

RESEARCH

OPEN ACCESS

## India–Central Asia Relations: Pathways of Education, Science, and Culture in the 21st Century

Lazat Nursultanova,<sup>†\*</sup> Gulnara Suleimenova,<sup>†</sup> Kunduzai Yerimbetova,<sup>†</sup> Alma Kassymova,<sup>‡</sup> and Kulyan Nursultanova<sup>¥</sup>

### Abstract

This study investigates the evolving contours of cultural and humanitarian relations between India and the Central Asian republics—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan—over the period 2000–2025, with particular attention to educational, scientific, and cultural initiatives. Employing contextual and comparative analyses of official statistics, academic programmes, grants, and international agreements, the research delineates the principal trajectories of cooperation.

Education emerges as the most dynamic sphere of engagement, evidenced by the exponential rise in academic mobility: more than 17,400 Indian students are currently enrolled in Kyrgyzstan, over 9,500 in Kazakhstan, and approximately 1,200 in Tajikistan. This surge is driven by affordable tuition (USD 1,500–6,000) and the accessibility of English-medium medical programmes. Bilateral exchange schemes further consolidate the foundations of a sustainable academic infrastructure.

Scientific collaboration, though uneven, reveals a differentiated profile: Tajikistan privileges the humanities, natural sciences, and astronomy; Uzbekistan advances technological and digital innovation; Turkmenistan focuses on pharmaceuticals; while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan display limited dynamism. Cultural interaction is most visible in large-scale Indian festivals—such as Holi in Almaty, Tashkent, and Bishkek—the dissemination of Indian cinema, and ICCR-supported initiatives in yoga and spiritual practices.

Theoretically, the findings are illuminated through Neorealism and Constructivism. Neorealism interprets India's initiatives as strategic manoeuvres designed to soft-balance China's expanding material presence, whereas Constructivism underscores India's mobilisation of shared identities and humanitarian gestures, notably COVID-19 assistance, as instruments of normative influence. By linking immediate crisis relief to broader geopolitical objectives, India advances an alternative model of cooperation predicated upon respect for local cultures, openness, and knowledge exchange, thereby cultivating enduring diplomatic outcomes.

**Keywords:** Cultural Exchange; Educational Initiatives; Scientific Cooperation; Intercultural Relations; Interregional Relations; Innovative Research; India; Central Asia

<sup>†</sup>School of Arts and Humanities, Astana International University, Kazakhstan

\*Corresponding Author Email: [nursultanovalazat@gmail.com](mailto:nursultanovalazat@gmail.com)

<sup>‡</sup> Department of Art History and Art Management, Kazakh National Academy of Choreography, Kazakhstan

<sup>¥</sup>Department of Management, Atyrau University named after Khalel Dosmukhamedov, Kazakhstan

©2026 by Nursultanova et al. is licensed under CC BY 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

## Introduction

In the contemporary era of globalisation, cultural and humanitarian cooperation has assumed heightened significance as a cornerstone of international engagement. Among its manifold dimensions, education occupies a privileged position, functioning not merely as a vehicle for human capital development but also as a conduit for scientific diplomacy and the cultivation of durable international relations. The historical entanglements between India and Central Asia, woven through religious, cultural, and educational exchanges, render the study of academic mobility between these regions particularly salient. The growing influx of Indian students into Central Asian universities underscores the urgency of analysing the trends, determinants, and consequences of this phenomenon.

The extant scholarship on cultural and humanitarian relations in Central Asia is both rich and diverse. Much of it foregrounds the role of cultural diplomacy in fostering regional stability and civil society resilience. Recent studies have illuminated the multidimensional foreign policies of individual states, with Uzbekistan frequently cited for its socio-cultural initiatives shaping the regional agenda (Hamzaoglu, 2022). Scholars such as Mirzaev (2020) have examined integration through shared spiritual values and historical legacies, while others have traced bilateral cultural ties with external actors, including Germany (Yakubov, 2021) and Turkey (Cornell, 2024; Hamzaoglu, 2022; Sagatova, 2023). Collectively, these works converge on the insight that academic mobility, joint cultural initiatives, and public diplomacy are indispensable instruments for advancing intercultural tolerance and strengthening civil society.

Within the specific ambit of India's engagement, scholarship has explored both strategic imperatives and historical continuities. Stobdan (2021) emphasised the geopolitical centrality of Central Asia for India, while Singh et al. (2023) and Vichare (2024) highlighted the enduring

cultural ties dating back to the Silk Road, situating cultural diplomacy as a vital mechanism for navigating contemporary geopolitical challenges. Yet, despite these contributions, much of the literature remains geographically circumscribed or historically anchored, offering limited insight into the programmatic realities of academic mobility across the region as a whole.

This lacuna is particularly evident in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution, when India confronted the challenge of cultivating relations with newly independent states (Aarif & Raghuramapatrani, 2024). Scholars such as Abdurashitov & Gusseinov (2024) have traced India's centuries-long ties with the Caucasus and Central Asia, encompassing trade, dynastic affiliations, and religious influences. Others, including Zharkynbekova et al. (2024), have interrogated Kazakhstan's cultural integration under globalisation, warning of the homogenising pressures that threaten cultural identity (Iskakova et al., 2023; Umbetbayeva et al., 2023, 2024). Parallel studies on Kazakhstan's cooperation with China under the Belt and Road Initiative (Baisultanova et al., 2025; Bazarkulova et al., 2022) underscore the cultural dimension of soft power as a stabilising yet contested force.

Despite the breadth of inquiry, existing scholarship often treats academic mobility and humanitarian ties as descriptive case studies rather than strategic instruments of statecraft. This reveals a significant scientific gap: the absence of a comparative framework that systematically explains how India operationalises cultural diplomacy across all five Central Asian republics. Addressing this gap, the present study poses the central research question: *How does India utilise educational and cultural mobility as mechanisms of soft balancing and normative influence across Central Asia?* By applying a dual neorealist and constructivist lens, the research advances knowledge by elucidating the causal linkages between localised humanitarian initiatives—scholarships, cultural festivals, exchange

programmes—and broader geopolitical outcomes.

