eighties resulted in a dip in heroin trafficking in the country, the trend did not sustain. After a gap of almost two decades, it again picked up in 2012. Increased production of opium in Afghanistan, greater domestic demand in India, and connivance of state government officials and border guarding forces together contributed towards this increase in heroin trafficking, especially in the Punjab sector. Besides heroin, hashish and marijuana are the two derivatives of Cannabis which are extensively trafficked in India. Hashish and marijuana have been traditionally trafficked into India from Nepal. The Golden Crescent has also been a major source of hashish in India. Incidentally, a lot of these narcotics that are trafficked into India not consumed domestically but transit the country for destinations such as Europe, Canada and the United States of America much likely to that of Kazakhstan. Lately, trafficking of cocaine into India has been observed. This is a result of diversification of cocaine markets globally. *Cocaine produced in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia travels to India through West Asia and Gulf Countries.*

Stringent narcotics and drugs laws, rising price of heroin and easy availability of synthetic drugs have propelled a shift in the consumption pattern and hence their trafficking. Amphetamine Type Stimulant (ATS) and Methamphetamine produced in large quantities in South-east Asia especially in the Golden Triangle are trafficked into India through the porous India-Myanmar border. India also manufactures a lot of synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals which are smuggled out of the country. Ephedrine and Pseudoephedrine used for manufacturing ATS and Acetic Anhydride used for the manufacturing of heroin are smuggled into the Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle from India. The estimate of global drug trade is of the order of 360

⁸⁹ The Golden Triangle, so named by a CIA operative, is a region in South-East Asia that's notorious for hosting a global hub of narcotics production

billion dollars contributed by Heroin is 100-110 billion dollars, Cocaine 110-130 billion dollars, Cannabis 75 billion dollars and synthetic drugs 60 billion dollars (Ramesh, 2020)⁹⁰. The world drug report 2020 of the UN states that the economic hardship resulting from Covid-19 has aggravated illegal drug production, supply and consumption making India extremely vulnerable.

Nexus of Criminality and A threat to National Security: Response

This two-way illegal movement of narcotics and drugs pose a significant threat to the national security. For one, the breach of the international borders of the country by drug traffickers implies that the same routes could be used for smuggling in weapons as well as terrorists into the country. In fact, it has been established that the arms and explosives used in the 1993 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai were transported by the Dawood Ibrahim gang through the traditional trafficking routes. Investigations into the Pathankot attack that took place on 31st December 2015 also hinted that the terrorists entered into India from Pakistan through the routes tried and tested by drug traffickers (Ibid 89)⁹¹. The nexus between drug traffickers, criminal networks and terrorists are another potent threat. Exploitation of the trafficking routes by terrorists with the help of well-entrenched criminal networks to infiltrate with arms and explosives adds a critical dimension to the security of the borders. It has been proven that the “D” Company had facilitated activities of Islamist terror groups in India by supporting their cross-border movement and providing them with funds and shelter in the country (Prasad, 2020)⁹².

Further, the money generated by the illegal sale of narcotics and drugs is used for financing terrorist activities. In India, militants have used drug money to finance their ‘struggle’ against the Indian state. It is estimated that 15 per cent of the finances of the J&K militants were

⁹⁰ Ramesh, S T. (2020, September 21). Many facets of global drug trade: India extremely vulnerable. Deccan Herald. <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/panorama/many-facets-of-global-drug-trade-india-extremely-vulnerable-890615.html>

⁹¹ Ibid 89

⁹² Prasad, P. (2020, March 12). Revisiting the 1993 Mumbai Serial Bomb Blasts, 27 Years On . The Quint. <https://www.thequint.com/explainers/1993-bomb-mumbai-blasts-abu-salem-tada-dawood-pakistan-isi-yakub-memon>

generated through the sale of drugs (Prajapati, 2020)⁹³. In the Northeast, while the smaller insurgent organizations are directly involved in drug trafficking to generate quick funds, the bigger insurgent organizations collect protection money from the drug peddlers in lieu of safe passage of drug consignments through their territory.

Last but not least, large-scale availability of narcotics and drugs encourages demand for narcotics and drugs by domestic population, consumption of which produces dysfunctional behavior thereby creating law and order problem in the society. It also causes a huge economic drain on the country through loss of production and diversion of resources for caring and rehabilitation of the drug addicts, etc. Drug trafficking also has a direct bearing on the political process as drug cartels subvert, penetrate and further corrupt state institutions to control the illegal drug trade.

Thus, given these challenges, India has adopted a comprehensive approach to reducing supply as well as demand for narcotics and drugs. The approach comprises four elements – a) enacting legislation such as the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS)

b) Ensuring physical security of the borders and coasts by strengthening patrolling and surveillance;

c) Eliciting cooperation from neighbors by entering into several bilateral and multilateral agreements on prevention of illicit traffic of drugs and chemicals, and;

d) co-operating with voluntary organizations in the endeavor to prevent abuse of narcotics and synthetic drugs.

India – Kazakhstan on convergence of interests:

Focusing on bilateral mechanism, India has expressed its readiness to find pragmatic solutions to all outstanding issues. India has been a member of various International Organizations and has signed multi-lateral agreements on being active member to combat

⁹³Prajapati, N. (2020). “Legal Service India”, Drug Trafficking in India.
<http://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-2839-drug-trafficking-in-india.html>

traditional security issues for peaceful co-existence. Combating nontraditional threats and challenges, especially those supported by external forces, is India's uppermost security concern. India has therefore been supportive of initiatives in this area launched by the United Nations. It has supported Security Council Resolution 1373, a milestone resolution aimed at combating terrorism, and in 1986, introduced *The Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism*, which was further proposed in 2019 but has not yet been implemented as there is no unanimity on the definition of terrorism among the member states. To it India responded, that *Terrorism is antithetical to everything. It is antithetical to peace and security, to development and to human rights, yet nations seem contented only to condemn terrorism and not do anything more.* India has always been supported internationally for its fight against terrorism. At the regional level, India and the Central Asian states have a common stake in peace and stability in the region which was established when all the *Five presidents of Central Asian countries visited India soon after their independence in the 90's seeking experience, assistance and friendship thereby resisting extremism.* This eased India's concerns and allowed the commonality of interests thus affirming to become a valuable component of India's new ties with the Central Asian states. *India built its relations with the Central Asian states on the basis of their aspiration to become more open and progressive societies, as well as their commitment to secularism and to democracy.* Beyond this, India and the Central Asian states share common views on the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking.

Yet, India's engagement with Central Asia was not as vigorous as it ought to have been. Several factors hampered a more vibrant engagement with Central Asia in the early years as, the Indian government had not anticipated the break-up of the Soviet Union, with which it had built up cordial and enduring ties over the years. *In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet collapse the Indian government had two major concerns:*

First, it wanted to restore its ties with Russia and put them on a new basis. This was essential in view of India's substantial cooperation and interdependence with Russia in the area of defense.

Second, India wanted to bring its policy towards the new states of Central Asia into a coherent relation with its all-important policy towards South Asia. India endeavored to embrace ties with these new states in such a way as to reinforce its abiding concerns in South Asia. It was for this

reason that India's main focus was on countering Pakistan's attempts to acquire strategic depth in Afghanistan and to do so in such a way as to constrain Pakistan's ongoing militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. In pursuing these goals, India continued to treat diplomatic exchanges as an important policy tool. Also relevant was the fact that India had just launched its own economic reforms, which placed great demands on resources and the government's attention. All these factors impinged on Indian policy makers as they moved to open and expand their contacts with the new states of Central Asia. As a consequence, it was simply not possible for India to devote to the task the attention it required and which it amply deserved in light of India's deep contacts and affinities there. In sum, while other major powers had already established a strong presence in the region and were deeply involved there, particularly in the areas of extractive industries and transport, India's presence in Central Asia remained minimal and its policy largely reactive,

The main challenge that India and Kazakhstan has been facing is religious extremism and terrorism, and in all cases this emanates from the same source making India to establish *Joint Working Groups* (JWG) for Responses to Non-Traditional Threats & Challenges on counter-terrorism with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in 2003 and with Kazakhstan in 2004 (The Economic Times, 2015, July 08)⁹⁴. The aim of each JWG was to review and analyze the regional security scenario, coordinate information, and share experience. The JWG framework also envisages the training of paramilitary personnel. As strategic partners, India and Kazakhstan held the 4th Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism at New Delhi on 03 May 2017 chaired by Shri Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary from India and by H.E. Mr. A.D. Smagulov, Ambassador on Special Missions delegation from Kazakhstan. Both sides assessed and exchanged views on prevailing terrorist threats in their respective regions including state-sponsored, cross-border terrorism in the Af-Pak region. The delegations held discussions on the current challenges posed by various terrorist entities, radicalization, Foreign Terrorist Fighters, drug trafficking and misuse of cyber space for terrorist purposes. They also emphasized the importance of strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation through exchange of information, capacity building, mutual legal assistance, sharing of best practices on countering violent extremism and cooperating in platforms like United Nations and the SCO(Shanghai Cooperation

⁹⁴ India, Kazakhstan sign five key agreements to strengthen bilateral ties(2015, July 08). The Economic Times.

Organization) (MEA, 2017, May 03)⁹⁵. India had also extended help in training the forces of the Northern Alliance. A valuable input into Indian policy is the developing *defense cooperation between India and Afghanistan's northern neighbors*. Military-Technical Cooperation Agreements have been signed with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. These agreements provide for the construction of training facilities, the purchase of defense equipment and the regular exchange of high level military delegations. The possibility of Indian involvement in upgrading and modernizing defense-related industries in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan is also to be explored. In 2001 the Shanghai Five evolved into the *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* (SCO), the agenda of which includes both security and economic issues to which India is a permanent member now since 2017. Among its structures, the SCO has established the *Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)* primarily to deal with unconventional challenges. Another regional security arrangement is the *Collective Security Treaty Organization. (CSTO)*, a Russian initiative aimed primarily at integrating its members' defence sectors. At a Moscow summit in February, 2009, the CSTO formed its own Collective Fast Reaction Force to deal with threats and challenges to which India is not a member.⁹⁶ The existing regional groupings in Central Asia act as a limiting factor on India's efforts to intensify its engagement. While the *South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)* has not emerged as an effective grouping with respect to security matters, it has only initiated some people oriented programs in such areas as the alleviation of poverty, transport connectivity, education, and health care.

Now that Afghanistan has become a full member of SAARC, the possibility of redefining the grouping as a series of contiguous states has arisen. This could be an advantageous development. Besides broadening its interests in Central Asia, India has taken a major stake in the development of an independent, democratic and secular Afghanistan which is the epicenter of problems. Indian policy in Afghanistan not only emphasizes institutional and infrastructure development but also includes a strong element of counterterrorism. Thus Indian policy in both

⁹⁵ 4th meeting of India-Kazakhstan Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism. (2017, May 03). New Delhi : Media Centre. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

⁹⁶ The CSTO(collective security treaty organization) is a military alliance of Russia and other countries who were part of the soviet union before 1991. The **CSTO** was established in 1992. India by provisions of the treaty if becomes a member to it then shall cease to have independent foreign policy. so it should not become a member of any military alliances

Central Asia and Afghanistan consists of an integrated effort to counter terrorist forces and develop viable economies that can provide people with livelihoods and thereby undercut popular support for extremism. India is also a member of the *Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia* (CICA), a Kazakh initiative. Though CICA is a forum for discussion, in the long term it aims at broadening the parameters of security by involving states outside the Central Asian region.

A quite popular among Indian analysts, is that stability and internal security of all Central Asian states highly depends on external factors, such as the Great Game of great powers. This is, of course, a real and serious concern for Central Asian states. Nevertheless, the level of economic, political and military dependence of these states on outside powers differs on various counts. In economic sphere, Kazakhstan plays a role of influencing power in respect of its neighbors without having any counter impact. The purpose of exerting such influence on the part of Kazakhstan is to prevent destabilization caused by bad economic conditions in neighboring states, which to a certain extent, is similar to the position of Russia in Central Asia and India in South Asia. In this regard, it could be said that India, which usually interacts with Russia on matters related to Central Asia, can now cooperate in some spheres with Kazakhstan also to deal with other Central Asian states. In 2009, with the invitation of the president of Kazakhstan in India's Republic Day and the later honour by visiting the same highlighted the relationship shared between the two nations which further strengthened with the declaration on strategic partnership between the two (Official site of the President of Kazakhstan, 2009, January 26)⁹⁷. Kazakhstan is distinguished by its diplomacy and multi-vector foreign policy in ensuring its security. Both Kazakhstan and India have enjoyed absolutely peaceful and smooth relations, and insecurity dilemma has no place in their bilateral relations. Neo-realist view may support that Kazakhstan's security concerns cover India. Afghanistan, terrorism, drug trafficking, military and technical interactions are those security issues where Kazakh and Indian interests meet. Both countries are taking part in reconstruction projects in Afghanistan which is a common security concern. Astana and New Delhi believe that Afghanistan has to serve as a bridge of interaction and cooperation between Central Asia and South Asia. Further during the official visit of former Prime Minister of India Sri Manmohan Singh in 2011 to Kazakhstan on discussing about

⁹⁷ President Nursultan Nazarbayev Participates in the Republic Day Celebrations Devoted to the India's National Holiday in New Delhi. (2009, January 26). *Official site of the President of Kazakhstan*.

strengthening ties with Kazakhstan beyond energy announcing a joint action plan for 2011-2014 marked an increased prominence of Kazakhstan on India's foreign policy agenda. It encouraged the adoption of a broader strategic framework. The Joint Action Plan for 2011-2014 details specific milestones in a range of bilateral cooperation areas including hydrocarbons and nuclear energy as well as the promotion of common security interests e.g. agreements on cyber security, mutual legal assistance, and fighting narco-trafficking as both experience the threat of Drug Trafficking through Golden Crescent (the Silk route) . The Indo-Kazakh Defence Cooperation is carried out under the framework of an agreement on '*Defence and Military Technical cooperation*' signed in July 2015 during the visit of The Prime Minister of India to Kazakhstan on 8 July 2015. The agreement includes various areas including conduct of joint training, exercises, military-technical cooperation, UN peacekeeping. Kazakh Armed Forces Unit underwent training on peacekeeping operations in India in April May 2018 for deployment under an Indian Battalion at the *United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon* (UNIFIL). Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, the then Defence Minister visited Kazakhstan from 2nd to 4th of October, 2018 to flag off the first rotation of the Kazakh contingent jointly deployed with the Indian Battalion in UNIFIL, the historic first in the annals of UN Peacekeeping (India - Kazakhstan Bilateral Relations., 2020, March 12)⁹⁸. Recently, in 2019, a joint military exercise between India and Kazakhstan with focus on counter terrorism operations began in Pithorgarh. Around 60 soldiers from both Indian and Kazakhstan would share their experiences of counter terrorism operations during the exercise (The Economic Times, 2019, October 03)⁹⁹. Both India and Kazakhstan expressed interest in the early settlement of the Afghanistan situation and positively assessed the contribution by both countries to the reconstruction in Afghanistan. They underscored the importance of eliminating the narco-trafficking infrastructure that still existed in Afganistan. The sides further assessed that for peace and stability to be restored, it was essential that renewed efforts were made to sufficiently build up the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. Afghanistan is therefore the epicenter around which the peace and stability of Central Asian as well South Asian Countries exists which definitely is largely affected by foreign policies of the countries like USA Russia and China.

⁹⁸ India - Kazakhstan Bilateral Relations. (2020, March 12).*Embassy of India*.
https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Kazakhstan_2020.pdf.

⁹⁹ 12 day India – Kazakhstan joint military exercise begins. (2019, October 03). *The Economic Times*.

Russia and China factor in India-Kazakhstan Relations

Politically Bi-Lateral visits between Astana and New Delhi has always been on the cards where the two nations have been a consistent supporter of each other for example Kazakhstan's support on India's permanent membership in SCO (Shanghai Co-operation Organization) to India consistent support to Kazakhstan's initiative on Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and is actively participating in the process. Kazakhstan supports India's permanent membership in an expanded UNSC. Further in the arena of Trade and economy the two nations have been supportive to one another while Kazakhstan is India's largest trading partner in Central Asia, Indian Agro based products on the other hand are promoted by APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) . Further in the field of energy India is a key importer of uranium which is found in abundance in Kazakhstan. It may be here recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid stress on increasing energy demands of the world and the need for a gradual shift of economies' to green energy and energy efficiency in accordance with the climate change agenda based on the Paris Agreement(IEA, 2020)¹. But he also stressed on moving to transparent market for both oil and gas, with the view to serve the energy needs of humanity in an optimal manner.

Prelude: While India and Kazakhstan have always maintained a friendly and an amicable relationship still India deters to have a strong impact or position in Central Asia unlike culturally which is again important considering the “soft power” politics but strategically India still relies on Russia to establish its importance over Central Asian republics at large and over Kazakhstan in particular. While India could only attract the nation states through its Cultural fields until 9/11, which changed the international perspective towards India which has been combating terror internally as well as externally and the only developing nation which was with United Nations in its peace keeping missions to combat lawlessness and restore peace and harmony in various nation states around the world.

¹ India 2020 Energy policy review. (2020). International Energy Agency. https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-01/IEA-India%202020-In-depth-EnergyPolicy_0.pdf.

