

**India's Strategy of Energy Security in Central
Asia: A Case Study of Kazakhstan (1991-2020)**

(Synopsis)

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Introduction

In the matter of a nation's growth in terms of its economy military might and human development index, India presents a paradox that has attracted much scholarly and popular discourse in recent year. On the one hand, India has been noted as a poor, third-world country with unsatisfactory human development and social inclusion. On the other hand, India is seen as dynamic centre of innovation and entrepreneurship that is energised by a pool of brilliant graduates and a fast-growing entrepreneurial middle class. These stark contradictions have drawn much scholarship and commentary with regard to the country's global comportment and international relations. In this context, this dissertation seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature in this field, and offer relevant insights into India's strategy to achieve energy security with reference to Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and its after math in respect of the newly independent, mineral rich states of Central Asia have been the subject of keen interest to scholars and international observers. It soon became apparent that these Central Asian Republics, given their abundant energy resources and strategic location in the heart of Asia, has emerged as a playground for multinational rivalries and the start of a New Great Game. A host of geopolitical complexities in the region have been exposed through the process of observation and analysis. While there is so gainsaying the importance of the region's location and enormous wealth of resources, there is at once a tricky mix of authoritarian political regimes, religious orthodoxy, tenor activism and narcotics trafficking. The major external powers engaged in the region must-willy-nilly contend with such a complicated matrix of realities in order to gain control over the largely untapped energy resources, such as oil, natural gas and uranium. After the September 11, 2001 terror stricks in the U.S, the world has witnessed rapidly shifting geopolitics, particularly with regard to region having strategic importance. The sovereign Republics of Central Asia became increasingly sensitive to the attention being bestowed on them by energy-hungry big powers. They were conscious of their rapidly swelling wealth from the stock of resources and accordingly,

tightened their control over those resources. They also made it clear that they were no longer finger-puppets in the hands of outside powers. This dissertation takes these geopolitical perspectives into account and accordingly presents its findings, arguments and reasoning.

Most of the scholars and policy makers in India and the west are agreed on the importance of Central Asia to India's strategic and energy security agenda. They identify the region as vital to the expansion of India's economic sphere of influence. The region is not only a destination in itself but also acts as a bridge to greater Eurasia. India and the Central Asian region have the advantage of regular historical linkages and strong civilizational and cultural affinities. This study explains how the Central Asian Republics (CARs) can benefit from India's experience of successful political transformation in the post-colonial period, as also from a mutually productive relationship with a fast emerging regional and global power.

To compound the complexities, Afghanistan has come to pose a very new threat of the re-emergence of radical Islam and rampant terrorism in the wake of the withdrawal of western forces from that violence ridden country. In the ongoing scenario, India's security concerns emanate from its north and west. In their turns, the Central Asian Republics are likewise affected by Afghanistan's volatility given its location in South and Central Asia. Further, they too have previous experiences with religious extremism and radicalism.

In the spheres of energy and economic growth, India's policy influencers and policy makers commonly identify Central Asia's hydrocarbon and mineral resources as important for meeting the nation's energy security needs, particularly in the context of the desirability of diversifying its energy sources. Again, on economic considerations India views Central Asia as a lucrative market for its goods and services. Moreover, the region has the potential to serve as a conduit for trade and communication with the larger Eurasian landmass. This is significant since India ends to establish overland connectivity with other parts of Asia and Europe. The Central Asian Republics in turn, stand to gain from India's capacity to counterbalance the pressures extended by Russia and China, who currently dominate the region. Policy makers and scholars in Central Asia have expressed their awareness of India's growing presence in the region being less intrusive than that of other major external powers.

The influential elite in the Central Asian Republics are particularly conscious of India's status as a democratic multi-ethnic, multi-religious, pluralist, inclusive and secular federal republic. On the other hand, key Indian personages often refer to the country's cultural heritage being significantly link to the larger Eurasian region. They continue to emphasise the cultural commonalities and civilizational affinities between the two regions, that date back to the ancient Silk Road and spread of Buddhism. They also mention the popularity of Bollywood cinema among the people of Central Asia and Russia. Central Asian leaders are agreed on these realities. The elite of both regions jointly support this narrative that helps them to look beyond India's currently limited engagement with Central Asia and perceive a great future partnership that would echo the historical successes.

Objectives of the Study

This work attempt to explore the principal argument in the discourse and their applicability to the dynamics of India's contemporary energy security strategy in relation to the Central Asian Republics in general and Kazakhstan in particular inasmuch as it constitutes a part of the main research objectives. Basing on this premise, this study analyses India's energy and economic engagements with Kazakhstan and the larger Central Asian Region. Given the background and other considerations enunciated above, this study proposes to spell out the problems relating to India's trade and energy relations with that region and offer reasoned solutions. This study aims to critically examine the circumstances that have created major kindness and challenges in the way of advancing the relations between India and the Central Asian region. A Significant challenge is posed by China's growing influence in Central Asia and the competition for control of the energy resources in Kazakhstan and the contiguous Republics. This study acknowledges the institutions of relevant forums for promoting trade, cultural and other ties between India and Kazakhstan. This study proposes to discuss the direction of India's foreign policy strategy with regard to Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular. In the process it will highlight the areas in which the energy policies of India and Kazakhstan converge and create the potential for further cooperation between the two nations. This study will necessarily trace the evaluation of India's energy Security needs. It will also spell out the recent developments and the impact of political, economic, and military factors that improve or impede in international energy transactions in Kazakhstan. This