The manuscript is structured as follows. The Methodology section delineates the research design, data sources, analytical procedures, and evaluative indicators employed to examine India's cultural and humanitarian engagement with Central Asia. The Results section presents the principal empirical findings concerning educational cooperation, academic mobility, scientific collaboration, and cultural exchange across the five Central Asian republics. The Discussion contextualises these findings within the existing scholarly literature and interprets them through the theoretical framework adopted in the study. Finally, the Conclusion synthesises the key findings, addresses the principal limitations and challenges identified, and outlines prospective directions for further research.

## Methodology

The study encompasses the period 2000–2025, thereby capturing the contemporary evolution of India's strategic partnership with Central Asia. The principal research materials comprised datasets and reports drawn from authoritative platforms, including the Ministry of External Affairs of India (2020), the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), the Central Asia Programme (2023), the Embassy of India in Tajikistan (2025), the Eurasian Research Institute (2025), the University of Central Asia (2025), and regional Indian embassies. These sources were operationalised around three core indicators: the scale of student mobility (measured by enrolment figures), the distribution of scholarship quotas (financial and educational grants), and the establishment of scientific and cultural agreements. To ensure reliability and validity, a triangulation method was employed, cross-referencing official Indian government statistics with data from Central Asian educational bodies and scholarly publications.

The methodological framework combined contextual and comparative analysis, structured through a rigorous measurement logic. Contextual analysis mapped the geopolitical and socio-cultural environment shaping bilateral

ties, with particular attention to signed agreements and institutional frameworks linking India and the five republics—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. Informed by constructivist emphasis on ideational factors, the study foregrounded India's deployment of soft power instruments to shape regional perceptions and cultivate enduring socio-cultural ties.

Comparative analysis evaluated India's programmatic engagement across the five nations. Comparison parameters included recipient countries, types of educational programmes, and periods of engagement. The focal point was the allocation and utilisation of Indian scholarship initiatives—most notably Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), and the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programmes.

Measurement entailed juxtaposing quantitative distributions of student quotas with qualitative distinctions in targeted disciplines (medicine, technical skills, language). This framework showed how India tailors its educational diplomacy to each republic's socio-cultural potential and strategic priorities. The study also examined additional initiatives, such as the *Study in India Scholarship and the Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children*, for their popularity among Central Asian populations and their disciplinary scope.

To assess cultural impact, the study adopted a case-study approach, selecting the Holi festival of colours in major Central Asian cities—Almaty and Astana (Kazakhstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), and Dushanbe (Tajikistan)—as the primary unit of analysis. Unlike more passive cultural forms such as cinema consumption or occasional exhibitions, Holi represents the most geographically widespread and participatory Indian cultural event in the region, actively bridging local populations, diasporic communities, and international students. The study measured its impact through specific indicators: frequency of annual events, estimated audience size,

participant demographics (local youth, expatriates), and institutional support from ICCR cultural centres. By grounding the analysis in quantitative and structural metrics, the study moves beyond descriptive accounts to offer a rigorous evaluation of the socio-cultural integration facilitated by Indian public diplomacy.

Results

Since the second century BCE, India and Central Asia have sustained enduring interactions through trade, religion, and cultural exchange, most prominently facilitated by the Great Silk

Road (Rahimullah et al., 2023). Over successive centuries, these engagements—ranging from commercial transactions to the diffusion of Buddhism—have cultivated deeply interwoven historical ties between the two regions (Abdurashitov & Gusseinov, 2024). Rather than one sphere subsuming the other, these reciprocal exchanges engendered a shared socio-cultural foundation, a legacy that continues to inform and animate their partnership in the contemporary era (Rahimullah et al., 2023). Table 1 presents the chronology of India’s cooperation with the Central Asian republics since 2000.

| Table 1: Chronology of India’s Cooperation with Central Asian Countries  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Period                                                                   | Main events                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2000-2012                                                                | In 2006, India helped train the Tajik Air Force and opened a military hospital. India entered into a strategic partnership with Kazakhstan in 2009, Uzbekistan in 2011, and Tajikistan in 2012. In 2012, India launched the Connect Central Asia initiative to strengthen political, economic, and cultural ties with the region. This initiative provides a significant theoretical framework for India’s use of ‘soft power,’ focusing on deepening educational and cultural exchanges as tools for fostering long-term diplomatic relationships, rather than relying solely on economic or military influence. The Connect Central Asia policy aligns with India’s broader strategy of promoting regional cooperation and cultural diplomacy, thereby expanding its influence through non-coercive means in an increasingly multipolar world. |
| 2015-2017                                                                | In July 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited all five Central Asian countries and signed 22 agreements, including a uranium supply agreement with Kazakhstan, which has become India’s main source of uranium imports. In 2017, India became a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which strengthened its position in the region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2018-2022                                                                | In 2018, India joined the Ashgabat Agreement aimed at creating an international transport corridor between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Since 2019, regular dialogues at the level of foreign ministers have been held between India and the countries of Central Asia. The third meeting was held in New Delhi in December 2021, where it was decided to hold summits every two years and establish the India-Central Asia Secretariat. In January 2022, the first India-Central Asia summit was held in a virtual format with the participation of leaders from all five countries of the region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2023-2025                                                                | In April 2023, Uzbekistan hosted the fourth India-Central Asia dialogue in the Track 1.5 format, bringing together government representatives and experts. In October 2023, the second meeting of national security advisers from India and Central Asian countries took place to discuss cybersecurity, digital infrastructure and rare earth resources. India has offered to establish a Forum on Rare Earth Elements and provide digital payment technologies. In 2025, Armenia expressed its intention to join the Ashgabat Agreement, expanding the geography of the transport corridor.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Aryal (2024) and Subrat (2024). |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

As shown in Table 1, India’s cooperation with Central Asia has evolved from diplomatic relations to strategic partnerships and institutionalised dialogue formats. Despite geographical and geopolitical challenges, India is actively developing ties with the region,

emphasising its importance in its foreign policy strategy. The analysis underlines that although cooperation is political and economic, establishing strong and lasting ties between the countries also requires socio-cultural contact. The humanitarian dialogue between India and

the Central Asian countries is a multi-subject interaction (Mikhno et al., 2023; Zhikeyev et al., 2024). The main trends in cultural and humanitarian cooperation between India and the Central Asian countries are presented in Table 2.