The most crucial problem that hinders the growth in India Kazakhstan relationship is absence of direct borders between India and Central Asian Republics in general and Kazakhstan in particular and the road to Kazakhstan from India passes through Pakistan , Afghanistan and China. While India's relation with Afghanistan is healthy as its helping Afghanistan in its nation building process and restructuring of its economy, defence and other vital sectors , after the NATO and USA forces left Afghanistan considering the immense protest against the war on terror post 9/11 as well as trying for its restructure , India on the other hand finds its principal threat from the terrorism brewing in Kashmir(Pakistan occupied Kashmir) and from the volatile areas of Aksai Chinn, Arunachal Pradesh and Ladhak mainly land acquisition threats from China. China also hinders in the building of a strong relationship between India and Kazakhstan which is well proven on China's unwillingness for India being a permanent member of SCO.

Again on the other hand with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the newly independent nation states were although developing bilateral and multilateral relationships with developed as well as developing nations to strengthen their position in the New Great Game but could not liberate themselves from the Russian Influence. The Central Asian countries remain strongly attached to Russia in the fields of security, economy, and culture, although they have become independent and enjoys full sovereignty. In order to enhance their own national identity, some Central Asian countries have endeavored to "de-Russianize" themselves, such as limiting the use of Russian language and promoting local languages in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, albeit on the precondition of not offending the Russian government.

In this context, increasing trade with China and cooperating with the BRI (Belt and Road Initiative)- in other words enhancing the influence of China -not only accords with the economic interests of Central Asian nations and their political elites, but also indirectly promotes their nation building. Therefore it is very crucial understand the chords the Central Asian countries especially Kazakhstan shares with the super powers of Asia in order to channelize India's Central Asia Policy.

A Theoretical Approach of Russia, China and India's Influence in Central Asia:

Central Asia has been called “the global chessboard.”(Sazanov, 2008)². Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the newly formed Central Asian republics urgently needed loans and investments in order to jumpstart their economies. However, they fell short of the World Bank and IMF's requirements, especially in the area of human rights (Dollar, Thornton, 2017)³. as most of the Central Asian republics continued to remain autocratic following their independence, and shared political, ideological and economic legacies with the former Soviet Union; the multilateral lending agencies did not view them as part of the Global South, which was deemed as priority for assistance.

China took advantage of the situation for its hegemonic pursuits. The concept of ‘hegemon’ or ‘hegemony’ dates back to Ancient Greece and was given theoretical dimension by Antonio Gramsci in his prison writings in the 1950s⁴. Since then, scholars of international relations have suggested that a hegemon can use three different strategies to hold sway over another state: being a benevolent hegemon, or a coercive-assertive hegemon, or a self-controlled-status-quo-driven hegemon. The benevolent hegemon creates and imposes norms and rules; such benevolence may be seen, for instance, in free trade mechanisms adopted by countries like the United States.(Martin, 2006)³. The coercive-assertive hegemon, meanwhile, as the name suggests will be aggressive and will aim to dominate another state under its influence. The self-controlled-status-quo-driven hegemon is motivated by its own state-centric economic intentions and is interested purely on its own goals in security and economic self-aggrandizement .⁵ By strategy, a hegemon dominates a region or an area by expanding its sphere of influence by simultaneously

².Sazanov, K B. (2008). *The Grand Chatrang Game*, Author house UK.

³ Dollar, D & Thornton, J L. (2017). *Is China's Development Finance a Challenge to the International Order*, Brookings Institution.

⁴Hegemony implies that some power or authority (most usually a state) is able to determine the operation of the system by setting the rules as well as determining to some extent the external relations between member states, while leaving them domestically independent.

⁵ Danner, L K; Martin, F E. (2019). *China's hegemonic intentions and trajectory: Will it opt for benevolent, coercive, or Dutch- style hegemony?*, Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies.

ensuring that the involvement of other countries in the region reduce their involvement in the area or the country under its influence.

India, for its part, has so far chosen to take the ‘constructivist’⁶ approach. Constructivists like Griffiths and Callaghan insist that international relations cannot be reduced to rational action and interaction within material constraints or within institutional constraints at the international and national levels (as argued by some liberal internationalists).”(Griffiths, Callaghan, 2004)⁷Defining constructivism, Wendt acknowledges that “the character of international life is determined by the beliefs and expectations that states have about each other and these are constituted largely by social rather than material structures.”(Wendt, 1999)⁸Therefore, according to constructivists, there are no interests based exclusively on economic or security interests. Interests always assume the establishment of relations with certain states but interact with each other according to their identities(Abdulahmidova, 2009)⁹. Constructivism considers international politics as a sphere of interaction which is shaped by the actors’ identities and practices and influenced by constantly changing normative institutional structure. Though they play a role in this relationship, national interests and identities are intertwined and are shaped by interactions with other states (Goldstein)¹⁰.

Influence of Russia on Central Asian States especially Kazakhstan and its Impact:

⁶ The concept of constructivism in international relations was introduced by Nicholas Greenwood Onuf in 1989.

⁷ Griffiths, M. & Callaghan, T O. (2004). *Constructivism. International Relations: The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge.

⁸ Wendt, A. (1999). *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

⁹ Abdulhamidova, N. (2009, January). *Constructivism. The European Union-Central Asia: in the light of the New Strategy*, p. 22.

¹⁰ Goldstein, J S. (7thed.), *Constructivism. International Relations*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, India, (pp. 93-94.).

Though Kazakhstan is often seen as Moscow's best partner, its relationship with Russia remains largely overlooked. There is a general overview of Russia's relations with all of Central Asia which is dominated by notions of Russia's push for "authoritarian diffusion", Astana's ambivalent management of Eurasianism, the economic implications of the Eurasian Economic Union and the role of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and SCO but the precise drivers of Kazakhstani behavior vis-à-vis Russia are rarely addressed. Research on Russia's influence in Europe has been growing rapidly, but Central Asia – and, more specifically, Kazakhstan – continues to be an understudied space where Russia's influence is taken for granted. The only two aspects of the Kazakhstan-Russia relationship to have been partially studied are the Russian minority – a topic that was mostly considered in the 1990s and disappeared in the 2000s before re-emerging after Crimea's annexation and Russian media influence, which has become a fashionable but superficially-studied topic since the 2014 Ukrainian crisis.

Russia's goal is to maintain Kazakhstan as a close partner in all spheres – political, strategic, economic, and cultural. Moscow's status as the pivotal state of the Eurasian space cannot be validated without Kazakhstan playing the role of loyal second, even more so now that Ukraine is lost to Russia for the near future and Belarus is becoming a rather capricious ally. Based on the existing literature, different vectors that might yield Russia-favorable behavior by Kazakhstan can be looked into: exogenous ones that Russia actively and passively generates (what is conventionally referred to as power or influence) and endogenous ones that are passively or even actively generated within Kazakhstan itself. Discussing Russia's economic and strategic links with Kazakhstan, the issue of the Russian minority, the status of the Russian language, Russian media presence, Russia's governmental and non-governmental networks, and the "payoff" of the latter three vectors: popular Russophilia¹¹ in Kazakhstan, by distinguishing between active and passive forces, as well as between exogenous and endogenous ones, it is

¹¹ Russophilia is "Russian influence" which has been invading the think tank world. Yet the concept of influence must be deployed with care. Analysts have frequently assumed that, when states do things thought favourable to Russia, it must be because Moscow has either forced them to act in that manner, or has actively manipulated their domestic politics so that they do so. Left largely unconsidered are the various other reasons that one state might act in a manner desirable to another.

hoped to achieve a more nuanced and theoretically-articulated picture of Russia's "influence" in Kazakhstan.

Economy:

From the collapse of the USSR until 2010, from the economic point of view Russia's share of Kazakhstan's imports declined continuously. The decline has since ended and partly reversed, with the result that, in 2017, Kazakhstan received 39% of its imports from Russia (Diesen, 2020)¹² The share of Kazakhstani exports going to Russia is far smaller (9%), but this could hardly be otherwise, as Kazakhstan's exports are mainly fossil fuels, raw minerals, and metals that Russia also exports. Kazakhstan does remain highly dependent on Russia for its oil exports to other countries, especially those in Europe. Despite Astana's efforts to diversify to China and through the Caspian-Caucasus-Turkey route, the vast majority of its energy exports – 85% of its oil and virtually all of its gas, according to Kazakhstan's Vice-Minister of Energy in 2015 – still transit through Russia (Orazgaliyev, 2017)¹³. Considering Russo-Kazakhstani ties in more detail, many Russian corporations have substantial assets in Kazakhstan or business relations with Kazakhstani companies. Lukoil and Rosneft have stakes in several major Kazakhstani energy concerns.¹⁴ Russian Railroads is one of the main partners of Kazakhstan TemirZholy, and Rosatom cooperates closely with Kazatomprom. Roskosmos is highly active in Kazakhstan, mainly due to the Baikonur Cosmodrome. Russian defense firms, such as Almaz-Antey, Sukhoy, Irkut, and Uralvagonzavod, partner with the Kazakhstani military-industrial complex. Russian agribusiness firms are also well represented on the Kazakhstani agricultural market.

In short, Kazakhstan's economic ties with Russia are undoubtedly more limited than they were when the two were part of the same country. Nevertheless, they remain relatively

¹² Diesen, G. (2020, May 08). Kazakhstan: Imagining Globalisation 2.0. The Astana Times.

¹³ Competition for pipeline export routes in the Caspian region: The new Great Game or the new Silk Road?. (2017, September). Cambridge Journal of Eurasian Studies; Research Gate.

¹⁴ The Kumkol, Tengiz, Karachaganak, and Kurmangazy fields, and the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) that connects the Tengiz field to Novorossiysk.

strong, and their trajectories over the years have been basically constant. Perhaps most interestingly, both the Russian and the Kazakhstani governments have recently taken major steps to ensure the endurance of these economic ties – and by means that further increase their interdependence. The large uptick in Kazakhstan’s imports from Russia in 2011 coincided with the establishment of the Customs Union between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. The slower but continual growth in Russian imports since 2015 follows the foundation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) (Shadrina, 2018)¹⁵. As an economic union, the EAEU substantially limits its members’ autonomy in certain economic spheres (though not in fiscal or monetary policy) and has mainly had the effect of harmonizing external tariffs and abolishing internal customs. Kazakhstani authorities have pushed for Eurasian regional integration since the dissolution of the USSR – more consistently, in fact, than Russia has. But since the launch of the EAEU, Astana has also sent clear signals regarding the limits of integration that it will accept: for instance, rejecting a joint parliament, joint citizenship, or a common currency. (Stevens, 2020)¹⁶ The economic vector promoting Russia-favorable Kazakhstani behavior is thus significant yet limited. The EAEU seems to have halted but not substantially reversed the decline in Russia’s economic predominance. (Libman, 2017)¹⁷ To a large extent, the economic vector is a “natural” consequence of Kazakhstan’s geographic position and the economic profiles of it and Russia; it could therefore be considered passively generated, both endogenously by Kazakhstan and exogenously by Russia. However, both the Russian and Kazakhstani governments also support a certain level of economic integration, meaning that they are both actively strengthening this vector by linking the two economies institutionally and thus further strengthening raw economic ties. The consequence is the stable or increasing importance of Russia to Kazakhstan in an economic sense, which in turn generates further Russia-favorable behavior by incentivizing

¹⁵ Shadrina, E. (2018, January). *The Common Gas Market of the Eurasian Economic Union*. Slavica Publishers. Vol. 7, No. 1. (pp105-138).

¹⁶ Stevens, C. A. (2020, February 13). *Russia–Kazakhstan Relations in the Early Post-Soviet Era: Explaining the Roots of Cooperation*. Asia Studies Published online.

¹⁷ Libman, A. (2017, February). *Russian Power Politics and the Eurasian Economic Union: The Real and the Imagined. (Russia’s Dual Roles in Global Politics as a Traditional Great Power and a Rising Power)*. Vol. 2 (1). (pp.81-103).

further economic integration – but, as yet, not political integration – and conceivably by providing Russia with leverage to incentivize or coerce behavior desired from Astana.

Military:

Kazakhstan's military dependence on Russia reflects the alignment of Kazakhstani and Russian interests, indicates the strength of vectors yielding Russia-favorable Kazakhstani behavior (insofar as they sustain the dependence), and itself constitutes another such vector. Kazakhstan is under Russia's military protection, including its nuclear umbrella – Kazakhstan denuclearized in the early 1990s and is part of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty – and is a key member of the CSTO.(kazakhstan-nuclear-disarmament, 2019)¹⁸ The regime in Astana believes that in the event of an attack, whether a conventional attack by another state or a non-conventional one such as mass terrorist actions, Russia would rescue it through CSTO mechanisms such as the Collective Rapid Reaction Force. Moreover, since 2013, Russia and Kazakhstan have pursued a “Unitary Regional Anti-Air Defense System”(Gavrilov, 2013). (Novosti, 2014)¹⁹.Kazakhstan also relies heavily upon Russian assistance in two other domains: training and equipment procurement. Russia remains the main external actor training Kazakhstani officers and soldiers, both within the CSTO framework and at a bilateral level, through the Ministries of Defense, Interior, and Emergency Situations, the FSB.(Gorenburg, 2014)²⁰and the National Guard. Kazakhstan provides about one-third of all foreign officers trained in Russian military academies (Peyrouse, 2007)²¹ with the result that more than half of the Kazakhstani army is now trained at least partly in Russia. Russia provides almost all of the foreign training received by some sectors of the military, including the young Kazakhstani navy

¹⁸ *Nuclear Disarmament Kazakhstan*. (2019, January 02). In NTI. <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/kazakhstan-nuclear-disarmament/>.

¹⁹ *Russia in the middle east*. (December, 2018). Washington DC, United States: The Jamestown Foundation.

²⁰Gorenburg, D. (2014, January). *External Support for Central Asian Military and Security Forces*. Sipri. Open Society Foundations.

²¹ Peyrouse, S. (2007, May). Nationhood and the minority question in Central Asia. The Russians in Kazakhstan. *Europe Asia Studies* Vol.59(3): (pp481-501).

and air force. (Ibid, 22)²² Almost thirty years after independence, Kazakhstan's military equipment is almost exclusively of Soviet or Russian origin, and the country is largely dependent upon Russia for the repair of old equipment and procurement of new. Weighted by value, about 82% of Kazakhstan's post-independence arms imports have come from Russia, including 78% in 2010–2017. (Sipri, 2018)²³ The Kazakhstani military-industrial complex is intimately linked to the Russian one: it operates mostly using Russian technologies and its employees are trained in Russia. (Paul, Nicole, 2018)²⁴ Kazakhstan's military doctrines, issued in 2000, 2007, 2011, and 2017, suggest that Astana has increasingly come to view Russia as its key partner and the US as an inconvenience, if not an outright threat (or, conceivably, that Russia's military-strategic influence over Kazakhstan has become so great that Astana wishes to project that position even if it does not actually hold it). Russia is continuously named first among Kazakhstan's military partners. Tertiary and then secondary priority was given to cooperation with China – at least until 2017, when mention of it vanished. Similarly, the US and its allies were given secondary preference in 2000 and tertiary preference in 2007 and 2011.

Russian Language reshaping Public Opinion:

In the educational system, though Russian has progressively lost status in favor of Kazakh. 55% of Kazakhstani students were studying in Kazakh and 41% in Russian in 2003. Ten years later, in 2013, 66% were studying in Kazakh and just 31% in Russian. This 10% decrease in Russian reflects the ongoing demographic change in Kazakhstan. Yet the share of Russian-language students has held constant since 2013. Given ethnic Russians' continuous decline as a share of Kazakhstan's population, this can only have taken place because a growing number of ethnic Kazakhs or minorities are now studying in Russian. In sum, the Russian language can be categorized as an *endogenous vector* that passively or naturally originates within Kazakhstan,

²² Ibid 22

²³ Wezeman P. D. et al. (2020, March). *Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2019*. Stockholm international peace research institute. Sipri.

²⁴ Paul, S & Nicole, N G. (2018, February 28). *Cooperation and Competition: Russia and China in Central Asia, the Russian Far East, and the Arctic*.

that is either accepted or at least not actively suppressed by the Kazakhstani government, and that is rising or at least maintaining a high degree of strength. Yet there is a lack of evidence of it having a direct effect on the objectives/perceptions or situation of the Kazakhstani government that might yield Russia-favorable behavior. The only result clearly attributable to the Russian language's strong position in Kazakhstan is its facilitation of Russian media influence, insofar as Russian-origin media does promote Russia-favorable behavior.

Russian Language Media reshaping public opinion:

By reshaping Kazakhstani public opinion, the vector of Russian-origin media can potentially alter the situation of the Kazakhstani government such that Russia-favorable behavior is incentivized. Media originating from Russia could also directly affect the interests/perceptions of the Kazakhstani government itself, or indirectly affect them insofar as public opinion “trickles up.” Russia's media presence in Kazakhstan can be divided into three vectors:

- Public diplomacy directed at foreign audiences such as Kazakhstan. This included Russia Today, but it ceased broadcasting in Kazakhstan in 2018 and no longer has a bureau in the country (Almaty, 2017)²⁵ as it refused to register as an in-country legal entity, as required of foreign media by the Kazakhstani authorities (Business in Kazakhstan, Facebook)²⁶. Sputnik, by contrast, has become one of the most popular websites in Kazakhstan. As of 12 March 2019, it had the sixth-most visits of all Kazakhstani news websites within the preceding month, and the second-most unique users (Almaty, 2017)²⁷.

²⁵ Almaty, A. G. (2017). Intersections-between-public-diplomacy-international-development-case-studies-convergingRT, Sputnik and Russian Soft Power in Kazakhstan (and Central Asia): Taken for Granted? . uscpubliediplomacy. <http://uscpubliediplomacy.org/resource/intersections-between-public-diplomacy-international-development-case-studies-convergingRT, Sputnik and Russian>.

²⁶ Business in Kazakhstan. In facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/start.a.business.in.kazakhstan/posts/state-registration-of-legal-entities-record-registration-of-their-branches-and-r/110978307339839/>.