work will attempt to assess India's geopolitical perspectives and the impact of Kazakhstan on energy security and the formulation of a strategy for the future. The study will examine the factors that have encouraged India to launch many initiatives in the Central Asian region, as also the factors that have limited India's success in achieving its objectives. A concurrent and ancillary objective of this study is to examine India's existing and potential engagements in the international energy scenario and its relations with the Central Asian Republics and the other competing powers in the region. Finally, the study will examine the possibilities emanating from India's energy security strategy in Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan, as well as India's interactions with the two dominant players in the region, namely, Russia and China.

Research Method

This work uses a qualitative paradigm to investigate the determinants of India's energy security strategy in Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan. Such a qualitative methodology enables a holistic understanding of the doctrines and mind-sets influencing India's strategy in Central Asia. It allows the study to explain the 'why' and the 'how' instead of simply delineating the 'what'. Qualitative research warrants an appropriate choice of method; a diversity of participants; a plethora of perspectives, the elasticity of the researcher and the subjects; and the application of different methods and approaches. In the same vein, qualitative methods permit the approach to be premised on interpretation, subjectivity, and flexibility in research design. The method itself emphasizes the process rather than the outcome in which situations and actions are inseparably linked. This approach allows for an experience that involves an explicit acknowledgement of the impact of the research process on the research situation.

A growing awareness of the limits of quantitative research, particularly its rigidity, gave rise to qualitative methods. While qualitative research lays stress on the measurement of variables and the testing of hypotheses, qualitative research method adopts a relatively philosophical approach with the objective of understanding the social sciences through experience, comprehension and perception. This significantly affects the approach applied in this study. In as much as it attempts to understand Indian motivations regarding the formulation of a strategy of energy security in relation to Central Asia. Accordingly, this work rises above the analysis of mere trade and

economic data and bilateral security cooperation. The work text into account the different perceptions and attitudes of Indian scholars who express divergent opinions and differ from one another in conceptualizing India and Central Asia. The method used in this work includes such different variables and behavior. In the event this work has selected a qualitative paradigm that acknowledges these divergences and at the same time usages a national approach to perform on objective analysis. The qualitative tools applied in this study on exposition of the design, and the formulations of research questions are given in the following sections.

This methodology appears to be particularly relevant in the present context, where the study forces on the determinants of India's strategy of energy security with regard to Central Asia. Further, it text into account that the Indian policy makers are the research objects and, for lack of an institutionalized setup for making formalized foreign policy, the distinction between the context and the phenomenon is unclear.

For conducting a case study effectively, it is vital to establish the case, or unit of analysis and the boundaries of the study. The case or unit is treated as the phenomenon to be studied, and the boundaries are meant to clarify what is not that phenomenon, and accordingly indicate what remains outside the objective of the study. The case in respect of this study can largely be identify as India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia. To be specific, the salient features of the case understudy are firstly, the process that gives shape to India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia, secondly, the elites who are formulating the strategy among with the determinants, and thirdly, the factors involved in influencing this strategy. This works includes a time frame for considering India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia. In particular, it highlights the period offer the dissolution of Soviet Union and the emergence of the Central Asian Republics from late 1991 to end 2020. Importantly, by definition and context, this work is about India's relation with the Central Asian Republics in general and Kazakhstan in particular, with particular reference to International Relations and geopolitical perspectives. Further, it forces on a political perspective, while identifying cultural and social factors.

While reviewing a variety of case studies, the research for this study is primarily posited on an intrinsic case study. The reasoning behind this approach is that an intrinsic method provides an

enhanced understanding of a particular case. While acknowledging that India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia is the outcome of a unique set of circumstances that preclude other cases, and while accepting that some of the conceptual and analytical frameworks developed allow for limited theoretical contribution to the field, this intrinsic case study has a more objective, result oriented purpose. Moreover, an intrinsic method in case study research almost always relies on a single case for study, where a single case has embedded units. Accordingly, an analysis of the embedded factors within a case makes it possible to consider the sub-units that exist within a longer case. This is so because data can be separately interpreted within the sub units as a part of the case analysis. Distinctions can be made between the subunits, on between case analyses, on across all the subunits, namely, cross case analysis. As first observed in the initial survey of related literature, this method makes it possible for the determinant of India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia to be treated as embedded units within the longer case. In turn, this allows for a study of their impact on strategy and vice-versa. In brief, though there are significant advantages in a qualitative single case study method, there is serious criticism from scholars who considers it to be short of methodological accuracy and too vulnerable to the subjectivity of the scholar.