| Table 2: Trends in India’s Engagement with Central Asia                      |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No.                                                                          | Aspect                                      | Example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 1                                                                            | Political dialogue and diplomatic relations | <b>India-Central Asia Summits: since 2022, summits at the level of heads of state have been held to formalise strategic dialogue. Formation of the institutional framework: the India-Central Asia Joint Coordination Agency was established to coordinate cooperation in priority areas</b> |
| 2                                                                            | Cultural and humanitarian cooperation       | <b>Development of educational programmes and exchanges (scholarships, Hindi courses, culture and history). Expansion of ICCR’s work in the region. Participation in the Digital India, Skill India and e-ITEC programmes for Central Asian countries</b>                                     |
| 3                                                                            | A counterweight to Chinese influence        | <b>India seeks to expand its presence in the region by offering a partnership based on mutual respect and shared values. India relies on soft power instruments: culture, education, democratic ideals, and technological cooperation</b>                                                    |
| 4                                                                            | Multilateral formats                        | <b>India is actively involved in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Central Asia Multilateral Cooperation and cooperation through the UN and the Economic Cooperation Organisation.</b>                                                                                              |
| <b>Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Bhavna (2025), Meena (2022).</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

As evidenced in Table 2, cultural and humanitarian cooperation between India and the Central Asian republics is systematic, multi-layered, and expressed through a wide array of programmes and initiatives. The data further reveal that, consistent with a Neorealist interpretation of regional power balancing, India perceives cultural and humanitarian engagement as a vital Constructivist instrument for shaping regional narratives and soft-balancing against Chinese influence. On this basis, it may be concluded that India’s multi-vector cooperation with Central Asia is poised not only to persist but also to expand in scope.

A central pillar of this cooperation is student exchange, particularly in the domain of medical education. The attractiveness of Central Asian universities for Indian students is underpinned by markedly lower tuition fees and living costs compared to traditional destinations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, or Australia (Aliyev et al., 2024; Samedova et al., 2022).

According to the Eurasian Research Institute (2025), Kyrgyzstan hosts more than 17,400 Indian students, Kazakhstan over 9,500, and Tajikistan approximately 1,200—a substantial figure within the regional context. Most of these students pursue medical degrees, a choice shaped by intense competition for limited places in Indian medical schools. Central Asian institutions offer Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery programmes in English, a feature of considerable advantage for Indian students (Chalova et al., 2022; 2024).

Tuition fees, ranging from USD 1,500 to 6,000, render these programmes accessible to India’s middle-class population while simultaneously generating direct economic benefits for host countries through the export of educational services. Importantly, the long-term impact on human capital is mediated by the recognition of these degrees by the National Medical Council of India, enabling graduates to return and practice domestically. Consequently, this mobility does not precipitate a “brain drain” for the host

nations, nor does it yield a permanent “brain gain” of international medical professionals. Instead, India secures a significant “brain gain” by reintegrating newly trained specialists into its healthcare system, thereby alleviating the constraints imposed by limited domestic medical school capacity.

Beyond affordability, academic exchanges are further facilitated by an extensive scholarship architecture, the principal elements of which are delineated in Table 3.

| <b>Table 3: India's Scholarship Programmes for Central Asian Countries</b>                                                                               |                                                                            |                                         |                                            |                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Curricula</b>                                                                                                                                         | <b>Direction</b>                                                           | <b>Levels of training</b>               | <b>Provider</b>                            | <b>Funding</b>                             |
| <b>ICCR</b>                                                                                                                                              | Humanitarian, technical, medical and cultural areas                        | Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, PhD | Ministry of External Affairs of India      | Full tuition, stipend, and accommodation   |
| <b>AYUSH Scholarship</b>                                                                                                                                 | Ayurveda, yoga, naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and homoeopathy                 | Bachelor's degree, Master's degree      | Ministry of AYUSH and ICCR                 | Full scholarship + accommodation           |
| <b>ITEC Programme</b>                                                                                                                                    | Short-term courses in management, IT, diplomacy, agriculture, and medicine | Professional development, training      | Ministry of Foreign Affairs                | Full scholarship + transit                 |
| <b>Study in India</b>                                                                                                                                    | Various academic programmes                                                | Bachelor's degree and master's degree   | Indian universities + government           | Partial or full scholarship                |
| <b>Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children</b>                                                                                                       | For children of the Indian diaspora                                        | Bachelor's degree                       | Ministry of Foreign Affairs + universities | Ministry of Foreign Affairs + universities |
| <b>Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Central Asia Programme (2023), Embassy of India in Tajikistan (2025), University of Central Asia (2025).</b> |                                                                            |                                         |                                            |                                            |

As outlined in Table 3, India advances academic mobility through a diversified portfolio of targeted educational initiatives. These programmes are strategically calibrated to address varying academic levels and disciplinary orientations, thereby offering specialised pathways that span traditional medicine (*AYUSH*), advanced degrees in the humanities and technical fields (*ICCR, Study in India*), and short-term professional development modules (*ITEC*). Collectively, they serve as pivotal instruments for consolidating educational ties between India and Central Asia, while

simultaneously facilitating the training of highly qualified specialists across critical sectors.

A comparative analysis of these scholarship schemes underscores the differentiated modalities of cultural and humanitarian interaction between India and the Central Asian republics. Each initiative reflects a distinct balance between disciplinary focus, duration, and institutional backing, thereby revealing the nuanced ways in which India tailors its educational diplomacy to the socio-cultural and strategic priorities of the region. The salient features of this interaction are presented in Table 4.

| <b>Table 4: Peculiarities of India's Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation with Central Asian Countries</b>                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Country</b>                                                                                                                                           | <b>Participation in scholarship programmes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Kazakhstan</b>                                                                                                                                        | <b>Every year, dozens of students receive ICCR grants to study in India. Kazakhstani students also actively participate in yoga courses and medical training through ITEC</b>                                                                                                              |
| <b>Uzbekistan</b>                                                                                                                                        | <b>One of the largest recipients of AYUSH grants. In 2023, India offered to increase the number of scholarships at the India-Central Asia Summit</b>                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Tajikistan</b>                                                                                                                                        | <b>Recipients of ICCR scholarships in English philology, economics, and medicine. Active participation in ITEC exchange programmes</b>                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Kyrgyzstan</b>                                                                                                                                        | <b>Students from Kyrgyzstan are particularly active in ITEC and Study in India. Several Indian universities, including the M.S. Ramayya University of Applied Sciences and the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, have direct agreements with universities in Bishkek and Osh</b> |
| <b>Turkmenistan</b>                                                                                                                                      | <b>People from Turkmenistan apply for AYUSH and ITEC programmes. Negotiations are underway to expand participation in the ICCR</b>                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Central Asia Programme (2023), Embassy of India in Tajikistan (2025), University of Central Asia (2025).</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