²⁷ Freedom on the net. (2020). In Freedom house. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kazakhstan/freedom-net/2020>.

- Russian media that is state-controlled but not actively directed at foreign audiences. This includes an important but declining share of the programming on Kazakhstani channels, which is originally produced for Russian domestic channels.
- Non-governmental cultural products that, like the second category, find audiences abroad more or less incidentally. This is the case for a lot of Russian cultural products, from literature to music, which aim at domestic audiences but also find success abroad.

Only the *first vector* constitutes exogenous influence upon Kazakhstan that is actively produced by Russia and intended to “influence” Kazakhstani public opinion. The latter two vectors are also exogenous, but are aimed at Russian audiences and emitted by Russia only passively. The *second vector* is difficult to study. Of the 15 free channels available in Kazakhstan, three are wholly funded by the Kazakhstani state, one is sponsored by CIS institutions and the other 11 are of mixed production (both Russian and Kazakhstani programming) and bilingual. The most popular channel in Kazakhstan, PervyiKanalYevraziya, owned 80% by the Kazakhstani government and 20% by the Russian government, has long led in rebroadcasting Russian programming. (Kantar, 2020)²⁸ But the share of Russian-origin content is declining: In 2014, Russian-origin broadcasts comprised only 24% of its programming (Kiselev, 2014)²⁹ As an example of the results of this situation, in the last week of October 2017, the ten most popular programs broadcast on the seven most popular mixed-production channels were all in Russian. Of these, three were from Russia, five from Kazakhstan, and two were Western films.³⁰ Higher trust in national media during a major geopolitical crisis is accompanied by lower trust regarding everyday economic or political news that can be cross-checked against personal experience. In 2015, the US Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG 2015) and Gallup found that the majority of Kazakhstanis consider Russian media to be highly reliable, and significantly more so than

²⁸ Kantar . (2020). In Kantar TNS Central Asia. <http://www.tns-global.kz>

²⁹ Kiselev , A. (2014). Russian-origin broadcasts comprised only 24% of its programming. & Francis online. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15387216.2019.1645033?journalCode=rege20>.

³⁰ This analysis is based on a survey of the seven main television channels in the period between October 23 and 29 October 2017.

Western media (74% against 26%) (Zakem, 2018) ³¹ . The trust issue is substantially affected by ethnicity: ethnic Russians tend to trust channels from Russia more than ethnic Kazakhs do.

Russia's major presence on the Kazakhstani media landscape can be explained by several factors: first, the high quality of Russian state-sponsored media, especially cinema, miniseries, entertainment shows, etc. Second, the relatively low quality of Kazakhstani state-sponsored media, even if this is slowly changing and Third, the vitality of non-state-sponsored Russian culture, from literature and pop stars to bloggers, which attracts readers and viewers from abroad. In sum, Russian media can be defined as a major force in Kazakhstan. By communicating Russian viewpoints and developing Kazakhstanis' identification with Russia, it alters the situation of the Kazakhstani government such that it may be driven or constrained to act in a more Russia-favorable manner, and potentially alters the interests/perspectives of the government itself. Though the media require a receptive audience to have any effect – and the studies do not confirm that effect – thus defining it to be ultimately an exogenous source of Russian influence, one that is generated both passively by Russian society and actively by the Russian government (Voloshin, 2017)³².

Political:

Kazakhstani governmental and nongovernmental institutions share numerous ties with their Russian counterparts. These ties allow Russian and Kazakhstani actors to exchange views and interests and, conceivably, to develop mutual identification at the state-to-state level. At the elite level, many figures within the two presidential administrations and Security Councils act as conduits of Moscow's interests in Kazakhstan, and vice versa. The two countries employ myriad PR firms to bolster these conduits. At an institutional level, Kazakhstan's Majilis has direct institutional ties with the Russian State Duma, and its Senate with the Federation Council;

³¹ Zakem, V. (2018, January). Mapping Russian Media Network: Media's Role in Russian Foreign Policy and Decision-making. Russia: CAN.

³² Voloshin, G. (2017, May 10). Kazakhstan Seeks to Reduce Russian Media Influence Amid Moscow-West Spat. Eurasia: Eurasia Daily Monitor. Vol. 14(62).

direct, faction-to-faction meetings occur regularly at multiple levels (Bowyer, 2008)³³. Eurasian institutions such as The Astana-based Eurasian Development Bank, The Eurasian Economic Commission, The Fund for the Development of Eurasian Cooperation, and The Eurasian Women's Forum also help unite Kazakhstani and Russian policy-making circles. (Laurelle, Royce, Bayssembayev, 2019)³⁴ Indeed, Russian-Kazakhstani governmental cooperation provides Kazakhstan with numerous benefits, including normative ones. Russia's emphasis on stability, state authority, and non-interference suits the Kazakhstani government better than political designs advanced by any other external actors, especially Western ones that prioritize democratic and liberal standards. For instance, the CIS Election Monitoring Organization (CIS-EMO) counterbalances the OSCE's (Organisation of Security and Co-Operation in Europe) and other Western institutions narrative on the lack of good governance and transparent elections in Kazakhstan. This and other fruits of Russo-Kazakhstani cooperation may potentially further develop Kazakhstani elites' positive attitude toward Russia. These contacts at the political elite level are reinforced in society more broadly. Because the Kazakh and Russian worlds have been interacting for centuries and belonged to the same state entity for over 150 years, people-to-people relations are quite dense. For Kazakhstan, the "human factor" linking it to Russia is crucial. This is slightly less true for Russia, given Russian society's tighter interpenetration with Ukrainian and Belarusian societies than with Kazakhstani society (Laurelle, Royce, Bayssembayev, 2019)³⁵.

Major segments of Kazakhstan's society remain closely integrated with Russia's through a vivid ecosystem government-organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs), advancing an agenda of Eurasian regional integration. The main Kazakhstani cities have sister-cities partnerships with their Russian counterparts that facilitate exchange at the official and people-to-people levels. The Orthodox Church of Kazakhstan, under the jurisdiction of the

³³ Bowyer, A.C. (2008, May). *Parliament and Political Parties in Kazakhstan*. Massachusetts, Johns Hopkins University: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program – A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center.

³⁴ Laurelle, M.; Royce, D.; Bayssembayev, S. (2019, July 14). *Untangling the puzzle of "Russia's influence" in Kazakhstan*. Taylor & Francis online. Pages 211-243.

³⁵ Laurelle, M.; Royce, D.; Bayssembayev, S. (2019, July 14). *Untangling the puzzle of "Russia's influence" in Kazakhstan*. Taylor & Francis online. Pages 211-243.

Moscow Patriarchate, has always been very loyal to the Kazakhstani authorities and supported Astana's tightening of religious legislation in the name of the fight against extremism (Peyrouse, 2008)³⁶. It constitutes another conduit of communication between Russian and Kazakhstani elites, but could also potentially be used to support Moscow's position more directly.

The past shared by Kazakhstan and Russia, and the position of the Russian language in the former, also cultivates intellectual and academic ties, in a manner that resembles the postcolonial relationships between UK and India. For the year 2018, for instance, of the 89,000 Kazakhstani students studying abroad, 69,000 were studying in Russia (UNESCO, 2019)³⁷, reflecting the attraction of Russian universities, which offer privileged fellowships to students from Kazakhstan (365Info.kz. 2018)³⁸. Several Russian universities, including Moscow State University and leading Siberian provincial universities have opened satellite campuses in Kazakhstan.³⁹ Associated with this higher education network, several associations are promoting the Russian language and bringing together Russian-language instructors. The Russian state agency serves as an umbrella for cultural activities related to the promotion of Russian language and culture. It organizes or funds contests, festivals, and Olympiads, offers certification in Russian language, and provides all kinds of grants and fellowships. The Russian Center for Science and Culture, which opened in Astana in 2004, is Russia's main cultural body in the

• ³⁶ Peyrouse, S. (2008, March). The "Imperial Minority": An Interpretative Framework of the Russians in Kazakhstan in the 1990s. *Researchgate*. Vol.36(1), (pp.105-123).

³⁷ Global education monitoring report. (2019, November 26). In UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/taxonomy/term/210>.

³⁸ Higher Education in Central Asia The Challenges of Modernization Case Studies from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, The Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan. (2018, March 12). In 365 Info. KZ. <https://365info.kz/2018/03/serebro-samyj-vygodnyj-instrument-nachala-2018-goda-tsipe>.

³⁹ Almaty branch of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences; Almaty branch of the Academy of Labor and Social Relations; Kostanay branch of Chelyabinsk State University; Ust-Kamenogorsk branch of Moscow State University of Economics, Statistics, and Informatics; Baikonur branch of Moscow Aviation Institute; Pavlodar branch of Tyumen State Oil and Gas University (closed in 2012); Private Kazakhstani-Russian Medical University (Almaty); Private Kazakh-Russian International University (Aktobe); Private Kazakhstani-Russian University (Astana, closed in 2014). We thank Marat Raikhatov for providing us with this information.

capital city, offering, among other things, Russian classes for teachers. The Russian World Fund is in charge of a network of Russia centers at several universities, including the state Al-Farabi University in Almaty. Its associated website, Russkiy Mir, is widespread in Kazakhstan, which provides its second largest readership, after Russia (Gusarova, 2017)⁴⁰.

Therefore, Russo-Kazakhstani networks, both governmental and nongovernmental, institutional and personal, are a stable phenomenon, one that is a “natural” product of Russian and Kazakhstani societies in some cases and that is actively supported by the Russian government – and, to a lesser extent, by the Kazakhstani one – in others. However, the real level of these networks’ significance, and the degree to which they are actually able to alter the situation or interests/perspectives of Astana in a manner facilitating Russia-favorable behavior, is unclear.

Impact:

Thus, As discussed, the three abovementioned vectors – Russian media, Russo-Kazakhstani networks, and potentially the Russian language itself – promote identification with Russia and understanding or adoption of its perspectives among the Kazakhstani population and elites. Other factors endogenous to Kazakhstan may also contribute to this, and the resulting Russophilia within the Kazakhstani population at large is easily identified. It affects the Kazakhstani government’s situation, potentially shaping and constraining its actions, and even influencing its perspectives and interests insofar as popular attitudes trickle upwards.

While there are a limited number of surveys on Kazakhstanis’ views on foreign policy, the ones at disposal suggest that public opinion is highly and consistently favorable toward Russia. The Russian leadership enjoys high approval, ranging from a low of 55% in 2012 to a high of 87% in 2007, for an average around 70%, Russia’s involvement in the Ukraine crisis (which was itself supported by most Kazakhstanis) has not had a noticeable effect on Kazakhstanis’ approval of its leadership.

Similarly, Eurasia Monitor’s surveys (2012–2019) on attitudes toward Russia find that an overwhelming majority of Kazakhstanis consider Russia a friendly country that can be counted

⁴⁰ Gusarova, M.(2017). Al-Farabi Kazakh National university. Taylor & Francis online.

on for help, though somewhat fewer think that its cultural and economic presence should be further strengthened. As mentioned, much of this Russophilia is endogenous to Kazakhstan. The success of Russian media and cultural products is not imposed by Moscow by force on the part of Kazakhstanis. Kazakhstan's own cultural products, including Kazakh-language serials and talk shows, tend to present Russia as a close ally (Laurelle, Royce, Bayssembayev 2019)⁴¹.

The rise of the Kazakh language and cultural production in Kazakh thus may or may not translate into a more critical positioning toward Russia. The Kazakhstani government has taken steps in certain areas to limit Russophile sentiment and, presumably, preserve its freedom of maneuver. For instance, since accession to the EAEU(Eurasian Economic Union), the Kazakhstani presidential administration has discreetly supported the rise of young Kazakh ethno-nationalist figures who criticize Russia's domination in general and the EAEU in particular, giving them a platform even within official structures. Criticized by some for ratification of the EAEU, Nazarbayev himself set limits on Kazakhstani integration by insisting that the EAEU is an economic project, not a political one (Roberts, 2014)⁴². More generally, in the media sector in particular, the presidential administration has promoted influential young Kazakhs with more nationalist views to decision-making positions, charged with dynamizing media production, especially in the Kazakh language, and reaching out to the younger generation, mainly its more nationalistically-minded segments.

However, in these and other cases, it is difficult to discern when Astana is actually attempting to curtail its population's pro-Russian sentiments and when it is merely seeking to maintain legitimacy among the substantial minority that is more nationalistic. For instance, the transition of the Kazakh language to a Latin alphabet, announced in 2017 and planned for 2025 seems more an example of the latter. Preparing for his own succession long before it happened on 19 March 2019, Nazarbayev aimed at satisfying the nationalists' long-standing but largely symbolic demand, offering the opportunity for the government to shore up its support among

⁴¹ Laurelle, M.; Royce, D.; Beyssembayev, S. (2019, July 14). *Untangling the puzzle of "Russia's influence" in Kazakhstan*. Taylor & Francis online. Pages 211-243.

⁴² Roberts, S.P. (2014). *The Eurasian Economic Union: A case of reproductive integration?*. Portsmouth, United Kingdom : School of Social, Historical and Literary Studies, University of Portsmouth.

them – without doing anything to practically diminish the presence or influence of the Russian state, culture, or language in Kazakhstan, or alter popular perceptions of Russia.

Economic ties bring some gains to Kazakhstan but also limit the diversification of its trade partners and potentially of its economy; integration to strengthen them is therefore desirable so long as it does not spill over into political integration. Military dependence obviously entails costs, hampering Kazakhstan's multi-vector policy, but these are seen as worth paying to avoid the possible consequences of a more isolationist policy, and as less onerous than those that would be imposed by an alternative, more demanding or unpredictable, patron.

When, on the other hand, a vector entails higher costs than benefits, Astana attempts to diminish it. Russian media – at least that which contains political content and especially that which is under Russian governmental control provide essentially no benefits to Astana, since any desirable messaging can be replicated in Kazakhstani state media. On the other hand, it does threaten to at least potentially impose costs on the Kazakhstani government by limiting its ability to direct public opinion and, ultimately, restricting Astana's freedom of maneuver. Consequently, the Kazakhstani government has begun working to substitute Russian-origin media with safer domestic replacements.

Influence of Russia on India and its Impact :

Russia and India since long have been close friends and partners. The Russians did not go to India to conquer it but the images of the faraway magical land of India inspired Russian thinkers, poets, composers and artists. The cultural influence was mutual. In the seven-plus decades of the diplomatic relations, Moscow and New Delhi have successfully built stable strategic, military, economic and diplomatic ties. Thousands of Russians took part in building industrial facilities in India (FICCI, 2017)⁴³. Military equipment manufactured in Russia accounts for a significant part of the arsenal of the Indian Armed Forces (Economic Times, 2020)⁴⁴. Tens of thousands of Indian engineers, doctors and other professionals have been

⁴³ India-Russia: Identifying New Opportunities. (2017, September). In FICCI.
<http://ficci.in/spdocument/20977/India-Russia-Identifying-New-Opportunities..pdf>.

⁴⁴ Government approves purchase of fighter jets, missile systems, weapons worth Rs 38,900 crore. (2020, July 02) The Economic Times.

educated in Russian universities. Russian and Indian scientists have close ties, and their joint work spans a large number of fields, from applied medicine to space exploration. Indian tea, coffee, spices, medications and other consumer goods are extremely popular in Russia. Regardless of their outward differences, Russia and India face many similar tasks both domestically and internationally (Economic Times, 2020)⁴⁵. Domestically, both need to ensure inter-ethnic and social harmony within multimillion, poly-ethnic, and poly-denominational states. The examples of Kashmir and Chechnya helped the two countries gain an insight into the evils of aggressive nationalism, religious extremism, terrorism and separatism sooner and more clearly than others.

Russia and India are democratic states that adhere to the principles of democracy in their domestic affairs, which in turn determines their general commitment to democratic conduct in international affairs. India was among the countries that were instrumental in the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement, which as early as the first years of the 1960s was pointing the international community in the direction of the polycentric world order that is so actively discussed today.

Russia and India are also united by the fact that Muslims form the second-largest denominational community in both states (Mitchell, 2017)⁴⁶. People for centuries have lived side-by-side with Orthodox Christians in Russia, and with followers of Hinduism and other Indian religions in India. Russia and India's long-standing engagement with Islamic history, and their geographic proximity to the leading Islamic states, determine both the special place of the

⁴⁵ 70 years of India-Russia : cooperation in the area of *exploration* and the use of outer *space* for peaceful purposes .(2020, March). The Economic Times.

⁴⁶ Mitchell, T. (2017). Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe. *Pew Research Center*.

two countries when it comes to the most urgent issues that concern the Islamic world today and their special role in handling problems related to the Middle East, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan ⁴⁷.

From the very beginning, the independent India set itself the goal of becoming a leading global power. However, for a long time, its international actions were bolstered solely by its moral authority and the support of friendly Asian and African non-aligned states. To join the “major league of international players,” it needed powerful economic, scientific, technological and military potential, something it has today. India’s objective for the near future is to entrench itself as the key power of the region that spans the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia. India hopes to overcome the negative geopolitical consequences of the 1947 division of the former British India into India and Pakistan along religious lines. Not only did this division result in the ongoing conflict with Islamabad over Kashmir, but it also cut India off from culturally related countries and its natural markets in Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, Iran and the Persian Gulf states as well as Central Asia.