Sources of Data

This work has sourced data from numerous agencies comprising, inter alia, official Indian documents, press releases, inter-governmental legislation and agreements, speeches annual reports, and trade data key government bodies in India, such as the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Defence (MoD), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Ministry of Defence, the Prime Minister Office (PMO) contribute significantly to formulating the country's global Affairs. This study has given due importance to analysing the official discourses emanating from these sources. This work has given weightage to the statements made by Indian policy makers as published in print media, such as The Hindu, The Indian Express, The Hindustan Times, The Mint, The Times of India, The Statesman, The Economic and Political Weekly, The Political Business Daily, The Telegraph etc., besides statement of foreign Affairs and foreign policy as appearing on websites like The Diplomat and Asia Times, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Vivekananda International Foundation, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, Observer Research Foundation. In terms of secondary data this study has relied upon books journal articles, conference papers, research papers, various websites

and newspaper reports. The secondary data have proven to be useful in the collation of background information on India and Central Asia relations. Further such data have helps to create a conceptual framework for understanding India's strategy and have provided a background against which India's opportunities and challenges in the region can be Appreciated and measured.

Research Questions

The work addresses the following research questions in its endeavour to address the research objectives identified previously.

1. Why the state of Kazakhstan occupies a Central position in India's 'Connect Central Asia policy'?
2. What are the perceptions of intelligentsia and common people from both sides regarding bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and India?
3. Which aspects constitute major challenges of India's involvement in Kazakhstan?
4. How far India is successful in maintaining a balance between its own interests and interests of other powers in this region?
5. Would India ignore the stability issue in Pakistan and Afghanistan in realizing a healthy relationship with Kazakhstan?

Review of Literature

The aim of reviewing literature with in an academic study is to achieve a recognition for the work as a part of the contemporary literature and result of other research in the given area of study. It is necessary to sift through the existing relevant literature in order to critically evaluate analyse and synthesize the contemporary knowledge in respect of the specific research problem.¹ This work attempts to offer a deeper discussion of the literature pertinent to the various chapters within the detailed discourse in that chapter.

¹ Hart, Chris. *Doing Your Masters Dissertation: Realising your potential as a social scientist*. Sage Publication, 2005.

The proposed research on ‘India’s Strategy of Energy Security in Central Asia: A Case Study of Kazakhstan (1991-2020)’ entails numerous reviews of literature relevant to the subject of study. It is worthwhile to mention the book, “China and India in Central Asia: A New Grate Game?” by Marlene Laruelle, Jean-Francois Huchet, Sebastien Peyrouse, and Bayram Balchi (Eds.), Palgrave, 2010, is a knowledgeable study comprising different aspects of the approaches of both China and India to the emerging Grate Game in Central Asia. Significant chapters of the book relate to matters of India-China cooperation and conflicts in Central Asia. An explanation of the different approaches of major powers to get a fort-hold in Central Asia is provided in the chapter relating to the nature and extent of the ongoing Grate Game being played out in Central Asia. Further, chapters have been assigned to elaborate on the roles played by India and China in the reconstructive process of Afghanistan which is India’s gateway to the Central Asian region.

The research objective of this study identifies a broad scope for discussing the wider dimensions of the relevant literature that share similar overall objectives. In the context of the Central Asian Republics having come into existence a little over three decades ago, this work has identified a few instances of contemporary scholarship that offer a holistic discussion of India’s energy policy in the region, that are at once rigorous in their analysis.

This work appreciates the significance of the book, ‘Mapping Central Asia: Indian Perceptions and Strategies’ by scholars Marlene Laruelle and Sebastien Peyrouse, published in 2011, Routledge. This book presents an edited compilation of essays by Indian scholars with expertise on Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and Russia. The compilation is divided into three segments, the first recounts the history of India’s role in the region, the second dwells on India’s current engagements, and the third highlights the contentious region such as Tibet, Kashmir and Xinjiang and how they affect regional geopolitics. These essays by Indian scholars are mostly descriptive and offer an important source of data. As such, they are referenced extensively within the body of this study.

In the introductory part they discuss how they were spurred to do their study best on the two paradoxes that exist within the relations between India and Central Asia. The first was about the

contradiction between the optimistic expectations of scholars and expert regarding India's great potential in the region and the unhappy reality of India's actual engagement so far. The second was observed to be the absence of consideration of the Indian elite thinking on the issue by the western scholarship on the subject. Laruelle first expounds on the geopolitical ramifications of the involvement of external powers in Central Asia during the post-Cold War period. She painstakingly builds a critique of the widely accepted academic structure for explaining contemporary Central Asia, that is, the Great Game.

Later, she elaborates on the idea of the New Silk Road and its impact on China, the United State and other major powers, while upholding the Silk Road as an opportunity for concerned countries to develop cultural, civilizational and trade linkages, with each such nation adding their own national flavor to the international discourse. Tuning her focus on India, she presents a critique of the cognitive framework formulated by Indian elites to justify their country's role in the region, to wit, historical analogy. She contends that Indian scholars on the subject place emphasis on history, that is, a collective memory of a glorious shared past, in order to project an ambitious future for relations between India and the Central Asian Republics. She further explains that the conceptual structures of the Great Game, the Eurasian Heartland and the New Silk Road may explain the involvement of India and other important players in Central Asia, but the use of historical analogy to project a great potential is a uniquely Indian approach. In her opinion, such justification of India's present involvement based on historical and civilizational linkages may not be a pragmatic approach.