In the sample analysed, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are the most active participants, regularly sending students on ICCR and AYUSH programmes, especially in the fields of medicine and yoga. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are mainly involved in technical and language courses, including through ITEC (Dossumov & Adilov, 2023b). Turkmenistan, in turn, is involved in a more limited range of educational initiatives, but efforts to expand academic exchange are ongoing. These differences reflect both the level of institutional cooperation with India and the internal priorities of each country in the region's education policy. India is actively engaging with Central Asian countries through scholarships and assistance through ITEC programmes, and promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields such as medicine, information technology, and yoga (Ministry of External Affairs of India, 2020). The second session of the India-Central Asia Dialogue, held on 28 October 2020 via digital video conference, addressed various aspects of cooperation between India and Central Asian countries, including education. The foreign ministers of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the acting foreign minister of Afghanistan, stressed the importance of creating platforms to strengthen educational ties and

student exchange between the countries of the region (Dossumov & Adilov, 2023a; Elvan et al., 2026). They stressed the need to develop joint educational programmes, exchange of teachers, and support for students studying in universities in the countries involved in academic exchange.

A primary focus of the discussion centred on humanitarian cooperation, particularly India's assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. This aid served as a vital strategic diplomatic instrument, reinforcing India's soft power to counterbalance competing regional influences while also spurring further efforts to expand academic cooperation. The ministers recognised the importance of expanding opportunities for students and educational institutions. They highlighted bilateral initiatives, such as grants for educational projects and joint academic programmes, which are aimed at improving the quality of education in Central Asia. The discussion also touched upon improving the social infrastructure for students, including visa and transport facilities, to facilitate more convenient study and student exchange between countries in the region. This is relevant as educational cooperation between India and Central Asian countries contributes to mutual awareness and knowledge sharing, which is a key element for the development of cultural and

humanitarian ties. Joint educational programmes and student exchanges not only develop academic knowledge but also deepen cultural ties based on the history and traditions of the region (Altayeva et al., 2017; Olga et al., 2023). This contributes to mutual awareness, reducing stereotypes and building trust (Team

Niyo, 2024). In parallel to student exchanges, India and Central Asian countries cooperate in various fields of scientific knowledge, from medicine to astronomy. Table 5 presents examples of scientific cooperation between the countries.

| <b>Table 5: India's Scientific Cooperation with Central Asian Countries</b>                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Country</b>                                                                                                                                          | <b>Areas of scientific cooperation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Tajikistan</b>                                                                                                                                       | Since 1995, the Tajik-Indian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation has been operating, with more than 12 meetings held. More than 20 agreements have been signed between scientific organisations, including the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan and Indian institutions such as the Kaligha Institute and the Gandhi Institute. Joint research is being conducted in geographic information systems technology, seismology, astronomy, and alternative energy. Restoration and joint use of the Shorbulok Observatory in the Pamirs is planned. |
| <b>Uzbekistan</b>                                                                                                                                       | Uzbekistan is participating in the International Liquid Mirror Telescope project in India, together with universities in Belgium, Canada and Poland. The telescope began operation in April 2022. Memoranda of cooperation in solar energy and digital technologies were signed between India and Uzbekistan. Joint seminars and conferences on history, culture and literature are held with the participation of leading academic institutions from both countries.                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Turkmenistan</b>                                                                                                                                     | The Indian company Ajanta Pharma, together with the Ministry of Health of Turkmenistan, established Turkmen Derman Ajanta Pharma Limited, which provides about 50% of the country's medicine needs. The Turkmen-Indian Vocational Training Centre was established, and 0.5 million USD was invested in training Turkmen citizens in manufacturing, business and information technology.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan</b>                                                                                                                           | In February 2022, an online conference was held with the participation of universities from India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to strengthen scientific and cultural cooperation. Student and scholar exchange programmes and joint research in economics, international relations and the humanities are being implemented.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Central Asia Programme (2023), Embassy of India in Tajikistan (2025), University of Central Asia (2025)</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

Table 5 shows that India's scientific cooperation with Central Asian countries varies in intensity and focus. The most active cooperation in science is observed between India and Tajikistan, and the least active between India and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (Hasanov et al., 2025). Differences in the priority areas of scientific cooperation between India and the Central Asian countries were also noted. Thus, cooperation with Tajikistan is mainly humanitarian, while cooperation with

Uzbekistan is technical. Scientific cooperation between India and Turkmenistan is aimed at supporting the pharmaceutical sector. India's cooperation with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan can be described as multi-subject. However, the potential of such cooperation is not fully unlocked and requires greater involvement from the parties.

Indian culture, in particular through cinema, music, yoga and festivals, also has a major

impact on the region, contributing to the strengthening of humanitarian ties. Cultural exchanges contribute to collaboration and create new opportunities for cooperation

between India and Central Asian countries. Illustrative examples of such cultural exchanges between India and Central Asian countries are presented in Table 6.

| <b>Table 6: Measuring Cultural Interaction between India and Central Asian Countries</b>                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Area of interaction</b>                                                                                                              | <b>Example of interaction</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Festivals and cultural events</b>                                                                                                    | <b>"Days of India" in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are large-scale festivals featuring Indian dance, music, crafts and cinema. India regularly participates in international cultural fairs in Tashkent, Bishkek and Dushanbe. The Festival of India (Ministry of Culture, India) is being organised in several capitals of the region and includes tours of Kathak, Bharatanatyam and Bollywood shows.</b> |
| <b>Cinema and television</b>                                                                                                            | <b>Indian cinema is popular in the region: Hindi films and TV series are broadcast on TV in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Indian Film Days are held as part of cultural programmes at embassies. Bollywood fans' clubs operate in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.</b>                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Yoga and spiritual practices</b>                                                                                                     | <b>Since 2015, the International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually in Central Asia, organised by Indian embassies. The ICCR has yoga and ayurveda centres in the region's capitals. Indian teachers regularly hold seminars and master classes on meditation, yoga and Vedic culture.</b>                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Khaytimmatov (2023), Rajesh and Garima (2024), Shahbaz (2024), I. Supyaldiyarov (2024).</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