The present Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given New Delhi’s international activities a measure of confidence and assertiveness. The Look East been transformed into the Act East Policy, which is intended to both stimulate India’s economic growth and align its strategic priorities with those of its leading partners in the Asia Pacific, namely Vietnam, the ASEAN as a whole, Japan and Australia. The Act East Policy is ultimately intended to expand and boost India’s regional and global role. Look East is supplemented with Look West, which is geared toward the Persian Gulf states. This policy has several far-reaching goals. First, the Persian Gulf is a major economic partner, home to over 6 million Indians and the principal source of oil and gas. Second, the region has long-standing historical ties with India — not only is it close neighbour, it is also a connecting link with Central Asia and Afghanistan. Third, “Look West,” as some analysts in India have noted, is also intended to give an impetus to changes in the relations with Islamabad in the future, when, instead of being a wall between India and the Persian Gulf

⁴⁷There is no official census of religion in Russia, and estimates are based on surveys only. In August 2012, ARENA determined that about 46.8% of Russians are Christians (including Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and non-denominational), which is slightly less than an absolute 50% majority. However, later that year the Levada Center Archived 2012-12-31 at the Wayback Machine determined that 76% of Russians are Christians, and in June 2013 the Public Opinion Foundation determined that 65% of Russians are Christians. These findings are in line with Pew’s 2010 survey, which determined that 73.3% of Russians are Christians, with VTSIOM’s 2010 survey (~77% Christian), and with Ipsos MORI Archived 2013-01-17 at the Wayback Machine’s 2011 survey (69%)

region, Pakistan would become a kind of bridge between them. India, in turn, would become Pakistan's "gateway" to Southeast Asia.

India appears to be banking here on Pakistanis stepping over 70-year-old dogmas regarding Kashmir and eventually realizing that cooperation with India in the Persian Gulf could be far more profitable for them than confrontation. Reconciliation between India and Pakistan would have a significant economic effect both for regional economic integration and for broader interregional cooperation between the states of Central Asia, South Asia and the Persian Gulf (Ivashentsov, 2020)⁴⁸. Unlike the United States, Western European countries and China, Russia has never had a conflict of interests with India, nor is one likely to appear in the future. The increasing role of India—a country that is friendly towards Russia — in international affairs, be it globally or in the Middle, Near or Far East (given India's significant economic presence in all those regions and a populous Indian community there) would objectively decrease the urgency of the foreign political challenges currently facing Russia (Joshi, 2019)⁴⁹.

Russia–India relations hold independent value for both countries. India is sympathetic to Russia's international actions. During the Soviet era, New Delhi did not condemn the deployment of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Nor has it joined the chorus of those condemning Crimea's incorporation into Russia today. New Delhi also supports Russia's stance on Syria, declaring that it would never use sanctions against Moscow. Historically, India's regional and global interests have largely coincided with those of Russia, rather than the other great powers. India's most important and complicated foreign political issues are concentrated in its relations with China and Pakistan as it has been involved in armed conflicts with both countries. New Delhi understands that these issues cannot be resolved without Russia, just as the Look East and Look West policies cannot be fully implemented without Russia. It is no coincidence, for example, that Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the 2019 Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok. He intends to expand India's economic presence in the Russian Far East. The situation is much the same with Look West, where India, among other things, is interested in

⁴⁸ Ivashentsov, G. (2020, January 21). Russia–India Relations: Successes and Prospects. Russia, *South Asia*. RIAC.

⁴⁹ Joshi, M. (2019). India's strategy in the China-Russia-USA triangle. India. *Observer Research Foundation*.

Central Asia being free from extremism and terrorism. India is also interested in establishing the North–South Transport Corridor from the Arabian Sea to Western Europe. Russia has a defining role in both cases (Dutta, 2019)⁵⁰.

But , neither the radical political and economic changes in Russia and India nor the general shifts in the global situation could stop new wrinkles and points of concern from being introduced into Russia–India relations which is more of privileged strategic partnership, rather than friendship and cooperation. Proof of the strategic nature of this partnership can be found in the interaction between the two countries on key issues of international politics, as well as in the fact that, beyond politics, bilateral relations are driven by energy (including nuclear energy), military-technical cooperation and peaceful exploration of space, areas that are of strategic importance for any state.

- India imports one third of the oil and gas it consumes and is investing heavily in the development of Russia’s energy resources. This fact is of special significance for Russia today, when the sanctions imposed on Russia mean that companies from the West are prohibited from participating in new Russian oil and gas projects, including those in the Arctic. India urgently needs to develop its nuclear sector, and Russia is the only foreign state that builds nuclear power plants there. Russia has made this decision in favour of a state that is not a party to the Non-proliferation Treaty because it trusts India and values the partnership it has with that country. Russia also supports India’s accession to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (Economic Times, 2020)⁵¹.
- India is the only country to have a long-term weapons cooperation programme with Russia in place. It is the only state that has received help from Russia in the development of a nuclear submarine project. India has also leased a nuclear submarine from Russia and purchased Russia-Israel-made AEW&C aircraft. The Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier was modernized for India, where it was renamed the Vikramaditya. The high-efficiency cruise missile BrahMos was developed jointly by the two countries, and a

⁵⁰ Dutta, P.K. (2019, September 05). Modi at Eastern Economic Forum: Why India is so interested in Russian Far East. New Delhi: *India Today*.

⁵¹ India in talks with Russia on mega deal for long-term import of crude oil. (2020, February 07). Energy world .com. *The Economic Times*.

fifth-generation combat fighter aircraft is now being developed jointly as well. India is expected to be the only recipient of the high-precision GLONASS (Russia's global navigation system) signal for the purposes of defence and security (Bakshi, 2006)⁵².

- Seventy percent of India's military's combat equipment was manufactured either in Russia or in India under Russian licenses (Ibid, 52)⁵³. It is unlikely that India would allow itself to become so dependent on Russia in the military sphere if it did not have full confidence in the strategic partnership. But this is strategically important for Russia as well. After the collapse of the USSR, Russia's defence complex found itself in dire financial straits. India alleviated the situation by placing large defence orders with Russia. In a sense, New Delhi forced the Russian defence industry to accelerate the modernization process by placing orders for equipment with highest technical requirements.
- Russia-India communication is of great practical importance for Russia in terms of studying India's experience and using it to solve a number of problems for examples, First, like Russia, India is a federative state. Its constitution clearly demarcates the powers of the central and local authorities. Russia would do well to study how India tackled such matters. The second issue pertains to financing the military. India's military, the fourth-strongest in the world, is a contract force. Perhaps some Indian financing methods could be used in Russia (Ivashentsov, 2020)⁵⁴.

In many ways, the long-standing Russia-India partnership has acquired a new quality over the past 25 years. Demonstrative declarations of friendship are a thing of the past. The two great powers collaborate on specific issues in order to meet both their individual and mutual interests. The partnership between Russia and India is an integral component of global and regional developments. Today, the world is on the threshold of a new world order, with a

⁵² Bakshi, J. (April- June, 2006). India-Russia Defence Co-operation: Strategic analysis. *Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses*. Vol. 30(2).

⁵³ Ibid 52

⁵⁴ Ivashentsov , G. (2020, January, 30). Russia-india-relations-successes-and-prospects. *Russia, Modern Diplomacy*. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2020/01/30/russia-india-relations-successes-and-prospects/>.

polycentric political and multi-currency economic system (New defence order strategy,2020)⁵⁵. The new world order should ensure equality and mutual respect for the interests of large and small states in politics; mutual advantages and gains in economy; compatibility and mutual enrichment of civilizations in culture; mutual trust and cooperation in security; and a common responsibility in global issues. The specially privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India is called upon to make a significant contribution to building the world order especially in India's Connect Central Asia Policy.

Conclusion of Russian Influence on Kazakhstan:

Therefore many factors that do or might yield Russia-favorable behavior by Kazakhstan are not the consequence of active Russian governmental efforts. Many, on the contrary, are the product of the international system (military-strategic ties) or of factors endogenous to Kazakhstan (the Russian language and minority), or are passively emitted by Russian society for domestic consumption (much Russian-origin media). Others (networks, economic ties) are the product of the two countries' proximity, in geographical and historical senses. Even those that are actively generated by the Russian government (economic and military ties) are often actively supported by Astana, as well, due to its aligned interests and its perception of little cost or threat. Only when the costs clearly outweigh the benefits does Astana move to block the avenue of influence. This was the case because the vector – Russian-origin media – promised virtually no benefits at all. In most other instances, the interests of the Kazakhstani and Russian governments are closely enough aligned that a factor's promotion of Russia-favorable behavior is seen by Astana as bringing more benefits than costs: even if the EAEU renders the Kazakhstani economy more dependent on Russia, Astana was already interested in intensifying economic ties; even if military cooperation renders Kazakhstan more dependent upon Russia for its security, it was already interested in acquiring greater Russian support for its military and security. The results maybe what is conventionally described as "Russia's influence." First, this notion to consider the multiple vectors – passive and active, endogenous and exogenous, promoted or fought against by Astana – that potentially yield Russia-favorable behavior by Kazakhstan, to enable a more fine-

⁵⁵ India's Republic Day. Congratulations For Strategic Partner!. (2020). In New defence order strategy. <https://dfnc.ru/en/politica/india-s-republic-day-congratulations-for-strategic-partner/>.

grained approach to the bilateral relationship should be moved beyond. Second, Kazakhstan is far from a passive object of Russia's actions and should be considered a fully-fledged actor in the relationship in its own right, even if the relationship would in theory seem to be weighted toward Russia. Some of the vectors leading to interests/perceptions and situations that incentivize Russia-favorable behavior (e.g., military cooperation) are themselves desired by Kazakhstan, and sometimes the behaviors themselves are (e.g., economic integration).

This means that Russia is not “dominating” Kazakhstan; trends within Kazakhstan itself, and decisions made by it, will be some of the key determinants of the future Russo-Kazakhstani relationship. The Russian ethnic minority will surely continue to decline, but most of the other vectors that have been identified are stable or potentially rising. Yet a decline in the benefits that they bring to Kazakhstan, or an increase in the costs that they impose upon it, could drive the government to turn against them in the future. Ultimately, the question is likely one of the continued convergence between Kazakhstani and Russian interests, the basis upon which most of the vectors rest – a question made increasingly germane by Kazakhstan's power transition and by rising polarization among younger ethnic Kazakhs regarding their acceptance or rejection of Russia's cultural products.

Influence of China on Central Asian States especially Kazakhstan and its Impact :

Despite the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the USSR, Central Asia remains a core element in the security strategy of the People's Republic of China. This strategy, establishing a continuum between China's internal and external security, has evolved from a strategy of influence following the independence of the new republics to a period of pragmatic adaptation to developments in the international arena after the terrorist attacks of September 11th. The SCO has emerged as the instrument for this flexible strategy of adaptation, of which the economic and energy dimension has now become key. The stability of Xinjiang lies at the heart of the concerns surrounding the security of the People's Republic of China, and it constitutes one of the primary factors determining China's policy towards Central Asia in an initially rather positive direction involving the development of exchanges, with the opening of frontier posts

allowing traditional ties to be rewoven and with the themes surrounding the “new Silk Road” (Niquet, 2020)⁵⁶.

The recognition of the “common security issues,” foremost among which are terrorism and separatism, which, as Beijing underlines, “pose a threat to the leadership position of the authorities of all the regional powers,” has thus constituted the primary element of the implementation of genuine collaboration in security matters between China and the Central Asian republics. At the bilateral level, China has similarly instituted with all of the Central Asian countries a series of “strategic partnerships”(Ibid 56,)⁵⁷. With Kazakhstan, the partnership is termed “strategic”, this is the highest level, and Kazakhstan is also the most sensitive state for reasons relating to its geographic proximity, the narrow ties that exist with Xinjiang and also the potential nation for co-operation in the field of energy. With the other republics, on the other hand, the terms are much less “strategic” with the rest, just a partnership of cooperation and friendship.

China’s Area of Interest in Central Asia especially Kazakhstan:

Economic: The economic strategy that China is pursuing in Central Asia can be analysed at several levels. It appears to be a prolongation of the development strategy for western China, with one aim being the opening up of Xinjiang and the economic development of the province in order to cool tensions there. But Beijing applies the same analysis to the republics of Central Asia, the economic backwardness of which is denounced as one of the causes of the social tensions and of the rise of Islamic terrorism (Weiwei, 2005)⁵⁸. Moreover, this is a relatively new element, and Central Asia not only appears today to be both a market for Chinese products, beyond the border exchanges, but also a source of energy supply, the importance of which has grown considerably for China. China is thus encouraging, with nevertheless qualified success,

⁵⁶Niquet, V. (2020). *China and Central Asia. China perspectives*. Open edition journals.
<https://journals.openedition.org/chinaperspectives/1045>

⁵⁷ Ibid 56

⁵⁸ Weiwei, Z & Jin, X. (2005, April) . An Observation of Security Cooperation between China and the Central Asian Countries. *International Strategic Studies* .

the development of infrastructure intended to facilitate the trade with Central Asia as well as the opening up of Xinjiang (Wani, 2020)⁵⁹.

The transport network, in particular the road and air network, has been considerably strengthened with trans-Central Asia motorway projects linking Andijan Osh and Kashgar and passing via the strategic route of Karakorum in order to open up the southern part of Xinjiang (Aneja, 2019)⁶⁰. The last agreement signed in 2005 with Pakistan provides for important works that allows the Karakorum highway to be open to traffic throughout the year. In 2003, border trade accounted for 50% of the province's total trade (Xinhua news, 2003)⁶¹. More than 28 crossing points have been opened, and in 2004 an agreement with Kazakhstan was signed to open a free trade zone centred on Khorgos (Ibid 61)⁶². On the other side of the border, it is the invasion of the markets by the Han traders, such as has happened in Almaty.

Chinese economic dynamism thus plays a part in reinforcing a common feeling of exclusion that affects the local populations both in Xinjiang and in Central Asia (Pannier, 2020)⁶³.

Strategic Energy:

Beyond access to a new market for the less sophisticated Chinese products, China's major interest is in the matter of energy, and projects that for a period had slowed down for reasons of costs and the absence of any real sense of urgency has recently been reactivated by Beijing.

⁵⁹ Wani, A. (2020, August 21). Invest, Indebt, Incapacitate: Is China Replicating Its 'Xinjiang Model' In BRI Countries? In Observer Research Foundation. :<https://www.orfonline.org/research/is-china-replicating-its-xinjiang-model-in-bri-countries/>

⁶⁰ Aneja , A. (2019, June 22). The Central Asian nodes in Belt and Road project. The Hindu.

⁶¹ Border trade accounted for 50% of the province's total trade. (2003, June 17). Beijing. Xinhua news agency.

⁶² Ibid 61

⁶³ _Pannier, B. (2020, January 02). The Four Big Issues Central Asia Faced In 2019 (And They're Not Going Away). <https://www.rferl.org/a/central-asia-2019-challenges-security-china-facial-recognition/30356077.html>.

In August 2005, CNPC (China National Petroleum Company) also initiated the acquisition of Petrokazakhstan, and was supported in this project by the Kazakh authorities (Kramer, 2005)⁶⁴. On the other hand, the pipeline projects requiring heavy investments, which foreign, in particular Japanese, companies, have not been prepared to make for both economic and strategic reasons, have for a long time experienced considerable delays despite recurrent projects promising to link the gas or oil fields of Central Asia, in particular in Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, up to the Chinese market (Ibid 64)⁶⁵. In economic terms, the aim of supplying energy to China's coastal regions, which are the most developed and the heaviest consumers, had appeared due to lack of incentives given the very high costs of exploitation and transport. The stakes have recently changed, for reasons that are both economic: with the increase in the cost of oil, and strategic: with the strengthening of the American military presence in the Middle East, China's primary source of oil imports (Trough, 1999)⁶⁶. In December 2005, a first section 998 kilometres long linking the oil fields of Kazakhstan to Xinjiang's northeast via the Alashan Pass was completed; the aim was to extend this network in the direction of eastern China towards Shanghai (Koolae, Tishehyar, 2011)⁶⁷. There is, however, still a very long way to go to turn round completely in the direction of China and Asia the Kazakh export networks, which are essentially oriented towards Russia and the Caspian Sea. But with the construction of this pipeline, China is increasing Kazakhstan's room for manoeuvre and negotiation, with the latter thus gaining an additional partner alongside Russia and the United States. On the other hand, the gas pipeline projects linking Xinjiang to Turkmenistan have still not gone anywhere (Niquet, 2005)⁶⁸.

Military and Security:

⁶⁴ Kramer, A. (2005, October 27). Chinese Company's Bid for PetroKazakhstan Is Approved. Business. *The New York Times*.

⁶⁵ Ibid 64

⁶⁶ Trough, S. (1999, September 01). China's Changing Oil Strategy and its Foreign Policy Implications. Brookings.

⁶⁷ Koolae, E & Tishehyar, M. (2005). China's energy security approach in Central Asia. *Researchgate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283322610_CHINA'S_ENERGY_SECURITY_APPROACH_IN_CENTRAL_ASIA.

⁶⁸ Chung, C P. (2005, October 17). The SCO: Institutionalization, Cooperation and Rivalry. Japan Focus.

But beyond these preoccupations, Chinese policy with regard to Central Asia possesses a more global dimension related to the reinforcement of the American presence in the region. Expansion of NATO to the east, despite its limits, was thus analyzed as a threat to the security of China's northeast frontier, which, moreover, has always constituted a zone that the Chinese authorities have been preoccupied with. This threat comprises both a conventional dimension related to the ratcheting up of American military pressure, but equally an ideological threat related to the theories of peaceful evolution or regime change. According to Beijing, this threat is exacerbated today, in particular since the attacks of September 11th, which led to a reinforcement of the military presence of the United States in Central Asia with the opening of several military bases, but also an even greater emphasis placed by Washington on the link it has established between regime change, democratisation and security (Fredholm)⁶⁹. This implantation of American bases in Central Asia after the September 11th attacks, without the countries of the region who belong to the Shanghai Group even consulting Beijing, has thus represented for China a significant setback of its policy towards the Central Asian countries and has imposed the implementation of a new strategy of reconquest, the result of which has not been perfectly satisfactory for Beijing.