Laruelle's references to the conceptual structures that govern India's strategy in Central Asia are not quite reflective of the Indian point of view. In other words, she does not consider Central Asia within the longer perspective of India's International relations. She does not take into account the linkages between India and Central Asia as a subset of India's grand foreign policy strategy. In the event, she does not consider some of the greater objectives of Indian foreign policy, and how they may have spurred its ambitions in Central Asia. Her deconstruction of the perspectives guiding India's international relations does not go beyond references to the use of historical analogies. Rather, she reduces the relations between India and Central Asia to a tendency in Indian foreign policy to rely on ancient myths.

Among other important commentaries Peyrouse's articulation of India's engagement in Central Asia stands out. He has attributed India's late foray in the region in the 90s to an understandable focus on internal matters and a constrained economy. Nevertheless, he contends, India's later failure to forge ahead in Central Asia is seriously symptomatic of a larger systemic drawback. He points out India's incapacity to present itself as a model for the Central Asian Republics. In his opinion, Indian democratic structure is a cause of uncertainties regarding its intentions in the minds of the Central Asian elites. Doubts are created when the policy makers are not in sync with the opposition and civil society. In consequence, India is losing out to China and Russia, with whom the authoritarian elites of Central Asia can easily relate. Western nations are also making headway by extending open support to Central Asia's civil society. This observation made by Peyrouse gives the essence of his evaluations of Indian strategy. However, in the conclusion, both Laruelle and Peyrouse acknowledge the huge potential for furtherance of ties between India and Central Asia. In their view, India should gear itself to make use of the several economic opportunities, as well as deepen security and energy cooperation ties in order to improve its presence in the region. However, in a note of caution, they point to the geopolitical volatility in the broader region in areas such as Kashmir, Afghanistan, Tibet, Baluchistan, and Xinjiang, that are outside the control of India and Central Asia Republics. India will need to take these geopolitical uncertainties into account while attempting to bolster its presence in Central Asia to match that of China and Russia. In summary, this compilation of essays is an important contribution to the existing literature on India and Central Asia relations, inasmuch as it encompasses the salient features of geopolitics, history, economics, foreign policy and society. Students who seek to fathom India's motivation in Central Asia find this seminal work to be extremely helpful.

Another important study relating to India's engagements in Central Asia is the Nirmala Joshi edited work, 'Reconnecting India and Central Asia: Emerging Security and Economic Dimensions', published in 2010, Central Asia Caucasus Institute. The study covers the security and economic features of the relations between India and Central Asia, while referencing the opinion expressed by Indian scholars with regard to Central Asia. After her introduction, Joshi has devoted a chapter to the 'Strategic Environment in Central Asia and India', authored by scholars Arun Sahgal and Vinod Anand. Sahgal and Anand deftly acknowledge the contemporary security

environment in the region that motivate India and Central Asia to cooperate in this sphere. They analyse the complex internal parameters of Central Asia and compare the approaches adopted by external powers such as China Russia and the west against one another. The importance of Central Asia to these plays revolves around the region's hydrocarbon deposits, as also the region location at the junction of vital trans-continental pipelines, communications links and multimodal transportation network. The authors have posited Afghanistan as an important geopolitical link between Central Asia and South Asia. This explains India's efforts to seek an overland route to Central Asia through Afghanistan largely for energy and security considerations. They make a mention of how India's strategy in Central Asia and Afghanistan may connect to a longer emerging strategic vision for its relations with particularly China and Asia. However, they do not proceed to an elaborate discussion of this vision.

In the third chapter, 'Responses to Non-Traditional threats and challenges', Joshi presents an important analysis of the linkages between cross-border terror, Islamic radicalism, narcotics and weapons trafficking and India's internal security concerns. She lays emphasis on the intricate interplay and the commonality of such threats to India and the Central Asian Republics, that largely emanate from extremist groups, like the Taliban and the Jihadi Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). As far as India is concerned the Taliban's predominance in Afghanistan echoes the brazen operation of Pakistan-sponsored terror group in Kashmir. The central Asian Republics are concerned with the support extended by the Taliban to the IMU and other Central Asian Jihadi outfits that only aggravates the extant volatility in restive part of the region such as the Fergana valley. Joshi thereby presents an important introduction for such analysis that is the subject of the second chapter of this study.

The final chapter of the book has been written by scholar Gulshan Sachdeva. He draws attention to Regional Economic linkages and presents a neo-liberal trade argument in favour of increased cooperation between India and the Central Asian Republics. He contends that such arrangement will enhance peace and prosperity in Central Asia and South Asia. He recommends that India should play a significant role in the evolving dynamics of Asian economics. In his view, deepened ties with Central Asia will act as a stepping stone to economic linkages with the longer Eurasian zone. He suggests that India should follow this agenda in few ways: firstly, India may turn its focus

to Central Asia as an important potential source for hydrocarbons, since India is in dire need to diversify its sources for satisfying a grooming energy hungry economy. Secondly, it may seek to participate in developing a number of trans-Eurasian linkages via pipelines, roads and railways, Sundry communication networks, and the important regional security and economic structures. Scholar Gulshan Sachdeva furnishes important points for consideration in this study which is elaborated in chapters three and four of this dissertation.