As reflected in Table 6, the principal domains of cultural interaction between India and the Central Asian republics encompass festivals, cinema, and spiritual practices. Large-scale events such as the *Days of India* and the *Festival of India* have played a pivotal role in popularising Indian arts and crafts. Indian cinema continues to command significant appeal, with *Indian Film Days* regularly organised and Bollywood fan clubs flourishing in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In the sphere of spiritual practices, yoga and Ayurveda centres, established with the support of the ICCR, operate in major urban centres, thereby reinforcing cultural ties and promoting deeper cooperation.

Among the most visible manifestations of Indian cultural influence is the celebration of traditional festivals. These events, particularly *Diwali* and *Holi*, have gained widespread popularity across Central Asia. Holi, the festival of colours symbolising the triumph of good over evil, is celebrated in the streets of major cities, where participants throw coloured powders and dance in vibrant public gatherings. Illustrative

examples of Holi celebrations in Central Asian capitals are presented in Table 7.

As illustrated in Table 7, the celebration of *Holi* across major Central Asian cities—despite occasional administrative constraints in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan—functions as a vibrant platform for the exchange of traditions, actively strengthening intercultural bonds and consolidating the regional presence of Indian culture. Indian cinema, particularly Bollywood, exerts a profound influence on the cultural life of the region. Films are broadcast on television and screened in cinemas, captivating audiences with their vivid narratives, music, and dance. Actors and directors such as Farooq Kabir (*Khuda Haafiz*), Aamir Khan (*3 Idiots*, *Dangal*), and Avika Gor (*Balika Vadhu*, *I'm Going to School*) enjoy wide recognition, while songs from Indian films frequently dominate radio playlists and music charts.

Equally significant is the diffusion of Indian yoga, which has emerged as a cornerstone of cultural exchange. Increasing numbers of Central Asians

practise yoga and meditation, not only to enhance physical well-being but also to cultivate inner harmony. Seminars and training sessions conducted by Indian yoga masters have further popularised these practices, reinforcing intercultural ties across diverse social groups (Lokshin et al., 2025; Nurekeshov et al., 2018).

| Table 7: Features of the Indian Festival of Colours, Holi, in Central Asia                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Country                                                                                                | Features of the celebration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Kazakhstan                                                                                             | In Kazakhstan, Holi is celebrated in major cities such as Almaty and Astana. Events include colour festivals, dancing, music and other cultural activities. For example, Almaty hosts events dedicated to Holi, where participants sprinkle coloured powder on each other and enjoy the festive atmosphere. |
| Uzbekistan                                                                                             | In Tashkent, Holi is celebrated in Nowruz Park, where mass events are held with the participation of the Indian diaspora and residents. The celebration includes traditional Indian dances, music and sprinkling of coloured powder.                                                                        |
| Kyrgyzstan                                                                                             | In Bishkek, Holi is celebrated in various formats, including colour festivals and cultural events. For example, in 2024, Bishkek hosted the ‘SomeWhere Hol’i festival, where participants listened to music, danced and took part in sprinkling coloured powder.                                            |
| Tajikistan                                                                                             | In Dushanbe, Holi is celebrated with the participation of the local Indian community and interested residents. Events include traditional Indian dancing, music and sprinkling of coloured powder. However, there have been cases where Holi has caused some difficulties with local authorities.           |
| Turkmenistan                                                                                           | Holi is celebrated in Ashgabat with the support of the Embassy of India. Activities include cultural programmes, dancing, music and sprinkling of coloured powder. The celebration helps strengthen cultural ties between India and Turkmenistan.                                                           |
| Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Khaytimmatov (2023), Singh et al. (2023), and Shahbaz (2024). |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

Yet, the expansion of cultural and humanitarian cooperation is contingent upon overcoming persistent barriers. A key challenge lies in limited mutual awareness: Indian society often perceives Central Asia as a monolithic region associated with instability, while Central Asian populations possess only a partial understanding of modern India’s culture and achievements (Dey, 2024; Mukasheva et al., 2018; Ostapenko et al., 2025). Sustained cultural interaction is essential to dismantle stereotypes and foster sustainable development.

Language also constitutes a significant obstacle. Insufficient proficiency in English among Central Asian populations restricts access to Indian educational and cultural programmes (Amandossuly et al., 2025; Sarma, 2024). Moreover, the limited number of Indian cultural centres curtails opportunities for deeper engagement. Addressing these barriers requires

strengthening educational cooperation through the establishment of new university branches, expanded student and faculty exchanges, and targeted scholarships in English and Hindi.

Institutional support remains another systemic limitation. While initiatives such as Indian university branches in Uzbekistan exist, the overall number of joint cultural and educational projects remains modest. Enhanced institutional cooperation, through the creation of joint cultural and scientific centres and the implementation of long-term programmes, would provide a more durable foundation for humanitarian engagement.

Thus, cultural and humanitarian cooperation between India and Central Asia, rooted in the exchanges of the Great Silk Road, acquired renewed vitality following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the independence of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan,

Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. Guided by Constructivist paradigms, India has implemented international projects in education, science, and culture as instruments of soft power, designed to foster shared norms and identities. By addressing emerging barriers, these initiatives can consolidate strong, long-term relations and contribute to sustainable regional cooperation.

## Discussion

The central argument of this study is that India's engagement with Central Asia possesses significant potential for sustainable development. This contention resonates with earlier scholarship, notably Aryal (2024), who examined the evolution of India's foreign policy towards Central Asia in the post-Cold War era. Whereas Aryal's work provides a broad overview of political, economic, and cultural relations, the present study narrows its lens to India's influence on the regional creative space and the dynamics of student mobility. Similarly, Yelzhas & Aktorgyn (2024) analysed the impact of globalisation on Kazakhstan's cultural identity, situating the country's adaptation within the context of its nomadic heritage, Soviet past, and multinational society. Comparative analysis reveals that earlier studies, such as those by Botokanova et al. (2023) and Sangwan & Kumar (2024), addressed the general implications of globalisation for cultural identity, whereas the current research foregrounds the specificities of creative and socio-cultural relations between India and Central Asia, with particular emphasis on educational and cultural ties.

