

Central Asia and India

Emerging Extended Neighbourhood



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India-Tajikistan Relations: Vistas for Increasing Engagement

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Introduction

India and Tajikistan relations are age old and time tested. The relationship can be traced back to the days of Kushana and Persian empires when Tajikistan was closely linked to Indian subcontinent (Gupta, 2019: 4). The historical contact between the two countries goes back to the ancient times. Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam and Sufism played an important role in religio-cultural exchange between the two countries. In the medieval period, the relationship got further cemented through close cultural and linguistic interactions which continue even to this day.

Scholars, literati, spiritualists, traders, craftsmen and artists between the two countries always kept the door of interaction open. This enabled exchange of ideas, movement of goods, cultural interaction which in turned helped in emboldening people to people connect (Warikoo, 2016). Indian poets like Amir Khusrao, Ghani Kashmiri and Saadi of Iran have exerted great influence in so far as Tajik literature and culture are concerned. The Pamiri language has close resemblance to that of classical Sanskrit language, and the Indo-Aryan group of language has close affinity with the Tajik language (Warikoo, 2016).

During the Soviet times, India's relations with Tajikistan were routed through Moscow. Tajikistan emerged as a sovereign independent nation after the dissolution of USSR. Tajikistan is a landlocked small country situated in the Central Asian region. On the south, Tajikistan is bordered by

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