This study refers to another book, 'India and Central Asia: The Mythmaking and International Relation of a Rising Power', authored by Emilian Kavalski, I.B. Tauris publishers, London, 2008. This book begins by considering the evolving dynamics of India's foreign policy in the past-Cold War scenario, when India adopted particularly assertive and pragmatic approach. After the end of the Cold-War, India's foreign policy with regard to Central Asia has veered towards pragmatism, an away from a dependence on historical and cultural ties and past relationship. The book focusses on the new pragmatism in India's foreign policy with regard to the Central Asian Republics and others players present in that region with their own perception. Moreover, the authors elaborate India's objectives and perceptions of its interests, and realization of the same by means of a constructive frame work.

Another book, 'Geopolitics and Energy Resources in Central Asia and Caspian Sea Region' authored by Shams-Ud-Din (Ed), published by Lancers books, 2000, attempt to consolidate the developmental landmark in the rise and growth of the Central Asian Republics. In presenting on independent analysis, the author has divided the book into chapters dealing with different aspects of development with regard to the economic, political, socio-cultural and security aspects that define Central Asia's policies and conceptions in the backdrop of the perspectives and interest perceptions of other concerned countries. The book depicts both the internal and external developments with regard to Central Asia. This includes the activities of different players in the region, including India. Further, it explains India's focused strategy for achieving economic and energy security.

The book 'India and Central Asia: A Reader', by Xinru Liu (Ed.), published by permanent Black in 2012, dwells on the Socio-cultural and economic linkages between India and Central Asia based

on ancient trade routes, and traces India's historical relations with Central Asia. It delineates the gradual evaluation and development of Central Asia as also India's changing approach towards that region. It further elaborates on India's participation in the nation building processes that are ongoing in Central Asia. It objectively considers the perceptions of the Central Asian Republics towards India, based on which a mutual relationship can be taken forward.

The book, 'India and Central Asia: Redefining Energy and Trade Links', authored by Angira Sen Sharma, Pentagon Press, 2010, incorporates detailed information on the energy resources of the respective Central Asian Republics, as also India's energy requirements. The author goes on to clarify the nature and extent of the bilateral relationship that India maintains with each of these countries. In another section of the book Sen Sharma offers information relating to present and potential transport connectivity and network linkages between Central Asia and the international market.

The book, 'Culture, Society and Politics in Central Asia and India', by Karan Singh and N.N. Vohra (Eds.), Shipra Publications 1999 dwells on cultural and historical ties as the basis for the contemporary relationship between India and the Central Asian region. The authors propose that there must necessarily be regional cooperation between the republics of Central Asia and other important powers, both regional and extra regional, including India. The book provides clarity to the approach adopted by India to the constraints relating to the Caspian Sea region.

The book, 'Modern Central Asia', by Ram Rahul, Vikas Publishing, New Delhi, 1979, traces the evolutionary history of Central Asia from ancient times to the modern era, as also India's historical and Cultural engagements with the Central Asian countries. The book presents an account of the long struggle among important international powers to gain influence and control in the Central Asian region.

The book, 'South Asia and Central Asia: Geographical Dynamics', by Ambrish Dhaka, Mangal Deep publications, Jaipur 2005, proposes a gamut of potential engagements between the Central Asian region, and India, while suggesting a revised structure for cooperation in the backdrop of the contemporary tendency towards globalization and the sway of the World Trade Organisation

(WTO). The richness of the Central Asian region in terms of its energy reserves acts like a magnet that draws different powers including India, each with their own approach and dialogue, towards this region.

In another important article, 'India's Energy Security and Central Asia's Energy Resources' (Central Asia and the Caucasus, vol. 37, no.1, 2006) Ambrish Dhaka expounds an India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia. The author presents a general overview of India's own energy environment for domestic consumption and imperative to explore other alternatives in order to meet its needs. This article contains a useful analysis of the diverse existing possibilities. In the author's view India should constructively engage with the Central Asian Republics, with particular reference to the Caspian Sea region, for exploration and utilization of the energy resources that have yet to be tapped. The article furnishes information with regard to the different routes, transit facilities and markets in relation to Central Asia's energy reserves, along with a review of the challenges that need to be faced and overcome.

The book, 'India and Central Asia the Road Ahead', by Raghav Sharma (January 2009) is in the form of a special report on Institute of Peace and Conflicts Studies (IPCS). It gives a detailed analysis of India's engagements in Central Asia that span issues relating to security, diversification of India's energy security sources, and the advent of Sundry radical Islamic groups in Central Asia that impact India's Security environment. It also explains the different challenges that stand in the way of India achieving its objectives and the fulfillment of its interests.

In the article, 'India and Kazakhstan should share Complementary Objectives' (Strategic Analysis vol. 33, no.1, 9 January 2009), Scholar P. Stobdan traces the evolution of Kazakhstan's Strategic Significance for India as also for the three major power, namely, USA, Russia and China. All these players have been attempting to establish and expand their presence in Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular. This article explains the different factors that drive India and the other powers to compete for control and influence in the region. There is an astute exposition of the mutuality of interests and objectives that inspire the relationship between India and Kazakhstan and form the basis for a common approach and institutional structure to further the relationship.