The findings of this study build upon these foundational frameworks by providing quantitative evidence of how India's strategy is operationalised in practice. The substantial presence of Indian medical students in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, coupled with the active deployment of ICCR and AYUSH scholarships, demonstrates that educational mobility has become the most institutionalised manifestation of India's cultural diplomacy. By encompassing all five Central Asian republics, the study further confirms that India's soft power is not applied uniformly but is dynamically

tailored to each state's institutional and socio-cultural realities.

While earlier literature often emphasised the negative aspects of globalisation, such as the erosion of cultural identity (Musayev et al., 2023), the present study adopts a more balanced perspective, acknowledging both the risks and opportunities inherent in global processes. Sharma (2024) highlighted the political and economic dimensions of globalisation, while Vision IAS (2024) analysed its impact on Indian society, particularly in relation to culture, religion, lifestyle, and labour structures. Ahmed et al. (2024) explored transformations in family relationships under modernisation and urbanisation. In contrast, the current study situates these cultural and social changes within the broader framework of international legal cooperation and humanitarian exchange.

Further comparative insights are drawn from Rakhimov (2022), who examined Uzbekistan's cultural cooperation with Korea, and Mamajonov (2023), who analysed Uzbekistan's international legal cooperation in the humanitarian sphere. Unlike these bilateral perspectives, the present study adopts a regional approach, analysing academic mobility and migration trends across all five republics. Scholars such as Doskalieva et al. (2025) and Sagatova (2024) have investigated the impact of globalisation on Kazakhstan, particularly through migrant return and cultural transformation, while Buribayev et al. (2025) and Mambetov et al. (2024) examined internal cultural adaptations to global pressures. This study extends such analyses by demonstrating how India externalises its cultural assets—through ICCR, AYUSH, and ITEC programmes, alongside large-scale events such as Holi—as deliberate instruments of soft power.

By fostering socio-cultural connections and addressing practical issues such as academic mobility, India is not merely responding to globalisation but actively shaping the regional narrative to its strategic advantage. This Neorealist manoeuvring ensures that India's growing interregional presence is anchored in practical cooperation and shared knowledge,

rather than solely in economic or military influence.

Thus, India's relations with Central Asia have acquired significance across multiple levels. Educational cooperation, manifested in scholarships, exchange programmes, and training courses, contributes to intercultural ties and intellectual enrichment. Cultural events—art festivals, exhibitions, concerts, and lectures—strengthen friendship and mutual awareness, aligning with sociological observations that national and cultural festivals act as vital mechanisms of integration, fostering cohesion and cross-cultural understanding (Akhrorova & Tashpulatova, 2024; Rutagand, 2024). Humanitarian initiatives promoting medical and traditional practices such as yoga and Ayurveda further consolidate these bonds, embedding India's soft power within the socio-cultural fabric of Central Asia.

## Conclusion

This study affirms the importance and strategic relevance of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between India and the Central Asian republics as a central axis of India's foreign policy from 2000 to 2025. A comprehensive analysis reveals that such cooperation unfolds across several key domains—education, science, culture, and soft-power institutions. Among these, educational collaboration has proven the most stable and institutionalised, generating the highest volume of exchanges. Quantitatively, this is reflected in the enrolment of more than 17,400 Indian students in Kyrgyzstan, 9,500 in Kazakhstan, and 1,200 in Tajikistan, drawn by English-medium programmes and affordable tuition ranging from USD 1,500 to 6,000.

Conversely, scholarship initiatives such as ICCR, AYUSH, ITEC, and *Study in India* provide Central Asian students with access to higher education opportunities in India. Yet, levels of engagement vary: Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan actively utilise ICCR and AYUSH grants in medicine and yoga, while Turkmenistan remains less involved, necessitating a more targeted scholarship strategy. Scientific cooperation, though fragmented, is highly specialised—ranging from collaborative astronomy and seismology

projects with Tajikistan (e.g., the Shorbulok Observatory), to solar energy and liquid mirror telescope initiatives with Uzbekistan, and pharmaceutical ventures such as *Turkmen Derman Ajanta Pharma* with Turkmenistan. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, however, scientific dialogue requires stronger institutional support to move beyond sporadic exchanges.

Cultural interaction is most visible through soft-power initiatives, including large-scale *Days of India* festivals, widespread Holi celebrations, and ICCR-supported yoga centres. Yet participation remains uneven, occasionally hindered by administrative constraints. The study also identifies barriers to deeper cooperation: limited mutual awareness, language difficulties (particularly low English proficiency), and weak institutional frameworks. Addressing these challenges calls for expanding direct university agreements, providing targeted language scholarships in English and Hindi, and establishing joint cultural and scientific centres across the region.

Methodologically, the study acknowledges certain limitations. Reliance on official government reports and diplomatic datasets may introduce evidence bias, as such sources often emphasise successes while underreporting inefficiencies or failures. Moreover, qualitative data on the lived experiences of students and the long-term career trajectories of graduates returning to India remain absent. Future research should therefore incorporate empirical surveys and participant interviews to provide a more balanced, participant-centred evaluation of these cultural and educational initiatives.

## References

- Aarif, N., Raghuramapatrani, R. (2024). Revealed comparative advantage and competitiveness: An analysis of India's trade potential with Central Asia. *Pacific Business Review*, 17(1), 143-153. [https://www.pbr.co.in/2024/2024\\_month/July/11.pdf](https://www.pbr.co.in/2024/2024_month/July/11.pdf).
- Abdurashitov, O., Gusseinov, E. (2024). India in the Caucasus and Central Asia: The Giant Next Door. *Journal of International Relations*, 34(6),

78-92. <https://thedi diplomat.com/2024/06/india-in-the-caucasus-and-central-asia-the-giant-next-door/>.