The Readjustment of Chinese Policies in Regards to Central Asia: USA, RUSSIA and SCO

After the attacks of September 11th, China attempted to regain the upper hand by aligning itself for an initial period with the seemingly common theme of the fight against terrorism. This theme in fact allowed Beijing to distinguish itself from the countries of the "axis of evil", to whom China was in reality very close, but at the same time to insist that its own analysis of the terrorist and separatist threat in Xinjiang be recognised. The success of this strategy can be found in the registering by Washington of ETIM (*East Turkestan Independence Movement*), a nevertheless very marginal movement, on its list of terrorist organisations. This highlighting of a strategic interest shared in common with the United States has, however, not produced the expected results for Beijing, in particular as far as Central Asia is concerned.

⁶⁹ Michael, F. (2013). *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Eurasian Geopolitics New Directions, Perspectives, and Challenges*. A project directed by Birgit Schlyter, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.

According to China, the theories of regime change, set in motion through the intermediary of certain NGOs supported by the United States, who praise especially the emergence of independent media promoting the expression of opposition, have in contrast been reinforced (Ning, 2005)⁷⁰. According to Chinese analyses, the “colour revolutions” that have been fomented in the countries of the former Soviet bloc (Georgia, Ukraine) and above all the “tulip revolution” in Kyrgyzstan, as well as the events that occurred in Uzbekistan in 2005, were in fact only the result of destabilisation efforts on the part of the United States, which had the goal of reinforcing its zone of influence. For Beijing, the risk would obviously be that, in line with the domino theory, these destabilisation movements expand to the whole of Central Asia and reach the autonomous region of Xinjiang (Ibid 56)⁷¹. China, significantly, is strongly reaffirming its ideological specificity, despite the policy of economic reforms that the regime has pursued for more than 25 years, but also attempting to recreate a kind of complicity with the Central Asian regimes that have emerged from the former Soviet nomenklatura (Zhi, 2005)⁷². For the Chinese analysts, after the attacks of September 11th, where the goal of the United States has been to acquire a strategic superiority in Central Asia by means of a military and ideological penetration, China thus denounces the reinforcement of the military co-operation with the countries of Central Asia, the opening of bases and the agreements in matters of trade and training in the military sphere (Haibo, 2002)⁷³. Beijing is also preoccupied with the multiplication of high-level visits by American leaders to the region, which have come in quick succession (Weiwei, 2005)⁷⁴. The United States has also reinforced its presence at the economic level through the multiplication of aid and investments, including in the field of energy, which is a particularly sensitive one for Beijing (Ning, 2005)⁷⁵. Thus, despite a discourse that incessantly recalls the

⁷⁰ Ning, C. (2005, March), *The Current Situation in Central Asia*. Pp. 34-35.

⁷¹ Ibid 56

⁷² Qi Zhi, “Warning Given by Color Revolution”, *ISS*, 3-2005, pp. 28-34.

⁷³ Haibo, Y. (2002, April). Weight and Prospect of US Military Presence in Central Asia. *ISS*. pp. 43-49.

⁷⁴ Weiwei, Z. (2005, April). An Observation of Security Cooperation between China and the Central Asian Countries *International Strategic Studies*.

⁷⁵ Ning, C. (2005, March), *The Current Situation in Central Asia*. *ISS*, pp. 34-35.

principle of *win-win*, the Chinese regime continues in reality to analyze the parameters of its security in terms of an asymmetry in its favour and a capacity to control and influence, as is demonstrated by the privileged ties woven by China with regimes that are especially isolated on the international stage. Facing up to this offensive on the part of the United States, China has successfully demonstrated a remarkable capacity for adaptation and reaction. Abandoning to a certain degree the discourse of the common fight against terrorism, which has not brought with it any major evolution within the current American administration as far as its analysis of the Chinese regime is concerned, Beijing has in contrast conducted an ideological realignment in the direction of the less democratic regimes, attempting to play off a common interest against the rise in power of the United States and threats of regime change. As one Chinese analyst has recognised, following the attacks of September 11th, any frontal opposition to the presence of the United States in the region had no chance of succeeding, and China thus had to find divergent means to rebuild, progressively and based on other factors, its influence in the region (Gongcheng, 2003)⁷⁶. In the goal to reduce the influence of the United States in the region while creating a new rationale for an alliance with the Chinese regime, Russia has a role to play in this process. However, for Beijing, the return of a strong Russia to Central Asia is no longer considered a positive point. Thus, in Central Asia, the Chinese analysts class as an “unfavourable factor” the role of external forces, primary among which is the United States, but also the integration of the countries of Central Asia “in the organisations of collective security of the CIS”. In reality, Beijing, going beyond the discourse of collusion surrounding a strategic partnership with Moscow, which was expressed in particular in the organisation of joint naval manoeuvres in the China Sea in 2005, seems just as much to deplore “the persistent influence of the CIS, which is playing a much more important role in Central Asia” (Weiwei, 2005)⁷⁷. In fact, Russia, confronted with the rise in power of the United States but also faced with China, is trying

⁷⁶ Gongcheng, Z. (2003, May). China: Periphery and Strategy. *SIIS Journal*. Vol. 10(2). (pp. 24-33).

⁷⁷ Weiwei, Z & Jin, X. (2005, April) . An Observation of Security Cooperation between China and the Central Asian Countries. *International Strategic Studies* .

to preserve a significant military presence in Central Asia by maintaining its own network of bases and privileged relations (Buszynski, 2005)⁷⁸.

While at the *economic* level, Beijing proposed in 2003, in accordance with a strategy that can be found everywhere in Asia, the establishment of a free trade zone based on highlighting the potential of the Chinese market and the supposed complementarity of the Chinese and Central Asian economies. China has similarly proposed that a working group on energy be set up with the intention of facilitating large-scale trans-border projects such as the construction of pipelines (Kellner, 2003)⁷⁹. At the political level, bilateral visits have been multiplied and several working groups have been set up. During the 2004 SCO summit, a development aid programme for the countries of the region based on low-interest loans was also initiated by China. Nevertheless, Beijing remains a minor actor in Central Asia despite a very pointed discourse. Its principal partner remains Kazakhstan. But, even in this case, Russia continues to be by far Astana's primary commercial partner. In terms of investment, it is the Western countries (72% of the total) who have taken the lead, with the United States (40% of the total) predominant, followed by Russia and then by China (3% of the total) (Weiwei, 2005)⁸⁰. However, as a result of this 'patient bypass strategy', which attempts to put the emphasis on a Chinese-style soft power, during the SCO summit that was held in Astana in July 2005 China and Kazakhstan signed a strategic partnership agreement, founded in particular on Beijing's strong support opposing to that of regime change preached by the United States. At the institutional level, China only obtained one arm, also established in Shanghai, of the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure (RATS), which comes under the predominant influence of Russia, since the structure was set up in Tashkent in 2003 (Weiwei, 2005)⁸¹. Despite this Beijing's influence within the SCO has been

⁷⁸ Buszynski, L. (2005, January 19). Russia's New Role in Central Asia. *Asian Survey*. Xinhua news. Vol. 45, (pp. 546-565).

⁷⁹ Kellner, T et al. (2003). *Nouvelle Asiecentrale*. GRP, Brussels.

⁸⁰ Weiwei, Z & Jin, X. (2005, April). An Observation of Security Cooperation between China and the Central Asian Countries. *International Strategic Studies*.

⁸¹ Weiwei, Z & Jin, X. (2005, April). An Observation of Security Cooperation between China and the Central Asian Countries. *International Strategic Studies*.

diluted. China is no more than one actor among others, one on which the Central Asian states can rely to buttress their own strategies and defend their interests, but also one on which they are not absolutely dependent (Mardell, 2020)⁸². In addition to the United States, Russia is also counted among the external actors, and it has demonstrated its renewed interest in the region, both against an overly invasive American presence but also against any attempt on the part of China to make Central Asia its exclusive zone of influence. As a Russian analyst recently underlined, for Russia the notion of a post-Soviet area of interest remains, in particular around the core question of the control of transit in matters of transport or energy, and Moscow could not accept the implementation of large-scale projects from which Russia would be excluded (Karganov, 2005)⁸³. From the Russian perspective, this is as true for the United States as it is for China. For these analysts, as for the Central Asian republics, China does not appear as a privileged partner, despite once more the discourse on “strategic partnership”. On the contrary, in so far as Russia can no longer play a lone hand in the region, it is the multiplication of actors that should ideally allow Russia and the Central Asian states a share of initiative. Further, during the SCO summit held in July 2005, several “observer” members were admitted, certain of whom, such as Pakistan and Iran, were more pro-China, but others of whom, including India and Mongolia, were much more skeptical when it came to the role of Beijing. India and Pakistan gained accession in June 2017 and there are numerous observer states including the likes of Iran and Afghanistan. The SCO is an effective tool for pursuing economic development for China in the Eurasian region due to its multilateral platform. The SCO, “reflecting China’s goals of building comprehensive strategic partnerships and cementing its burgeoning economic role and influence in Central Asia, expanded its concerns from a primary emphasis on counterterrorism to include economic cooperation”, presenting that China has significant power over the organization to expand its focus to in line with its own policy goals, making it more effective as a tool (Scott, 2019)⁸⁴.

⁸² Mardell, J. (2020, August 14). *China’s footprint in Central Asia. Asia policy brief. Bertelsman stiftung*

⁸³ Karganov, S. (2005, December). New Contours of the New World Order. *Russia in Global Affairs*. Vol. 3, No. 4. pp. 8-23.

⁸⁴ Battam Scott, G. (2019). *How Effective Is the SCO as a Tool for Chinese Foreign Policy?* <https://www.e-ir.info/2019/02/26/how-effective-is-the-sco-as-a-tool-for-chinese-foreign-policy/>

China's most recent flagship economic project, the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative, presents how effective the SCO is as a tool due to the multilateral platform. OBOR is "a multilateral proposal to upgrade infrastructure, improve China's bilateral ties, and international institutions, as well as drive much needed global development.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Strategically located at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, the Central Asian region is poorly connected. Besides the physical barriers, factors such as trade regulatory hindrances and political fragility have often created obstacles in the free flow of trade within the region. In 2013, while unveiling the much-hyped Chinese concept of One Belt One Road (OBOR) (later rechristened BRI) in Kazakhstan, President Xi Jinping said that all Central Asian countries "should take an innovative approach" and collaborate with China in setting up "an economic belt along the Silk Road". (China Today, 2018)⁸⁵ Out of the six economic corridors of the BRI, two run through Central Asia. The New Eurasian Land Bridge connects China with Kazakhstan, Russia and Europe, while another route establishes China's connectivity with Central Asia and West Asia, giving it a direct geostrategic footprint on the region. Under the BRI, infrastructure projects like railways, ports and highways are constructed exclusively by Chinese companies with loans from Chinese state-owned banks. So far, China has invested more than 100 billion US Dollars in these infrastructure projects. The estimated cost of 70 BRI economic corridors is 575 billion US Dollars. According to the World Bank, the completion of the BRI projects will boost trade and reduce travel time in the economic corridors by 12 percent, and lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty and increase incomes by 3.4 percent. However, the World Bank has also cautioned about the debt risks, stranded infrastructure, environmental and social risks, and corruption. (WorldBank, 2018)⁸⁶ The Central Asian economies, too, earlier viewed BRI as their chance to blur their shared physical barriers with China-

⁸⁵ Factbox: Belt and Road Initiative in five years. (2018). *China Today*.
http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/2018/zdtj/201808/t20180827_800139221.html.

⁸⁶ Belt and Road Initiative", (March, 2018). *The World Bank*.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/regional-integration/brief/belt-and-road-initiative>

implemented cross-country connectivity projects. They also hoped that the BRI would once again enable them to assume centrality in terms in global trade.



The Figure 8 showing Chinese Belt and Road Initiative through land and Sea enrouting the strategic trade routes along with encircling India

However, quite unlike what they hoped, Beijing used the BRI as a geostrategic and geopolitical tool to merely strengthen and expand its own hegemonic quest in the region. The region only became a transit route for Central Asia and Europe-bound Chinese goods, while not resulting in clear benefits to the economic development of the region. China has successfully used the BRI to relieve the pressures of overproduction in the mainland and exploit the much-needed hydrocarbon reserves of the region, while landing the CARs in its deep debt trap. (Furukawa, 2018)⁸⁷ By 2016, half of the external debt of Kyrgyzstan (1.4 billion US Dollars) and Tajikistan (1.1 billion US Dollars) comprised of loans from China's EXIM Bank. Debt from all other global institutions including the World Bank, IMF, Asian Development Bank and others, made up the other half. (Farchy, 2016)⁸⁸

The BRI investments and loans to CARs increased trade between the two regions manifold. In 2016, trade reached 26,267.1 million US Dollars (UN Conference,

⁸⁷ Furukawa. E. (2018, August). Belt and Road debt trap spreads to Central Asia, *Nikkei Asian Review*.

⁸⁸ Jack Farcl h, J. (2016). China's growing influence in Central Asia", *Financial Times*.

2016)⁸⁹ against 1.5 billion US Dollars in 2001. (Stratfor World view, 2016)⁹⁰ China, like the Soviet Union, is primarily interested in importing raw materials, energy, and mining resources from the region, while flooding the Central Asian markets with their over-produced goods in Chinese industries and factories. For example, when the cargo train service was started in 2017 between Xian in China's Shaanxi Province and Uzbekistan, Tashkent sent 1,000 tonnes of cotton yarn to China, with the eventual goal of delivering 3,000 tonnes of cotton per month. (Magnier, 2016)⁹¹ The other key exports from Central Asia are food products, iron ore, other metals and uranium. China imported 306.9 thousand tonnes of wheat, 123.7 thousand tonnes of sunflower seeds, and 44.5 thousand tonnes of other oil seeds from Kazakhstan alone. (Zerno, 2018)⁹² Over 80 percent of Kazakhstan's exports to China comprised raw materials like ferrous and non-ferrous metals, while exports from Kyrgyzstan to China included raw materials for textiles like leather and wool (23 %) and ferrous and non-ferrous metal waste (60 %). Turkmenistan exports to China mainly constitute energy sources – 83 % of total exports. (Paramanov, 2005)⁹³

As a result, CARs, instead of benefitting from the BRI, continued to fare poorly on ease of doing business parameters. According to the World Bank data of 2019 that ranked 190 countries on an Ease of Trading Across Borders Index, Kyrgyzstan was ranked number 89, Kazakhstan, 105 Tajikistan 141 and Uzbekistan 152. (World Bank, 2019)⁹⁴ Factors such as regional competition, weak governance, economic stagnation, tension over water

⁸⁹ Trade and development report. (2016). UNCTAD. Newyork, Geneva, United Nations.

⁹⁰ *China's Long March Into Central Asia*. (2016). Stratfor World view.

⁹¹ Mark Magnier, M. (2016). How China is Changing its Manufacturing Strategy. *The Wall Street Journal*.

⁹² SevernoeZerno,GC. (2018). Agriproducts import volumes to China to increase. *APK INFORM*. <https://www.apk-inform.com/en/exclusive/opinion/1100785..>

⁹³ Paramanov, V. (2005). *China and Central Asia: Present and future of economic relations*. Conflict Studeis Research Centre: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/92589/05_May.pdf

⁹⁴ Trading Across Borders. (2019) *The World Bank*. <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/rankings>

resources, and high cost of border trade are the main reasons for the CARs' poor ranking. China's infrastructure projects under the BRI are tactical and meant to only draw benefits for the mainland, and not to aid the regional economic integration. Furthermore, the BRI failed to remove the hindrances of intraregional trade within the CARs as investments in road and infrastructure projects under the initiative are mostly bilateral. Of the total 51 road and infrastructure projects, only 18 are multilateral shown in Table 1. Also, Table 2 shows Chinese investments in road and infrastructure projects in the region are at third place, exposing how China has clearly focused on exploiting the region for its own interests.

Table 1: Number of Bilateral Vs Multilateral Chinese projects in Central Asia

Country	Total by country		Road and Infrastructure		Energy connectivity		Trade and industrial development	
	Bilateral	Multilateral	Bilateral	Multilateral	Bilateral	Multilateral	Bilateral	Multilateral
Kazakhstan	100	2	13	1	20	0	60	1
Kyrgyzstan	41	5	8	3	5	0	16	1
Tajikistan	35	9	8	8	6	1	17	0
Uzbekistan	38	5	2	3	0	1	16	1
Turkmenistan	23	3	2	3	4	0	12	0
Total	237	24	33	18	46	2	127	3

Source:BRI in Central Asia: Overview of Chinese Projects, Central Asia Regional Data Review 20 (2019) 1–5

Table 2: Total investment of Chinese projects in Central Asia (US million dollars)

	Rail & road connectivity	Energy connectivity	Industry	Agriculture & food	Hydrocarbon exploration & processing
Kazakhstan	14539	18849	10545	1049	37778

Turkmenistan	1402	9410	NA	NA	1403
Tajikistan	4515	4516	679	342	465
Kyrgyzstan	1773	2713	150	31	676
Uzbekistan	1269	205	923	28	2209
Total	23499	35693	12299	1451	55159

Source: *BRI in Central Asia: Overview of Chinese Projects*, Central Asia Regional Data Review 20 (2019) 1–5

China's Investments in Energy Infrastructure

China began making investments in the hydrocarbon reserves in CARs nearly three decades ago. It has already built cross-country pipelines through Central Asia to fetch gas from Turkmenistan, gas and oil from Kazakhstan and other CARs, to Xinjiang. Investments in CARs have been amongst President Xi Jinping's priority from the time he assumed office. China's investments in Central Asian oil and gas sector date back to 1997, when a 9 billion US Dollars deal was signed with Kazakhstan and the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC). Since then, CNPC has become a leading investor in the oil and gas sector of CARs. It has also played an active role in opening the doors for other Chinese state-owned and private firms in the energy sector. After 1997, the CNPC obtained a majority of exploration licences for the Texaco-North Buzachi oil field in Kazakhstan, the Bagtyyarlyk gas contract area on the right bank of the Amu Darya River, the South Yolotan field in Turkmenistan, and the Mingbulak field in the Namangan region of Uzbekistan (Zhuwei, 2015)⁹⁵.