The article, “India’s Soft Power in Central Asia: Why it must work in the Look North Policy” (mainstream, vol. 53, no.29, July 2015), Ramakrushna Pradhan, expounds on the tremendous economic and energy potential of Central Asia that inspires and drives India’s Look North Policy and strategy for diversifying energy sources. The article lauds and encourages a pro-active and deepening relationship between India and Central Asia, with a special focus on Kazakhstan. In particular, it lays out India’s strategy of using Soft Power diplomacy in order to add different dimensions to bilateral relationships that are of mutual significance in economic, political and security fields.

The article, ‘India-Kazakhstan Relations: Challenges and prospects’, (Mainstream, vol. 47, no. 38, September 2008), by Vijay Kumar Bhatia, gives importance to India’s long historical and cultural engagements with the countries of Central Asia since they are the basis of India’s contemporary strategy and economic ties with the region. This article presents an analysis of the old foundations of the India-Kazakhstan relationship and relates the same to India’s present perceptions and objectives as well as the official and formal approach of Kazakhstan towards India’s on-going outreach in the region. It also delineates the different constraints and challenges that stand in the way of furthering the relationship, and indicates the future prospects of the relationship that now obtains.

The article, ‘India-Kazakhstan: Emerging Ties’, by Meena Singh Roy (Strategic Analysis, January-March 2002) attempts to span the various aspects of India’s engagements with Kazakhstan. It explains the basis of India-Kazakhstan relations, the current motivations taking the relationship forward, the new areas of partnership opening up the challenges, the best options for further strengthening the relationship and the future possibilities of cooperation between the two countries.

The article, ‘Nuclear Fuel and the Emerging Dynamics of Indo-Kazakhstan Relations’, by Deepti Srivastava (Mainstream, vol. 47, no.33, 2010), gives an overall view of the significance of Kazakhstan in India’s foreign policy, given Kazakhstan’s stature as Central Asia’s fastest growing economy and the world’s biggest producer of crude oil and uranium. The article deftly enunciates

India's need and ongoing quest for energy security and diversification of energy sources. It also spells out the imperatives driving the India-Kazakhstan relationship.

The article, 'India-Kazakhstan Relations: Challenges and Opportunities', by Ashok Sajjanhar, Published in Gateway House (November 20, 2013), depicts the strategic importance of Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular. It also explains Kazakhstan's initiatives in respect of regional interests and the dialogue process in order to promote peace and stability in the region. This article provides an analysis of the different areas of cooperation between Kazakhstan and India. It suggests the different avenues of potential cooperation between the two countries within the joint mechanisms already existing.

A special report of the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, 'India and Kazakhstan: New Ways Ahead' by Zakir Hussain, (February 18, 2009) offers a perspective on Kazakhstan's potential with regard to energy resources and related issues. This article analyses both the nature and scope of India's relations with Kazakhstan in terms of nuclear security. It spells out the inter government mechanisms that are designed to promote the relationship at national and international levels. Moreover, it depicts the economic dimensions of this relationship and the different approaches adopted by the two countries.

The special report, 'India's Role and Interests in Central Asia', by Ivan Campbell, Saferworld, October 2013, analyses the evaluation and development of India's relations with Central Asia since the turn of the century. It adopts a two-pronged approach to the study of India's objectives in Central Asia, namely, security and the diversification of India's energy sources. It addresses India's need for energy to sustain rapid economic growth, as also the need to ensure security in the context of the threats posed by different radical islamist groups. Finally, the article deftly argues in favour of India's need to exploit the commercial possibilities existing in Central Asia. The above books and articles are useful as secondary sources for the purpose of this research.

Organisation of Chapters

This dissertation comprises five substantive chapters that expound India's strategy of energy security in Central Asia, with Kazakhstan as a case study, apart from the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter offers a historical perspective and a conjectural frame work to understand India's motivation in the region. The second and third chapters spell out the determinant of India's foreign policy and the consequent actions initiated by India. The fourth chapter outlines pipeline politics and India's strategy for cooperation and competition in the extended neighborhood. The fifth and final chapter clarifies both the opportunities and challenges with regard to India's quest for energy sources in Central Asia.

Chapter 1, India and Central Asia from A Historical Perspective delivers an analysis and understanding of the historical evolution of India's engagements in Central Asia. The chapter also provides the premise for understanding India's historical imperatives that also drive its modern-day engagements with the region. It covers the ancient and medieval periods, dating from the Indus-Oxus civilizations to the Mughal conquests of the sixteenth Century. It depicts how the familiarity enjoyed between India and the Central Asian region has evolved from their historical linkages. In that period Buddhism had originated in India and then spread north to Central Asia before radiating towards the coast and onwards towards South East Asia. The further spread of Buddhism was intercepted by the Arab invasions. Central Asia was conquered by the Mongols and Muslims subsequently, the Muslims invaded India. During the reign of Babar in Delhi, there was a restoration of cultural and collaborative engagements between India and Central Asia. At the same time the Mughal Empire was established in India. As a consequence, Central Asia largely influenced the Indo-Islamic artistic culture that came into being. In the subsequent phase of history, the interactions between Central Asia and India were governed by the respective Tsarist and British empires. The chapter also notes the period when India's engagements with Central Asia were moderated via Moscow, under the Soviet Union. The chapter then proceeds to cover the fateful events in the 1990s, when the newly formed Central Asian Republics and a more assertive India were able to engage as sovereign nations without outside interference.