Ahmed, D., Qureshi, S., Nargis, S. (2024). Analyzing the influence of Indian culture on globalization: A comprehensive study. *Journal of Socioeconomic and Contemporary Review*, 4(1), 593-603.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10901882>.

Akhrorova, N., Tashpulatova, N. (2024). The role of national festivals in the life of community. In: *International Scientific and Practical Conference "Cultural Echoes on the Silk Road: Bridging Historical Legacies with Modern Tourism"* (pp. 251-254). Samarkand: CESR.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11218759>.

Aliyev, S., Hasanov, R.I., Aghayeva, K., Gasimov, J.Y., Ahmadova, S.E. (2024). The Relationship between Renewable Energy Consumption and Economic Growth: Insights from Iceland and Azerbaijan. *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*, 14(5), 229–235.  
<https://doi.org/10.32479/ijeep.16490>

Altayeva, K.Z., Yergobek, S.K., Mynbatyrova, N.K., Zhailau, Zh., Kuderin, I.K., Mashimbayeva, G.A. (2017). Legal regulation of transboundary natural resources. *Journal of Environmental Accounting and Management*, 5(3), 243–253.  
<https://doi.org/10.5890/JEAM.2017.09.006>

Amandossuly, B., Baizhomartova, K., Zhailau, Z., Nyssanbekova, L., Otyshiyeva, A. (2025). Legal Challenges and Developments in the WTO Dispute Resolution Mechanism. *Khazanah Hukum*, 7(1), 46–60.  
<https://doi.org/10.15575/kh.v7i1.39633>

Aryal, S.K. (2024). *India and Central Asia in the post-cold war era: Security, economic and socio-cultural dimensions*. London: Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003509684>.

Baisultanova, K., Duisakina, A., Dauletova, G., Ustemirova, A., Ashinova, Z. (2025). The main trends and directions of cultural and humanitarian cooperation between China and Kazakhstan within the Belt and Road Initiative. *Kazakh University of International Relations and World Languages Journal*, 35, 1005-1020.

<https://www.produccioncientificaluz.org/index.php/opcion/article/view/32456>.

Bazarkulova, G., Usenbaeva, J., Akilova, P. (2022). Project of the PRC «One belt- one Road»: A view from Kyrgyzstan. *Bulletin of the Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University*, 14(1), 174-179.  
[https://balasagynbulletin.com/web/uploads/pdf/vknu\\_1\\_109\\_2022-174-179.pdf](https://balasagynbulletin.com/web/uploads/pdf/vknu_1_109_2022-174-179.pdf)

Bhavna, D. (2024). India in Central Asia. In: J. Lempp, S. Mayer (Eds.), *Central Asia in a Multipolar World: Internal Change, External Actors, Regional Cooperation* (pp. 341-358). Cham: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-63727-8\\_20](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-63727-8_20).

Botokanova, G., Alybaev, A., Mursahmedova, G. (2023). Transformation of the consciousness of post-nomads in the context of globalization. *Trans/Form/Ação*, 47(2), e0240085.  
<https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-3173.2024.v47.n2.e0240085>.

Buribayev, Y., Khamzina, Z., Buribayeva, A. (2025). Between traditions and globalization: Value orientations of Kazakhstani youth. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 10, 1563274.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2025.1563274>.

Central Asia Programme. (2023). *Apply to the new CAP leadership programs!*  
<https://centralasiaprogram.org/cap-spotlight/apply-to-the-new-cap-leadership-programs/>.

Chalova, L.R., Lokshin, V.N., Kinzhibayev, A.A. (2022). Oocyte donation from medical professionals' view. *Russian Journal of Human Reproduction*, 28(6), 79–87.  
<https://doi.org/10.17116/repro20222806179>

Chalova, L.R., Lokshin, V.N., Kiyan, V.S., Kinzhibayev, A.A., Turdaliyeva, B.S. (2024). The relevance of using donor sperm in ART programs from the point of view of medical workers in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Reproductive Medicine Central Asia*, 2024(2), 36–44.  
<https://doi.org/10.37800/RM.2.2024.36-44>

Cornell, S.E. (2024, May 22). Friends at last: The rapid rise of Turkey-Uzbekistan relations. *The*

*Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*.

<https://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/feature-articles/item/13800-friends-at-last-the-rapid-rise-of-turkey-uzbekistan-relations.html>

Dey, A. (2024). Power dynamics of Central Asia in the 21st century: Prospects and challenges for India. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 9(3), e552-e566. <https://www.ijnrd.org/papers/IJNRD2403470.pdf>.

Doskalieva, B., Kenzhzhebekov, N., Kurilkin, A., Pupysheva, T., Puntus, Y., Biryukov, V. (2025). Prospects for the integration of the Kazakh economy into the global value chain. *Montenegrin Journal of Economics*, 21(1), 179-192. <https://doi.org/10.14254/1800-5845/2025.21-1.14>.

Dossumov, S., Adilov, A. (2023a). Constitutional and Legal Stages in the Development of Electoral Law in the Recent History of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. *Economic Affairs (New Delhi)*, 68, 909–915. <https://doi.org/10.46852/0424-2513.2s.2023.38>

Dossumov, S., Adilov, A. (2023b). The Proportional Electoral System of Kyrgyzstan as a way to Avoid Violating the Citizens' Right to Proportional Party Representation. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, 15(3), 263–284.

Elvan, O.D., Uyar, Ç., Perkumienė, D., Baimuratkyzy Umbetbayeva, Z., Afrand Sorkhani, H.R., Czakowska, M., Velioglu, N., Škėma, M., Aleinikovas, M., Beriozovas, O. (2026). Comparison of Forest Laws According to Sustainable Forest Management Criteria: The Example of Türkiye, Lithuania, Poland, Kazakhstan, Iran. *Forests*, 17(1), 82. <https://doi.org/10.3390/f17010082>

Embassy of India in Tajikistan. (2025). *ICCR Scholarship for Tajiks*. <https://www.eoidushanbe.gov.in/page/iccr-scholarship-for-tajiks/>.

Eurasian Research Institute. (2025). *Prospects of Central Asia for Indian students*. [https://www.eurasian-](https://www.eurasian-research.org/publication/perspectives-of-central-asia-for-indian-students/?lang=ru)

[research.org/publication/perspectives-of-central-asia-for-indian-students/?lang=ru](https://www.eurasian-research.org/publication/perspectives-of-central-asia-for-indian-students/?lang=ru).