The 3,666 km-long Central Asia-China gas pipeline that starts from Gedaim in Uzbekistan/ Turkmenistan and offloads gas at Xinjiang was completed at an estimated cost of 7.3 billion US Dollars⁹⁶. Constructed by CNPC, the pipeline transported 4.38 billion cubic meters

⁹⁵ Zhuwei, W. (2015). *Securing Energy Flows from Central Asia to China and the Relevance of the Energy Charter Treaty to China*. Energy Charter Secretariat.

⁹⁶ Central Asia-China Gas Pipeline. (2020). CNPC.
https://www.cnpc.com.cn/en/CentralAsia/CentralAsia_index.shtml#:~:text=Under%20the%20agreements%2C%20CNPC%20would,each%20running%20for%201%2C833km.

(bcm) of natural gas to China from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan in 2010. China's gas imports increased to 36.2 bcm via this pipeline in 2017 (Putz, 2018)⁹⁷. As the demand for gas has increased tremendously in China and the existing network of pipelines is no longer sufficient, new pipelines – financed by Chinese state-owned companies – are being constructed to connect all the CARs gas reserves with China. The dependence on Chinese investments and gas pipeline grid has created huge constraints for CARs, especially Turkmenistan. Since 2017, following the cutting off of imports by Russia from the world's largest gas fields in Turkmenistan; this isolated Central Asian country has become completely dependent on China for gas exports (Lelyveld, 2020)⁹⁸

The China-Kazakhstan crude oil pipeline connects Xinjiang and Kazakhstan. Other countries such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have also sought more cooperation with China in oil exploration. The China-Kazakhstan crude pipeline passes through a 1,500-km desert area, 340 km of marshes, 830 km of area that experience some of the world's strongest overland wind currents. The pipeline was completed in 2009 and the capacity reached to production of 12 million tonnes of crude oil in 2012. This capacity was doubled to 24 million tonnes in 2018 (Aminjonov *et al.*, 2019)⁹⁹. As shown in Table 2, most of the investments from Beijing were in hydrocarbons exploration and processing and energy connectivity sectors.

The deals worth 30 billion US Dollars including building an oil refinery in Kazakhstan are among 22 agreements signed between China and Kazakhstan in 2013. In Kashagan, the discovery of the world's largest oil field increased Kazakhstan's offshore and on-shore oil reserves to an estimated 37 billion barrels. The country now sells 8.3 percent of offshore oilfield to Beijing for 5 billion US Dollars after the Kashagan deal in 2013 (Gordeyeva, 2013)¹⁰⁰. In Kazakhstan, Chinese shares in the Kazakhstan hydrocarbon and uranium explorations are more than 60 percent and even some of the companies have exclusively 100-percent Chinese shares

⁹⁷ Putz, C. (2018). Central Asia Gassing Up China. *The Diplomat*.

⁹⁸ Lelyveld, M. (2020). China Nears Limit on Central Asian Gas. *Radio Free Asia*.

⁹⁹ Aminjonov, F. et al. (2019, January 01). BRI in Central Asia: Overview of Chinese Projects. *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)*.

¹⁰⁰ Gordeyeva, M. (2013). China buys into giant Kazakh Oilfield for \$5 billion. *Reuters*.

(Jumadilova *etal.*, 2020)¹⁰¹. In Turkmenistan, China's largest natural gas supplier, President Xi Jinping has announced the opening of the world's second-biggest gas field in production. In Uzbekistan, another 15-billion US Dollars deal was inked for oil, gas and uranium exploration (The Economist, 2013)¹⁰². In oil exploration and refineries, Sinopec, China's largest oil refiner, has constructed many facilities in the CARs. Sinopec has also bagged many contracts in the region for the modernisation of these facilities.

Gradually, with the economic and global ascent of China, Beijing has increasingly resorted to using coercive-assertive strategies without respecting the cultural identities of Central Asian countries, especially after 2017 (Wani, 2019)¹⁰³. The ancient Silk Route that passed through the CARs established between the people of Xinjiang and Central Asia centuries-old cultural and ethnic bonds based on shared history, religion, language. After the announcement of the "great wall of iron" in 2017 (China's Xi calls for 'great wall of iron' to safeguard restive Xinjiang, 2017)¹⁰⁴ to safeguard the China's restive western region of Xinjiang, more than one million Uyghurs, including Kazaks, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks (Zenz, 2018)¹⁰⁵ were sent to "re-education camps" in Xinjiang (Kuo, 2018)¹⁰⁶. These people are forced to pledge loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), learn Mandarin and denounce Islam and their culture (Wani, 2019)¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰¹ Jumadilova, G. et al. (2020). China's Interests in Central Asia. *Cyber Leninka*.

¹⁰² Rising China, Sinking Russia. (2013). *The Economist*.

¹⁰³ Wani, A. (2019). Rising anti-Chinese sentiments in Kazakhstan. *ORF*. <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/rising-anti-chinese-sentiments-in-kazakhstan/>.

¹⁰⁴ China's Xi calls for 'great wall of iron' to safeguard restive Xinjiang, (2017). *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-security-xinjiang-idUSKBN16H04J>.

¹⁰⁵ Zenz, A. (2018). Thoroughly reforming them towards a healthy heart attitude— China's political re-education campaign in Xinjiang. *Central Asian Survey*. Vol. 38(1); (pp. 102-128.)

¹⁰⁶ Kuo, L. (2018). My soul, where are you?': families of Muslims missing in China meet wall of silence. *The Guardian*.

¹⁰⁷ Wani, A. (2019). From cultural persecution to illegal organ harvesting in Xinjiang: Why is Muslim world silent?. Observer Research Foundation (ORF).

In the past three years, the people in Central Asia are increasingly worried about the fate of their ethnic brethren in neighbouring Xinjiang who have been subjected to a cultural onslaught by China. The Kazak foreign ministry have termed the treatment of minorities in Xinjiang a delicate issue (The Economist, 2020)¹⁰⁸. Though officially the CARs are reluctant to speak out on the issue of re-education Camps because of their growing indebtedness to Chinese BRI investments (Ibid)¹⁰⁹, anti-Chinese sentiments are high, especially in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan has witnessed protests against the Government's pronouncement to allow China to set up 55 factories that will deepen Kazakhstan's economic dependence on China. The situation has worsened to such an extent, that the government of Kazakhstan has arrested prominent anti-China activists to avert violence (Jardine, 2019)¹¹⁰. In Kyrgyzstan, there were protests against Beijing in January 2019 (Kyrgyz police disperse anti-Chinese rally, 2019)¹¹¹. In August 2019, more than 500 villagers in Kyrgyzstan entered a mine operated by Chinese company and injured 20 Han workers (Putz, 2019)¹¹².

Central Asia Pushing Back China:

China has increased its access to the region's huge hydro-carbon resources, while flooding the markets of the region with Chinese products through Khorgos, a special economic zone and dry port on the Kazakh-China border. Khorgos, located in Xinjiang's Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, is a bustling duty-free and visa-free centre flooded with people from Kazakhstan and other CARs for discount deals on the over-produced Chinese goods (Reuhl, 2019)¹¹³. More than 80 percent of the shipped goods at Khorgos go to the countries of the former Soviet Union, and 35 to 40 percent go to Uzbekistan alone (Ibid)¹¹⁴. The rotation of capital illustrates the classical

¹⁰⁸ Will China sit again at the heart of its own cosmos? (2020). The Economist.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

¹¹⁰ Jardine, B. (2019) Why are there anti-China protests in Central Asia?. *The Washington Post*.

¹¹¹ Kyrgyz police disperse anti-Chinese rally. (2019). *Reuters*.

¹¹² Putz, C. (2019). Tensions Flare at Kyrgyz Gold Mine. *The Diplomat*.

¹¹³ Ruehl, H. (2019). The Khorgos Hype on the Belt and Road. *The Diplomat*.

¹¹⁴ Ibid

form of colonialism in a new perspective – while China invested to buy the hydrocarbons of the region, it flooded the markets with finished goods without any regard for the region's indigenous industries and factories. Furthermore, most investments from China have come with Chinese workers and security personnel. The presence of Chinese security personnel in the region increased manifold (Yan, 2019)¹¹⁵ after the bombing in 2016 at the Chinese embassy in Kyrgyzstan (Putz, 2016)¹¹⁶

By most accounts, China's BRI investments lack transparency. Out of the 68 countries that have agreed for Chinese investments under BRI, 23 face the risk of landing into China's debt trap (Hurley, Morris, Portelance, 2019)¹¹⁷. In the case of CARs, especially, only three countries – Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—have been able to sustain the Chinese debt with returns from hydrocarbons and uranium exports. However, the less resource-rich countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan already owe China an estimated 4 billion US Dollars and 1.38 billion US Dollars loans, respectively. Both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were forced to insert a clause in their respective BRI agreements that transfer greater control over the assets to China if they defaulted in the repayment of loans. Under this clause, Beijing already acquired ownership of a lucrative gold mine in Tajikistan (Furukawa, 2018)¹¹⁸. In 2011, Tajikistan, where only six percent of the total land mass is arable, was forced to cede 2,000 hectares of that arable land exclusively to 1,500 Chinese farmers for rice cultivation (Pannier, 2011)¹¹⁹. In this case, China not only exploited Tajikistan for its geostrategic advantage, but also for its food security. Stung by the experience of its neighbouring republics with China's BRI, resource-rich Kazakhstan has responded with its own plan of NurlyZhol ('Bright Path') in 2015. Under this

¹¹⁵ Yan, Y T. (2019). Chinese Private Security Moves Into Central Asia. *The Diplomat*.

¹¹⁶ Putz, C. (2016). Suicide Attack on Chinese Embassy in Kyrgyzstan. *The Diplomat*.

¹¹⁷ Hurley, J; Morris, S and Portelance, G. (2018, March). *Examining the Debt Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative from a Policy Perspective*. Washington DC, Center for global development.

¹¹⁸ Furukawa, E. (2018). Belt and Road debt trap spreads to Central Asia. *Nikkei Asian Review*.

¹¹⁹ Pannier, B. (2011). Tajikistan Agrees To Allow Chinese Farmers To Till Land. *Eurasianet*.

plan, 9 billion US Dollars are being invested to upgrade and build 7,000 km of roads and 4,000 km of railways in Kazakhstan (Russell, 2019)¹²⁰.

The Central Asian countries themselves are looking towards new partners like India to balance China. Such “suspicions” of China are not new. Buhar-Jiru, an adviser to the 18th-century political leader Abulai Khan of Kazakhstan, had used the metaphor of a rider and a horse to present his perception of China: “Russian yoke is made of leather that can gradually be worn out, while Chinese yoke is made of iron and one can’t free oneself from it.” (Wani, 2019)¹²¹ The CARs countries recognise that China’s increased engagement in the region presents many opportunities; at the same time, China’s hegemonic thrust has provoked mistrust among its civil societies (Mariani, 2019)¹²². Under these conditions, as most of the Central Asians regimes are authoritarian with weak governmental institutions, they are likely to bandwagon with China anyway (Waltz, 1993)¹²³. CAR under such pressure, is trying to balance China with India. The CARs countries are seeking closer relations with India by enhancing diplomatic channels, making more frequent mutual visits, signing various agreements, and pushing for stronger trade relations.

India as an immediate alternative to China:

India revived its “Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation” (ITEC) programme to provide assistance to the CARs countries, as well as capacity building through training programmes, study tours, technology transfers and, in some cases, aid for disaster relief. The ITEC programmes covered information technology, management, journalism, diplomacy, entrepreneurship, and banking. New Delhi also signed the Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) with three of the five CARs—Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—to stimulate defence cooperation and deepen trade relations. Through various initiatives under the Indian

¹²⁰ Russell, M. (2019, April 02). Connectivity in Central Asia: Reconnecting the Silk Road. *EPRS*.

¹²¹ Wani, A. (2019). Rising anti-Chinese sentiments in Kazakhstan. *ORF*.

¹²² Mariani, B. (2013). China’s Role and Interests in Central Asia, Safe world. also see Strokan, S. (2019). India is eager for Eurasia, *Kommersant*.

¹²³ Waltz, K N. (1993). *Theory of International Politics*, University of California, Berkeley. Pp. 113.

Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), India also stressed on rekindling the country's ancient mutual cultural linkages with the region. Until today, the ICCR organises cultural conferences, and provides scholarships to students of CARs to study Indian arts and culture. New Delhi has established Indian Cultural Centres in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. At the India-Central Asia Dialogue in January 2019 at Samarkand, India's External Affairs Minister SushmaSwaraj remarked, "We (India-Central Asia) are bound together through shared history, cultural linkages and common habits and traditions." (Kamilov, 2019)¹²⁴

New Delhi's constructivism is more concretely manifested in its 'Connect Central Asia' policy. The policy, launched in 2012, aimed to enhance India's political, economic, historical and cultural connections with Central Asia. Portraying India's Connect Central Asia policy as a means to reconnect with Central Asia, "with which we are bound by the silken bonds of centuries of common history," the then External Affairs Minister, E. Ahmad said, "The policy is based on pro-active political, economic and people-to-people engagement with Central Asian Countries, both individually and collectively." (Ahamad, 2012)¹²⁵ However, India's strategic, economic and cultural interests remained severely curtailed as such aim was stonewalled by Pakistan's lack of willingness to allow India passage through its territory.

Connectivity Projects

The planned Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline—which could have helped meet the energy needs of South Asia—has been stalled since 2006. (Sachdeva, 2013)¹²⁶ Consequently, India has had to explore other options for establishing connectivity with CARs to obtain direct access to the hydrocarbon-rich and geo-strategically important region as well as war-torn Afghanistan. New Delhi announced its plans to invest in Chabahar port in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran in 2003. However, the major push to developing the port

¹²⁴ Kamilov, A K. (2019, January 13). Statement by External Affairs Minister at the First Session of the India-Central Asia Dialogue. *Ministry of external affairs*. [https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl%2F30905%2FStatement by External Affairs Minister at the First Session of the IndiaCentral Asia Dialogue](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl%2F30905%2FStatement+by+External+Affairs+Minister+at+the+First+Session+of+the+IndiaCentral+Asia+Dialogue).

¹²⁵ Ahamad, M E. (2012). *Keynote Address: First India- Central Asia Dialogue*, Ministry of External Affairs.

¹²⁶ GulshanSachdeva, G. (2013). *TAPI: Time for the Big Push*. The Central Asia Caucasus Analyst.

came after the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) between India and Iran in 2015.

US-Iran relations, which were already strained after the unilateral withdrawal of the US from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in May 2018 and the imposition of sanctions on Iran, became more hostile after the assassination of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in January 2020. The US strike that killed Soleimani took place barely a week after Iran and India reviewed ties after the 2+2 dialogue between US and India in Washington. (Ghosh, 2019)¹²⁷ During that dialogue, the US gave India a narrow exemption for the development of Chabahar as a strategic port developed jointly by Iran, Afghanistan and India to trade with CARs. The written assurances by the US include facilitation of funds from the global banks for the purchase of equipment worth US\$85 million to be erected at Chabahar port for warehouses, cranes for loading and unloading and multi-purpose terminals. However, this commitment to India is grounded on certain assurances by India, foremost of which is that Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) cannot participate in the project. (Wani, 2019)¹²⁸

The importance accorded by India to the Chabahar port – despite the uncertainties brought about by the US-Iran tensions– can be gauged by the budgetary allocation to the project, which doubled to INR 1000 million in budget 2020-21 from INR 450 million in the previous year. At the same time, Indian firms are reluctant to invest in the port, posing challenges to India's plans to build and operationalise the Chabahar port. In 2018 India succeeded in partially opening the port; it is not clear when the entire port will be fully operationalised.

Most of CARs countries' leaders view India's Chabahar port as an opportunity to diversify their export markets and control the ambitions of China. These CARs nations have admitted New Delhi into the Ashgabat Agreement, (Stobdan, 2018)¹²⁹ which allows India to use the existing land connectivity networks to facilitate trade and commercial interactions with both Central Asia and Eurasia and also access the natural resources of the region. One of the railway

¹²⁷ Ghosh, R. (2019). India-US 2+2 Dialogue: Concerns remain amid growing strategic convergence. The Times of India.

¹²⁸ ANI, (2019). India gets 'narrow exemption' from sanctions on Chabahar for Afghan aid. The Telegraph.

¹²⁹ Stobdan, P. (2018). Significance of India Joining the Ashgabat Agreement. IDSA.

lines under the Ashgabat Agreement that connects Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan became operational in 2014. This route gives landlocked Central Asia access to Iran's Persian Gulf seaports. India can use this route to overcome Pakistan's hostility and Afghan instability – and give itself access to markets of CARs and high-value minerals in the region including uranium, copper, titanium, ferroalloys, yellow phosphorus, iron ore, and rolled metal. Kazakhstan has already made a state policy to increase the non-oil exports to 50 % by 2025. (Wani, 2019)¹³⁰ As the Ashgabat Agreement gives India direct access to CARs, it can exercise its goodwill across the region by using the Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan railway line.