In some, this chapter attempts to furnish a historical perspective of India's engagements with Central Asia, in addition to providing a critical analysis of India's capacities, strategies and initiatives with regard to Central Asia, especially in respect of energy security in the post-Cold War Scenario. Accordingly, it provides a historical and factual foundation for a theoretical structure to enable and understanding of India's engagements in the region. This aspect has been addressed thoroughly in the chapter to follow. The historical background and the evolution of cultural exchanges delineated in this chapter caters to an expressive comprehension of the determinants of India's energy security strategy. This becomes the focus of an exhaustive study latter in the thesis.

Chapter 2, India's Foreign Policy Objectives in Central Asia with special Reference to Kazakhstan, contends that a proper understanding of a nation's foreign policy is essential in order to make sense of the nature of its relations with other nations and to appraise its role in international politics. Further, the methodology adopted in order to comprehend a nation's foreign and security strategy needs to include the way in which different actors and agencies influence a nation's conduct of foreign policy. Accordingly, this chapter attempts to establish a deeper understanding of India's foreign policy objectives with reference to the Central Asian region. The significant factors that drive India's political processes include energy, economy and security. Accordingly, this chapter furnishes a comprehensive review of largely unexplored parameters that give shape to a nation's identity, in this case the historical evolution of a nation's self-perception, its journey through experiences and the consequent perspectives of its leadership. In this manner, this chapter traces India's foreign policy culture with regard to Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular.

n important foreign policy objective of India in the Central Asian region is to enhance mutual economic, energy and trade relations. This chapter delineates India's traditional role in the region's trading and other economic activities. In the past when over the security environment became volatile, the economic links between India's north western territories with Central Asia progressed haltingly. The restive north-western frontiers of undivided India had often inhibited the furtherance of economic relations with the Central Asian region. In the last few decades India's rapidly growing economy and enhanced need for energy have prompted India to look towards the Central Asian states that are rich in energy reserves. The Central Asian Republics, have sought to

strengthen economic relations with an emerging Asian Power like India in order to consolidate its position in the globalized world. India's emergence as a rapidly expanding economy to reckon with has introduced a shifting trend in Asian geopolitics. However, India's economic stability and sustained development depends on the availability of adequate sources of energy. In respect of the Central Asian region in general, and Kazakhstan in particular, India has launched strong initiatives through its Connect Central Asia Policy of 2012. India's political elites are concerned with the insecurities plaguing Afghanistan and Pakistan, that preclude an overland pipeline from Central Asia to South Asia, and jeopardize overland linkages with Central Asia through Afghanistan.

This chapter analyses India's Look North and Connect Central Asia Policies that have emerged in the last three decades. India's burgeoning relations with the Central Asian Republics span issues relating to overall security, as also economic and energy engagements. General security issues and energy security are significant factors that drive India's foreign policy with respect to Kazakhstan and the wider Central Asian region. India's current foreign policy gives emphatic attention to improving the depth and extent of mutual engagements with the Central Asian Republics. The platform offered by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is utilized by India and the five Central Asian Sovereign Republics towards coordinating their policies with regard to the threat perceptions posed largely by radical Islamist terror groups. India's policy makers as well as the elites of Central Asia are acutely aware of the need for multilateralism in the current global scenario.

This chapter addresses the overall geopolitical security issues that are manifested in the overlapping regions of South and Central Asia (Afghanistan and North Pakistan), and deals with the complex interplay of security concerns relating to Central Asia and India's immediate neighborhood. There is also a discussion on India's national security interests, both domestic and external and an explanation of how these issues overlap with the insecure environment in Afghanistan and Pakistan located as the doorway to Central Asia. In doing so, it highlights the ongoing security cooperation between India and the Central Asian Republics.

This chapter deals with the pragmatism of India's foreign policy as also the political overtures and outreach with regard to the Central Asian region. India's foreign policy construct in respect of the

Central Asian region is based on general security concerns and energy Security in particular. The chapter explains India's need to collaborate with the Central Asian Republics in the backdrop of ongoing security threats emanating from radicalism. Moreover, concurrent to a depiction of the enhancement of relations with the Central Asian Republics, the chapter traces the historical and strategic relationship that India and Russia nurture between themselves and there by formulate respective foreign policy objectives. Clearly, as incorporated in the Chapter, the national Security strategy adopted by India and the Central Asian states is necessarily dynamic in nature overall, the chapter defines the salient features that combine in the formulation of India's foreign policy with regard to Central Asia. India's economy has been on a growth trajectory over the last few decades. The rising demand for energy resources has been consistent with the burgeoning industrial sector. This phenomenon explains India's declared objective of improving bilateral and multilateral engagements with the republics in Central Asia, especially in the economic realm. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a platform that enables India to secure bilateral and multilateral arrangements for pursuit of energy sources and access to markets in the extended neighborhood. Even so, inspite of the different agreements designed to enhance relations with the Central Asian Republics, the overland route from India to the region could not open up owing to Pakistan's hostility and Afghanistan's insecurities. In the event, India had to revert to a Sea route through Iran Chabahar Port. Plainly, India's foreign policy strategy in Central Asia has to contend with complexities arising from intermediate countries.