Exploring New Opportunities

The growing geostrategic and security concerns regarding BRI has forced New Delhi to fix its ineffectual strategy towards Central Asia, marred by direct access and delayed investments in Chabahar port till 2015 because of US sanctions. Soon after assuming office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited all the Central Asian countries in July 2015. These visits boosted the momentum of India's "Connect Central Asia" policy of 2012 and set in motion the next stage of cooperation. The visits also marked a major shift in India's diplomatic relations with the region. For the first time, New Delhi was looking at the region as a geographical unit. Eventually, the CARs became the link that also placed the Eurasian region firmly in New Delhi's zone of interest. India and CARs signed several deals on a range of issues including security, energy, trade and culture, with Prime Minister Modi reiterating the need to rejuvenate India's ancient traditional and socioeconomic ties with the region. (BBC, 2015)¹³¹

Prime Minister Modi's visits to the Central Asian countries—the first such visits by an Indian head of government to the region—were reciprocated by visits to India by the presidents of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and twice by Uzbekistan. Clearly, this has marked the mutual desire of India and the Central Asian states to strengthen their bilateral and trilateral arrangements.

Influence of China on India and its impact on India's Venture in Central Asia:

¹³⁰ Wani, A. (2019). India in pivotal geographies: Central Asia. ORF.

¹³¹ Can Modi reconnect with Central Asia? (2015). BBC Monitoring.

The first records of contact between China and India were written during the 2nd century BCE. Buddhism was transmitted from India to China in the 1st century CE. Trade relations via the Silk Road acted as economic contact between the two regions. Starting from becoming a trusted member of Non Alignment Movement to India's permanent status in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Sino – Indian relations has always been unpredictable. The 1962 war waged by China against India flouting the principles of NAM is a perfect example of China's attitude towards India. Starting from the tensions of Arunachal Pradesh to Sikkim or sending Chinese troops to Ladhak, Sino India relations have never been smooth. Moreover, Pakistan and China share relations in an attempt to contain India, as well as drive Chinese infrastructure projects in the disputed territory of northern India. In South Asia and South-East Asia, a power balance struggle between China and India is seen in relation to third countries (Bajpai et al., 2020)¹³².

Bilateral trade between India and China:

June 2012, China stated its position that "Sino-Indian ties" would be the most "important bilateral partnership of the century" (Times of India, 2012)¹³³ setting a goal to increase bilateral trade to 100 billion US Dollars by 2015 (Times of India, 2012)¹³⁴. Bilateral trade between China and India touched 89.6 billion US Dollars in 2017–18¹³⁵, with the trade deficit widening to 62.9

¹³² Bajpai, K . et al. (2020, February 25). Introduction: Taking stock—a multi-disciplinary view of China–India relations. The impact of triangular relations. Routledge Handbook of China–India Relations. Routledge

¹³³ US, China woo India for control over Asia-Pacific. (2012, June 07). The Times of India. Archived from the original on 31 May 2013. Retrieved 1 July 2013

¹³⁴ India-China bilateral trade set to hit \$100 billion by 2015. (2012, June 21) The Times of India. Archived from the original on 24 June 2012. Retrieved 3 August 2012

¹³⁵ China India Relations. (2021, February 12), In Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%E2%80%93India_relations

¹³⁵ India-China bilateral trade hits historic high of USD 84.44 bln in 2017. (2018, March 07). The Economic Times. Archived from the original on 3 May 2018. Retrieved 2 May 2018

billion US Dollar in China's favour (The Economic Times, 2018)¹³⁶. In 2017, the volume of bilateral trade between India & China stands at 84.5 billion US Dollars (Ibid)¹³⁷. Chinese imports from India amounted to 16.4 billion US Dollars or 0.8% of its overall imports, and 4.2% of India's overall exports in 2014 (Wikipedia)¹³⁸. Major commodities exported from India to China were: cotton; gems, precious metals, coins; copper; ores, slag, ash; organic chemicals; salt, sulphur, stone, cement; machines, engines, pumps (Wikipedia)¹³⁹. Chinese exports to India amounted to 58.4 billion US Dollars or 2.3% of its overall exports, and 12.6% of India's overall imports in 2014. Major commodities exported from China to India were: electronic equipment; machines, engines, pumps; organic chemicals; fertilizers; iron and steel; pastics; iron or steel products; gems, precious metals, coins; ships, boats; medical, technical equipment (Wikipedia)¹⁴⁰. In 2018, a Standing Committee on Commerce chaired by Naresh Gujral submitted a report on the 'Impact of Chinese Goods on Indian Industry'. The report pointed out insufficient implementation of anti-dumping laws, reliance on Chinese raw materials in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, reliance on Chinese imports in India's National Solar Mission, Goods and Services Tax on certain products resulting in increased imports from China, and Indian smart city administrations preferring Chinese bicycles over Indian ones (Impact of PRS Legislative Research, 2020)¹⁴¹.

Dispute over Water and Border:

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Sen, A. (2018, July 12). India tells China: \$63-b trade deficit untenable. In Businessline. <https://trendlyne.com/posts/1540143/india-tells-china-63-b-trade-deficit-untenable>.

¹³⁹ Top China Exports. Archived from the original on 21 May 2016. Retrieved 16 May 2016. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_exports_of_China.

¹⁴⁰ Top China Exports. Archived from the original on 21 May 2016. Retrieved 16 May 2016. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_exports_of_China.

¹⁴¹ Impact of Chinese Goods on Indian Industry. (2020, October 20). PRS Legislative Research

A total of seven rivers that start in Tibet flow through India — Indus, Sutlej, Karnali (Ghaghara), Subansiri, Brahmaputra and Lohit (and its tributary Dulai) (Bhattacharji, 2020)¹⁴². India has concern with China's water-diversion, dam-building and inter-river plans. Moreso, in a conflict, India fears that China can use the rivers as leverage. China has already constructed ten dam on the Bhramaputra and its tributaries such as the Zangmu Dam ¹⁴³, and there has been talk of China building a mega-dam at the "great bend" called the Motuo Dam. India's concerns also stem from the fact that China does not cooperate with regard to timely sharing of information related to projects which would impact water sharing; nor does China allow Indian experts to visit dam sites. There are a number of MOUs on hydrological data sharing between the two countries with regard to the Brahmaputra including emergency management (Selina, 2018) ¹⁴⁴.

In 2005, China and India signed the 'Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity' (Chinese embassy in India, 2005)¹⁴⁵. However, there has been very little if not any strategic convergence between the two countries (Livemint, 2017)¹⁴⁶. Instead In November 2006, China and India had a verbal spat over claim of the north-east Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. India claimed that China was occupying 38,000 square kilometres of its territory in Kashmir, while China claimed the whole of Arunachal Pradesh as its own (BBC News, 2006)¹⁴⁷. In 2007, China denied the application for visa from an Indian Administrative Service

¹⁴² Bhattacharji, R. (2009, December 04). Where is the dam?. The Hindu.Frontline. Retrieved 4 November 2020.

¹⁴³The Zangmu Dam is a gravity dam on the YarlungZangbo/Brahmaputra River 9 km (5.6 mi) northwest of Gyaca in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. This dam is built a few kilometers from the Bhutan-India border. The purpose of the dam is hydroelectric power production using run-of-the-river technology. It is part of the Zangmu Hydropower Project and supports a 510 MW power station. Construction began in 2009 and the first generator was commissioned in November 2014. The last became operational on 13 October 2015. It is the first dam on the Brahmaputra/YarlungZangbo River and has caused controversy in India.

¹⁴⁴ Selina, H. (2018, September 03). "Power Asymmetry and the China-India Water Dispute". In Paul, T. V. (ed.). *The China-India Rivalry in the Globalization Era*. Georgetown University Press. pp. Chapter 7.

¹⁴⁵ China, India agree on strategic partnership. (2005, April 12). *Chinese Embassy in India*.. Retrieved 26 May 2020.

¹⁴⁶ *The reality of the India-China strategic dialogue*. . (2017, February 24). Livemint. Retrieved 26 May 2020.

¹⁴⁷ *India and China row over border*. (2006, February 14). Wayback Machine, BBC News. Archived 15 February 2008 . Retrieved 31 January 2007.

officer in Arunachal Pradesh. According to China, since Arunachal Pradesh is a territory of China, he would not need a visa to visit his own country (CNN-IBN, 2007)¹⁴⁸. Later in December 2007, China reversed its policy by granting a visa. Chinese Premier paid an official visit to India from 15 to 17 December 2010 at the invitation of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (People's Daily, 2012)¹⁴⁹. He was accompanied by 400 Chinese business leaders, who wished to sign business deals with Indian companies (BBC, 2011)¹⁵⁰. During this visit Premier Wen Jiabao said "India and China are two very populous countries with ancient civilisations, friendship between the two countries has a time-honoured history, which can be dated back 2,000 years" (The Tribune, 2012)¹⁵¹. In April 2011, during the BRICS summit in Sanya, Hainan, China the two countries agreed to restore defence co-operation and China had hinted that it may reverse its policy of administering stapled visas to residents of Jammu and Kashmir (India Today, 2011)¹⁵². This practice was later stopped and as a result, defence ties were resumed between the two countries and joint military drills were expected. India's insistence to raise South China Sea in various multilateral forums subsequently did not help that beginning once again, the relationship facing suspicion from Indian administration and media alike (Goswami, 2015)¹⁵³. In September 2014 the relationship took a sting as troops of the People's Liberation Army reportedly entered two kilometres inside the Line of Actual Control in Chumar sector (The Indian Express,

¹⁴⁸ China denies visa to IAS officer. (2007, May 25). CNN-IBN. Archived from the original on 21 August 2007. Retrieved 31 August 2007.

¹⁴⁹ Chinese premier urges closer cultural, youth links with India – People's Daily Online". (2010, December 17). People's Daily. Archived from the original on 15 October 2012. Retrieved 3 August 2012.

¹⁵⁰ Chinese PM Wen Jiabao begins bumper Indian trade trip. (2010, December 15). BBC News. Archived from the original on 26 January 2011.

¹⁵¹ The Tribune, Chandigarh, India – Main News. (2012, November 02). The Tribune . Retrieved 3 August 2012.

¹⁵² India, China to restore defence co-operation :Neighbours, News. (2011, April, 13). India Today.. Archived from the original on 1 August 2011. Retrieved 3 August 2012.

¹⁵³ Goswami, R. (2015, May 11). Can Modi Make China India's Natural Ally for Development?. HuffPost. Archived from the original on 14 February 2017. Retrieved 14 February 2017.

2014)¹⁵⁴. The next month, V. K. Singh said that China and India had come to a "convergence of views" on the threat of terrorism emanating from Pakistan (Krishan, 2014)¹⁵⁵. According to a 2014 BBC World Service Poll, 23% of Indians view China positively, with 47% expressing a negative view, whereas 27% of Chinese people view India positively, with 35% expressing a negative view (BBC, 2016)¹⁵⁶. A 2014 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center showed 72% of Indians were concerned that territorial dispute between China and neighbouring countries could lead to a military conflict (Pew research, 2014)¹⁵⁷. Disruptions have risen again due to China building trade routes, the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor, with Pakistan on disputed Kashmir territory. On 16 June 2017 Chinese troops with construction vehicles and road-building equipment began extending an existing road southward in Doklam, a territory which is claimed by both China as well as India's ally Bhutan (LosAngeles Time, 2017)¹⁵⁸. On 18 June 2017, around 270 Indian troops, with weapons and two bulldozers, entered Doklam to stop the Chinese troops from constructing the road. Among other charges, China accused India of illegal intrusion into its territory, across what it called the mutually agreed China-India boundary, and violation of its territorial sovereignty and UN Charter (China foreign ministry, 2017)¹⁵⁹.

India accused China of changing the status quo in violation of a 2012 understanding between the two governments regarding the tri-junction boundary points and causing "security

¹⁵⁴ Chinese troops said to be 2 km inside LAC, build-up on the rise.(2014, September 23). The Indian Express. Archived from the original on 5 March 2016. Retrieved 16 May 2016.

¹⁵⁵ Krishnan, A. (2014, October 31). Delhi, Kabul warn China: Pak maybe your ally but it exports terror . India Today. Living Media India Limited. Archived from the original on 1 November 2014. Retrieved 1 November 2014.

¹⁵⁶ 2014 World Service Poll (2016, April 10). Wayback Machine. BBC.

¹⁵⁷ How Asians View Each Other.(2014, July 14). Pew Research Center. Archived from the original on 15 October 2015.Retrieved 10 October 2015.

¹⁵⁸ Standoff, D. (2017, July 24). China sends a warning to India over border dispute. Los Angeles Times.Associated Press. Archived from the original on 11 August 2017. Retrieved 11 August 2017.

¹⁵⁹ China Foreign Ministry (2017, August 02). The Facts and China's Position Concerning the Indian Border Troops Crossing of the China-India Boundary in the Sikkim Sector into the Chinese Territory. fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/. Archived (PDF) from the original on 2 August 2017. Retrieved 15 August 2017.

concerns", which were widely understood as at its concerns with the strategic Siliguri Corridor. On 2 August 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China published a document claiming that Indian border forces had illegally crossed the border between China and India and detailed China's position on the matter (Blanchard, 2017)¹⁶⁰. The document said that China notified India regarding its plan to construct road in advance "in full reflection of China's goodwill" (Ministry of external affairs, 2017)¹⁶¹. The Indian Foreign Ministry replied by referring towards their earlier press release on this matter, as opposed to a point-by-point rebuttal. In 2019, India reiterated that it would not join China's Belt and Road Initiative, stating that it cannot accept a project that ignores concerns about its territorial integrity (ANI, 2019)¹⁶². On 11 October 2019, President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India for a second informal meeting between India and China. Modi and Xi Jinping met 18 times between 2014 and 2019 (Mehta, 2020)¹⁶³.

On 10 May 2020, Chinese and Indian troops clashed in Nathu La, Sikkim, leaving 11 soldiers injured (France-Presse, Agence, 2020)¹⁶⁴. Following the skirmishes in Sikkim, tensions between the two countries grew in Ladakh with a buildup of troops at multiple locations. (Singh, 2020)¹⁶⁵ There were 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of PLA soldiers killed on the night of 15/16 June. China reinforced troops near the Indian border with Tibet, Chinese state

¹⁶⁰ Blanchard, B. (2017, August 04). China says India building up troops amid border stand-off. Reuters. Archived from the original on 5 August 2017. Retrieved 5 August 2017.

¹⁶¹ Weekly Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson (2017, August 07), India, Ministry of external affairs. Archived from the original on 2 March 2019, retrieved 16 August 2017.

¹⁶² India won't join BRI, its concept won't apply to us: Jaishankar. (2019, October 04). Asian News International. Archived from the original on 6 October 2019. Retrieved 5 October 2019.

¹⁶³ Mehta, Ashok K. (2020 October 10). Where Does the India-China Border Dispute Stand Now, and What Can We Expect?. The Wire.

¹⁶⁴ Indian and Chinese soldiers injured in cross-border fistfight, says Delhi. (11 May 2020). France-Presse, Agence . The Guardian. Archived from the original on 12 May 2020. Retrieved 12 May 2020.

¹⁶⁵ Singh, S. (2020, May 24). Chinese intrusions at 3 places in Ladakh: Army chief takes stock. The Indian Express.

media reported. (Aljazeera, 2020)¹⁶⁶ On 29 June, the Indian government banned 59 widely used Chinese mobile phone and desktop applications in response to rising tensions and escalating diplomatic dispute between the two nations. India has been told that visas for Chinese businessmen, academics, industry experts, and advocacy groups will need prior security clearance, and the measures are similar to those that have long been employed with Pakistan (Times of India, 2020)¹⁶⁷. On 19 August and On 27 October, the United States and India signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), enabling greater information-sharing and further defense cooperation, to counter China's growing military power in the region. (Griffiths, 2020)¹⁶⁸

Conclusion:

Thus pertaining to the situation of India and China, the presence of India becomes inevitable in the Central Asian Region. Thus Tatyana Shaumyan, Director of the Center for Indian Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, explained to Kommersant, "The Indian presence in the region should counterbalance the growing Chinese influence and prevent the southern part of the CIS from turning into a region of undivided domination by Beijing".

Chinese domination, which is becoming too tangible needs to be curbed. China, like a giant magnet, is turning the economies and resources of the former Soviet republics in its direction, and this is causing a certain imbalance. At the same time, Russia cannot play the role of an economic counterweight to China. " In this situation, as Vadim Kozyulin notes, "interest in

¹⁶⁶ China sent martial artists to LAC before deadly clash: Report. (2020, June 28) . Aljazeera.. Retrieved 4 July 2020.

¹⁶⁷ slaps new curbs on visas, schools to stem China's influence. Time of India. Archived from the original on 21 August 2020. Retrieved 21 August 2020 China sent martial artists to LAC before deadly clash: Report. (2020, June 28). Aljazeera. Retrieved 4 July 2020. Bloomberg. "India

¹⁶⁸ Griffiths, J. (2020, October 27). India signs defensive agreement with US following Himalayan standoff with China. CNN. Retrieved 27 October 2020.

Indian investments in the region is growing rapidly." In addition, he adds, "the North-South International Transport Corridor project needs a leader that India can become."

According to ArkadyDubnov, an independent Russian expert on Central Asia, the declared task of strengthening international cooperation within the SCO does not mean the end of the rivalry between the two Asian giants - Beijing and Delhi, which will inevitably fight for influence on small countries. "The fact that the head of state, chairing the SCO, Kyrgyzstan, was invited to Modi's inauguration, testifies to the desire of India, which is historically a geopolitical opponent of China, to use the SCO in its own interests, attracting the sympathy of the" small "countries that make up this organization," says ArkadyDubnov.

Indian experts have a similar opinion. "In Central Asia, there is a growing demand for alternative players capable of balancing Chinese influence, and this cannot be overlooked in Delhi, making a completely logical step towards the SCO. In this situation, relations between India and China are becoming relations of cooperation-rivalry, "NandanUnnikrishnan, vice president of the Observer Research Foundation, explained to Kommersant.

In turn, Secretary of the Association of Indian Diplomats Anil Trigunayat believes that the competition between Delhi and Beijing for influence in Central Asia will not go too far. "After being reelected for a second term, NarendraModi focuses on smoothing out the rough edges in relations with Beijing and constructive interaction with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in accordance with the agreements reached by the two heads of state.

Conclusion

The growing engagement of India in the geopolitical forum is favorable for the Central Asian republics that have consistently supported India in every sector starting from being a permanent member at SCO from observer status to becoming of a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The nations believe India can help as an ally for the nations to flourish further in exchange for some of their energy resources which can be used as major bargaining chip. And in the coming future, India's relevancy on the international stage could be proliferated with the backing of these nations. This would not sit well with China, who has tried to quash India's attempt of gaining permanency in the Security Council. In fact, for the future having the Central Asian economies dependent on itself would provide China the status quo required to deny India the permanent seat at the table. Recently, with the turn of the decade, China has been increasing its presence into Central Asia. The exit of NATO forces from Afghanistan means lesser attention will be diverted to Central Asia which presents a gainful window to China who has been looking forward to play up the dismemberment of the Soviet Union to reduce the diplomatic importance of Russia and capture the markets of the former Silk Road. Additionally, with its geographical location, exerting influence in the region would serve China's purpose to build a bridge beyond into Eurasia and Europe. With China looking to capture the continent with its mega-developmental projects under the BRI as well as the Shanghai summit, India needs to make sure it keeps its friends close which India does and has been doing at random by visiting the CARs and welcoming these nations in India as well for signing several bilateral and multilateral agreements recently being Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA) with three of the five CARs- Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan-to stimulate defence cooperation and deepen trade relations.

As discussed in the chapters about the historical linkage that Central Asia and India shared for even more than 2000 years, got its momentum with the disintegration of Soviet Union in the 90's with the recognition of the newly independent nation states. While the Great Game which pivoted around annexation of Land between British and Soviets, the New Great Game pivoted around the untapped energy resources that the newly independent republics possessed. And owing to the "Global Energy Demand and Crisis" and India, considering its energy requirement had to participate in the New Great Game but lacked reliance for which a successful

“Look North Policy” or “Connect Central Asia Policy” could not be as fetched as “India’s Look East” policy, although there were Bi-Lateral ties with each of the landlocked Central Asian Republics since their independence from the Soviet Union. But with the attack of 9/11, the scenario in Central Asian Region changed as well with NATO forces coming in Afghanistan to counter terrorism and contain Taliban. With the presence of the US Troops in the region to fight back terrorism and rebuild Afghanistan assisting the Afghan Forces, India became the most trusted reliance to Afghanistan and other Central Asian republics as India has been fighting against terrorism in its own territory. Further the landlocked nations of Central Asia finds a trusted partner in India due to the accessibility of warm waters and has been keen in India’s North South Transport Corridor to that of China’s Belt and Road Initiative which has been discussed in chapter “Non Traditional Security Issues” and also in the chapter “China and Russia Factor in India Kazakhstan relations”. Further Kazakhstan already accounts a successful bi-lateral trade with India among the Central Asian Republics which amounted to 1.5 billion dollars over first five months of 2020, compared to 577.09 million dollars during the same period of 2019.

On Economic Assistance between Central Asian Republics and India:

The Central Asian region is experiencing high growth in the construction industry and cities of Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand offers great scope for investment in construction works for India. India has immense potential in developing small and medium scale industries in the region which is presently being provided through India’s program of ITEC (Indian technical and economic cooperation). The pharmaceuticals offer a huge component for India’s export component of Central Asia worth 28.14% of total exports. Indian companies can actualise their share in the market through joint ventures and setting up manufacturing units of pharmaceutical products in the region.

Sericulture has also re-emerged as an area of synergetic importance in the region. According to International Sericulture Commission 2018, Uzbekistan is the third-largest producer of silk following China and India. India and Central Asia can collaborate by setting up of integrated textile plants within the region to manufacture high-quality silk material.

Similarly, according to the Indian Chamber of Commerce 2017-18, India is the world's second-largest tea producer with a total production of 1325.05 million kgs. Central Asian people are often known as “tea addicts” and offer a huge market for Indian Tea.

Trade facilitation centers are required to boost the centuries-old dry-fruit, tea, and species trade from Central Asian countries to India. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have a large production of various such as cumin, saffron, pepper, etc. which have immense potential to boost the trade volume with India

This would also result in the targeted development of small farmers through a new export market for both India and Central Asian countries. Central Asia has vast potential of untapped service market and India can bridge the gap of rise in demand and lack of services. India, being a major hub of the Information Technology sector, has vast scope for collaboration with these economies for strengthening its Information Communication Technology (ICT) sector. Integrating the service sector of Central Asia with information technology would transform the manufacturing and service sectors. India and Central Asian republics can partner in language training while collaborating on the tourism sector which can provide the twin benefits of employment generation.

India needs to focus on trade in finished and semi-finished products and not just limit its trade relations to import hydrocarbons from the Central Asian region. It is imperative for India to shift the focus from import orientation to establishing a manufacturing base in Central Asia. India needs to establish the base of a special manufacturing zone with a tax-free zone for the goods. Central Asian countries would be mutually interested in manufacturing bases as it will save their industries from Chinese dominance and provide jobs to the Central Asian workforce. It will also boost the local domestic growth and would ease the viability of products such as agricultural products. India's public sector undertakings (PSU's) with the private players have the potential to tap the exports of Central Asian products not just to India but to third countries as well which require a huge financial investment in resources. It can be illustrated in the case of the untapped Hydel potential of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan which is to be supplied to China which at present is only 6% of the total capacity. While the economic partnership will be the key driver of the relationship between India and Central Asia, the cooperation will manifest in strategic and defence spheres too. India's recent entry into Shanghai Cooperation Organization

(SCO) and participation in the Eurasian economic union will affect the relations between Central Asia and South Asia. India's engagement with China, Russia, and European Union within the multilateral regional structure would open the avenues of economic cooperation the Central Asian region.

On Energy potential:

Kazakhstan is a strategic hub in the vast Central Asian-Caspian basin zone, a region with rich energy resources and potential gates for trade and communications between Europe and Asia. Energy has emerged as the most important factor in shaping the geopolitics of Kazakhstan. The geostrategic location and its natural resources have yielded the geopolitical significance of the region. Energy resources allow Kazakhstan to balance the engagement of major powers (example of India and China) in the country and make it a subject of geopolitics rather than an object.

China's energy policy in Kazakhstan is a part of its broader geopolitical approach towards the region that includes economic and infrastructure links, fight against the three evils (terrorism, separatism and extremism), by using multilateral organization like the SCO. While China is seeking to extend its sphere of influence as a regional power in order to enhance its economic and energy security but not seeking territorial expansion into the regions of Central Asia. *Notwithstanding India's limited economic role in Central Asia in general, its recent willingness to be associated with multilateral organizations like the CICA, being member of SCO in 2017 and entering into bilateral Custom Union arrangement have opened prospects for expanding India-Kazakhstan energy cooperation.* Further, India's aim of obtaining energy security could be served through SCO forum which might not be possible in isolation. The time has come to put energy firmly on the agenda in India's relationship with her extended neighborhood. If India does not get into the act quickly, Kazakhstan may well sign off all its forthcoming production to western firms. Furthermore The IEA (International Energy Agency) commends India for its continuous pursuit of market opening and greater use of market-based solutions through ambitious energy sector reforms. Increased access to affordable energy has raised the living standards of all segments of the population. India now has the institutional framework it needs to attract more investment for its growing energy needs. The IEA welcomes the government's decisions to allow private-sector investment in coal mining, and to open up the

country's oil and gas retail markets. The creation of functioning energy markets will ensure economic efficiency in the management of the coal, gas and power sectors, which is critical to achieving energy security and supporting the country's economic growth. This will be increasingly important in the future, as energy demand and investment needs increase in line with India's economic expansion.

Reform of India's electricity sector needs to be comprehensive to achieve these goals. The IEA welcomes the reforms proposed by the Central Energy Regulatory Commission (CERC) and progress made towards improved real-time markets. A country-wide wholesale market is very much needed as a backbone for the national grid. Key to this success will be building a joint vision and a common reform roadmap among a broad range of central government agencies, state authorities, system operators and utilities.

India also faces the challenge of ensuring the financial health of its power sector which is dealing with surplus capacity, lower utilisation of coal and natural gas plants, and increasing shares of variable renewable energy. The government is working to improve the financial viability of the power sector. Faced with the challenge of some "stressed assets" in coal and gas-fired generation, it has been implementing a package of measures to enhance the economic efficiency of coal and gas supply for power generation and the availability of finance. The creation of a competitive wholesale power market will be vital for improving the utilization of India's generation capacity.

Economic Opportunity in Kazakhstan:

For India, Kazakhstan offers the best possible opportunity as a gateway to the Central Asian region. Following are certain suggestions that may serve these goals:

- Keeping in mind the overall pattern and indices of Kazakh imports, key products and services sectors that are of importance for diversification of India's export basket to Kazakhstan are: machine tools, construction and building materials, processed food and spices, edible oils, engineering and construction services, business management and consultancy, agro-business services, public relations and advertising, travel services.
- Earmark specific funds in the annual supplements of India's Foreign Trade Policy for regular business delegation meeting in different cities in both the countries. There should

be Business Consular Service Centres in Astana, Almaty, New Delhi and Mumbai and such institutions should be set up as public-private partnerships with business associations and other civil society groups.

- Economic diplomacy with Kazakhstan must take into account the larger goal of increasing better trade and investment ties with the CIS region. Increased bilateral ties would help to leverage the larger market potential of Belarus-Russia-Kazakhstan customs union as well as the combined market potential of CIS countries.
- All Central Asian states produce high quality cotton. Some major Indian textile companies should be considering setting up a few integrated textile plants in the region to manufacture good quality cotton & blended fabrics. Setting up textile units can be a highly profitable venture for Indian companies, since the lucrative European markets are only 10 to 12 days away by road transit freight from Central Asia.
- There should be target-oriented promotional policies for increasing investment in Kazakhstan's mineral sector. Investment risk assessment in Kazakhstan should be conducted on a regular basis with a view to dynamically review the effectiveness of the provisions of India-Kazakhstan BIPA (Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements).

On the issues of Non Traditional Security factors:

The trading relations between India and Kazakhstan and India & Central Asian region are largely affected due to non-traditional security factors. India and Central Asia have convergence of interest in the realm of Non Traditional Security issues since both faces the common problems of Terrorism and Drug Trafficking because of the instability of Afghanistan. Developments in Central Asia in the last several years indicate the direction in which the strategic winds are blowing. U.S. influence has already peaked, and both Russia and China are cementing their political, military and economic relationship with the Central Asian nations. Meanwhile, India has been endeavoring to improve its profile in the region in order to exploit its energy reserves and to establish a mutually beneficial security and economic relationship. The Central Asian states, while exploiting the competition between the different players for their own national interests, have many conflicts among themselves and are still in the process of moving towards

regional harmony. Political processes are yet to mature, making terrorism a real threat especially because of the unstable situation in Afghanistan and the resurgence of the Taliban. Again as the U.S. and E.U. influence has been on the decline, the Central Asian states continue to be attracted to them because engagement with U.S. and NATO which is a defining feature of their sovereignty and independence. India, with its civilizational and cultural links to the region, combined with its approach based on soft power, could play the role of a balancer. Further, integrating South and Central Asia would result in vast economic benefits to all the stakeholders involved, leading to a positive outcome for stability and security in the region.

China & Russia Factor:

Thus pertaining to the situation of India and China, the presence of India becomes inevitable in the Central Asian region. Tatyana Shaumyan, Director of the Center for Indian Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, explained to Kommersant, “The Indian presence in the region should counterbalance the growing Chinese influence and prevent the southern part of the CIS from turning into a region of undivided domination by Beijing”.



Figure 9 shows India's Counter of Necklace of Diamonds to China's String of Pearls

Chinese domination, which is becoming too tangible needs to be curbed. Chinese “String of Pearls Strategy” to hinder India's Trade movement can only be countered if India sets up a

strategy countering String of pearls by establishing a trading route surrounding China by countering Gwadar Port of Pakistan through Chabahar Port of Iran. *The map shows India's Necklace of Diamond Strategy to that of China's String of Pearls*. China, like a giant magnet, is turning the economies and resources of the former Soviet republics in its direction, and this is causing a certain imbalance. At the same time, Russia cannot play the role of an economic counterweight to China. "In this situation, as Vadim Kozyulin notes, "interest in Indian investments in the region is growing rapidly." In addition, he adds, "the North-South International Transport Corridor project needs a leader that India can become."

According to Arkady Dubnov, an independent Russian expert on Central Asia, the declared task of strengthening international cooperation within the SCO does not mean the end of the rivalry between the two Asian giants - Beijing and Delhi, which will inevitably fight for influence on small countries. "The fact that the Head of state, chairing the SCO, Kyrgyzstan, was invited to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's inauguration, testifies to the desire of India, which is historically a geopolitical opponent of China, to use the SCO in its own interests, attracting the sympathy of the" small "countries that make up this organization," says Arkady Dubnov.

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SummaryTherefore in view of the areas that have been discussed in the chapters addressing the research questions it may be concluded that a robust connect Central Asia Policy

could only be reached out if India works proactively on some of the projects related to connectivity as in the very first stage lack of physical connectivity has been the number one barrier to India's engagement in the region. Bringing to fruition the existing projects on establishing physical connectivity with the Central Asian region is absolutely essential for India to become a critical actor in the region. The TAPI pipeline which was supposed to be functional by 2019 did not even start its construction works in India although it is expected to commence in 2021. Furthermore the trade through Chabahar port located at Iran would help India directly connect with Central Asian Nations and will also cut transport costs & time for Indian goods by one third. Chabahar may also provide link to the planned International North-South Transport Corridor as it has already started showing success story with the recent being transporting of Cargos of Wheat as an aid to Afghanistan on June 28, 2020. With the improve in the transport connectivity the trade between India and Kazakhstan may also increase to a large extent. Further with the accessibility of Chahbahar Port the landlocked Central Asian Republics would also get access not only to the warm waters of Indo-Pacific region but would also be self reliant and have the hassle free access through Arabian Sea to the emerging Indo-Pacific Market where India would play the pivotal role to help Central Asian Republics to build their own economy devoid of Russian and Chinese interference. Moreover Central Asian Republics would have a greater bargaining capability with both Russia and China, which has already started with Uzbekistan's approach towards joining Chahbahar project and demonstrating of having its independent Foreign Policy free from Chinese and Russian influences and boosting its economy by exporting energy through Chahbahar to India.

India and Kazakhstan have cooperation in a wide range of areas like IT, oil and gas, banking, military technical cooperation. Thus boosting trade and commercial ties with the region has to be India's priority as these linkages are vital for projecting Soft Power especially when there is a competitor like China and a natural dominance of Russia. Various small scale projects by Indian companies dotted throughout Central Asia needs to be given a policy and strategic context and possible official support in implementation and timely completion. Further the objective could be better achieved by increasing developmental and humanitarian aid to the region and promoting closer "people to people ties" through educational assistance, knowledge transfer, providing medical and health assistance and encouraging tourism which are the basics of soft power. India further needs to display leadership in forging greater coordination and

cooperation with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in the efforts at stabilising Afghanistan. Further considering the present scenario when US is withdrawing troops which has been 2500 in 2020 from Afghanistan India should consider itself a viable alternative of US in the region considering its historical relations with the region. Also to contain China and Pakistan, India has to deploy both soft and hard power to gain access to Afghanistan through Tajikistan by increasing humanitarian and developmental assistance to the Tajiks and by reaching a quid pro quo with Russia on the common cause of combating extremism and terrorism.

The TAPI Project which would provide around 14bcm of the Gas produced to India and Pakistan which amounts to 42% of the total gas produced has been under process since 2015. The construction of which has started in Afghanistan in 2018 is supposed to be completed and is suppose to be functional from 2021 needs sustained diplomatic efforts for advancing the construction of TAPI by engaging in negotiations with all parties to ensure long-term security of energy supply. Here membership of SCO may offer a useful multilateral platform to engage in dialogue with Pakistan on this and other issues which will enable India to strike a workable relationship with Pakistan.

Thus India also needs to develop new initiatives and vision to work closely with China and Russia in shaping multilateral regional structures and incorporating Afghanistan in the broader framework. India's engagement with SCO and AIIB is definitely a positive start. Although Russia's try to rope Central Asian Countries through European Economic Union as a part of a new endeavour of a "Greater Eurasian Partnership" couldn't attract all the Central Asian Republics due to Russia's economic weakness with the fall in the Oil Prices at the international market and the sanctions Russia is facing from EU countries . So it is needed to engage in dialogue with EEU and identify the areas of Partnership with Central Asian Republics which are mainly oraganisational,value oriented ,social which mainly take into account the interest and the well being of Central Asian member states. Indian industries and entrepreneurs will benefit from economic liberalization and market opening of the CARs.

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