The circumstances that work in favour of India's expanding presence in Central Asia include its overall fair image, historical cultural linkages with the region diplomatic and political detachment from the internal politics of other countries, and its own immergence as an economic power house. India's policy is to stay away from the great power competition in Central Asia, particularly between Russia and China. However, India consciously takes the initiatives to protect and further its strategic interests in the region. It adopts a multi-pronged approach, so that its initiatives are mutually beneficial for the Central Asian Republics in general and Kazakhstan in particular.

Chapter 3, 'Bilateral Relations between India and Kazakhstan on Economic and Energy Security', deals with India's rapidly growing energy requirements and the need to secure diverse sources, as against Kazakhstan's potential for addressing India's concerns. This chapter explores the paradigm

of India not only seeking energy cooperation with Kazakhstan as its primary objective, but also relating to that country in terms of general trade and multi-faceted connectivity. The chapter examines the geopolitics associated with the search for energy security, analyses India's energy compulsions and its strategy to diversify its sources, in the backdrop of its rapid economic growth and evident expansion of its middle-class. It lends a perspective on India's energy imports vis-à-vis consumption levels, and furnishes an empirical study of how the energy-export oriented economic of the Central Asian region can serve India's diversification strategy. It gives an overview of Kazakhstan's energy reserves comprising oil, gas and nuclear sectors. The chapter proceeds to outline India's present energy cooperation and production with Kazakhstan, and then relates the success of such cooperation to a plethora of opportunities for expanding trade and connectivity linkages, that will all combine to assist India to achieve its great power aspirations.

Chapter 4, 'Energy Resources in Kazakhstan and Pipeline Politics: India's Regional Strategy for Cooperation and Competition', tests the contention that India's strategy in Central Asia is finally determinant by the issue of connectivity. India's bid to achieve the status of a great power and the concomitant spread of its soft power in terms of cultural and civilizational aspects in the control Asian region revolves around the achievement of pragmatic means of access. This chapter further examines India's relation with China and Russia with respect to the rivalries in the region and, in that context, appraises the progress of India's aspirations in Central Asia since the beginning of this century.

Since the Central Asian Republics were once an integral part of the Soviet Union, Russia continues to enjoy a legacy of significant political and economic influence in the region. In the post independent era, the newly sovereign republics of Central Asia have viewed India, as an emergent big power with a strongly resurgent economy to be a valued potential customer for their energy exports, principally oil and gas. As India began to explore the possibility of tapping new sources of energy in that region it found China to be already established as a strong competitor for the available energy resources. Owing to its common border with the Central Asian, China had a head start in the Great Game being played out in that oil-rich region. It has established its presents by way of constructing new pipelines for acquiring additional energy assets. India's bid to source its energy supply from Central Asia become subject to the agreeability of Kazakhstan and

Turkmenistan to begin exporting their oil and gas to South Asia. Another important factor to be taken into account is the intention of the United State to tap into Central Asian energy reserves by way of routes that go either westward through Europe or Southward through India. US foreign policy strategy in Central Asia is accordingly limited to the acquisition of energy resources. Such strategic US involvement will have the effect of reducing the influence of Russia and China in the region. With these objectives in mind, the US has extended its support to the proposed Trans Caspian and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) natural gas pipelines. The US has taken note of the number of new Chinese pipelines and consider China to be a progressively influential player in Central Asia.

This chapter proceeds to appraise the rivalries among US, Russia, China and India in the pursuit of strategic influence in Kazakhstan. All these important nations have their own respective approach for turning local decisions in their favour, especially in Kazakhstan. The chapter also analyses India's foreign policy objectives in the competitive scenario in Central Asia. In the context of its dealings with the major players in the region as well as with the Central Asian Republics (CARs) within the forum of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and other such platforms. It attempts to measure the progress made by India by way of its strategic objectives in the region, and then examines the challenges that have restricted India's success.

Chapter 5, 'Challenges and Opportunities in India's Quest for Energy in Kazakhstan', the final chapter, focuses on the extend of India's role within the international dynamics evinced in Kazakhstan, and examines the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats with regard to the application of India's energy strategy in Kazakhstan. A major, apparently insuperable, challenge to India's proposal for a pipeline from Central Asia is the volatility and insecurity obtaining in Afghanistan as also the hostility posed by Pakistan. This chapter discusses India's approach towards maintaining the security in its frontier regions in the backdrop of the 'three evils' by way of terrorism, separatism and Religious Fundamentalism in addition to the study conducted in chapter two. It also addresses the manner in which India's political elites deal with the threats to national security. It acknowledges the challenges faced by India's policy makers in charting a frontier security policy. The chapter deals with the extend of India's involvement in Kazakhstan energy sector and delineates the factors responsible for impeding progress, that are largely beyond

India's control. The most important constraint in the way of India acquiring control of energy sources in Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan, is the absence of a direct and convenient overland access route. The unfavorable relations obtaining between India and China, that come to the surface with respect to various global and bilateral issues, also add to the complexities prevailing in Central Asia. The second half of this chapter explains India's approach to the SCO as its full member, and the opportunities that the SCO open up. The chapter then proceeds with a study of the various aspects of India's soft power that are implemented in Kazakhstan by means of generous development assistance.

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