Hamzaoglu, H. (2022). Turkey-Uzbekistan relations: Strategic cooperation and partnership. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(2), 313-329. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30830/tobider.sayi.11.14>.

Hasanov, R.I., Vasa, L., Guliyeva, S., Giasova, Z., Shakaraliyeva, Z. (2025). Assessing the impact of oil prices and inflation on bank deposits in Azerbaijan. *Banks and Bank Systems*, 20(1), 11–22. [https://doi.org/10.21511/bbs.20\(1\).2025.02](https://doi.org/10.21511/bbs.20(1).2025.02)

Iskakova, Z., Karazhan, B., Seidesh, B., Karabayev, F., Zukay, Z. (2023). Integration Law- An Independent Legal System. *European Review*, 31(1), 45–64. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1062798722000187>

Khaytimmatov, O. (2023). India and Central Asia: Formation of cultural ties. *Oriental Journal of History, Politics and Law*, 3(3), 230-236. <https://doi.org/10.37547/supsci-ojhpl-03-03-27>.

Lokshin, V.N., Suleimenova, M.D., Akhmetova, A.A., Aripova, R.S., Baikoshkarova, S.B., Chalova, L.R., et al. (2025). Assisted Reproductive Technologies in Kazakhstan (National Registry Data, 2021). *Reproductive Medicine Central Asia*, 2025(1), 10–19. <https://doi.org/10.37800/RM.1.2025.443>

Mamajonov, N. (2023). International legal cooperation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the cultural and humanitarian spheres – Important part of international relations. *Scientific Notes of the University of World Economy and Diplomacy*, 9(2), 4-5. <https://doi.org/10.12955/snsj.v9i2.724>.

Mambetov, B., Tursun, K., Kurmanalin, S., Issayev, M., Rsybetova, L. (2024). Tendencies of ethnocentrism and mythmaking in the historiography of Kazakhstan: A review. *RIVAR*, 11(33), 209-221. <https://doi.org/10.35588/rivar.v11i33.6439>.

Meena, A. (2022). Re-energising India-Central Asia relations. *Journal of International Issues*, 26(1), 66-79. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48674367>.

- Mikhno, I., Ihnatenko, N., Cherniaiev, O., Vynogradnya, V., Atstaja, D., Koval, V. (2023). Construction waste recycling in the circular economy model. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 1126(1), 012003. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1126/1/012003>
- Ministry of External Affairs of India. (2020). *Joint Statement of the 2nd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue*. <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/33148/Joint+Statement+of+the+2nd+meeting+of+the+IndiaCentral+Asia+Dialogue>
- Mirzaev, G.R. (2020). Cultural and humanitarian cooperation of Uzbekistan with Central Asian countries: Formation, development and prospects. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 3(12), 253-259. <https://doi.org/10.31149/ijie.v3i12.997>
- Mukasheva, A.A., Sabirov, K.K., Alenov, M.A., Bekisheva, S.D. (2018). The legal status of a bona fide purchaser of a land plot according to the legislation of Kazakhstan and Germany: Comparative analysis. *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 9(3), 1043–1049. [https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v9.3\(33\).31](https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v9.3(33).31)
- Musayev, O., Abidova, Z., Abdalov, U.M., Orzikulov, B., Narkulov, S.D., Rakhimov, S., Salaev, I.B., Iskandarov, S.A., Nematov, O. (2023). Issues of national identity in the people of Central Asia. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(12), e2796. <https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i12.2796>
- Nurekeshov, T., Mukasheva, A., Bekisheva, S., Khassenov, M. (2018). The problem of providing legal groundwork for the balance of traditional and alternative energy development in the context of Kazakhstan's shift to green energy. *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 9(5), 1716–1728. [https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v9.5\(35\).25](https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v9.5(35).25)
- Olga, S., Zhandarbek, M., Temirkhan, Z., Khalil, M., Azamat, D., Kaldybay, A., Makhabbat, K. (2023). Ecological Architecture in the Steppe Zone of Northern Kazakhstan. *Environmental Science and Engineering*, 1, 297–307. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-30233-6\\_27](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-30233-6_27)
- Ostapenko, I., Saibulatova, A., Omuraliev, D., Seitova, N., Bekturganova, K. (2025). Use of modular technologies for the construction of low-rise housing in Kazakhstan. *Architectural Studies*, 11(2), 21–35. <https://doi.org/10.56318/as/2.2025.21>
- Rahimullah, S., Pradeep, S.C., Sushil, S. (2023). India and Central Asian republics: A review of economic and strategic partnership. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Organizational Studies*, 18(2), 739-761. <https://swadeshishodh.org/india-and-central-asian-republics-a-review-of-economic-and-strategic-partnership/>
- Rajesh, M., Garima, D. (2024). Cultural relations between India and Uzbekistan. *Radinka Journal of Science and Systematic Literature Review*, 2(3), 489-495. <http://dx.doi.org/10.56778/rjslr.v2i3.371>
- Rakhimov, M. (2022). Uzbekistan and South Korea relations in the contests of transregional and global perspectives. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 13(2), 200-211. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/18793665221123598>
- Rutagand, E. (2024). The role of cultural festivals in promoting social cohesion and cultural understanding. *International Journal of Humanity and Social Sciences*, 3(2), 13-25. <http://dx.doi.org/10.47941/ijhss.2077>
- Sagatova, Z.B. (2023). General overview of cultural and humanitarian relations between Uzbekistan and Turkey. *Science and Innovation*, 3(5), 114-116. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11410337>
- Sagatova, Z.B. (2024). Influence of cultural-humanitarian relations for the development of civil society in Uzbekistan and Turkey. *International Journal of Medical Sciences*, 4(5), 198-201. <https://www.academicpublishers.org/journals/index.php/ijms/article/view/605>
- Samedova, E.R., Mamedova, S.K., Aliyeva, M.S., Samadova, M.T., Kashiyeva, L.A. (2022).

Exchange rate regime in a crisis: the case of Azerbaijan. *Journal of Eastern European and Central Asian Research*, 9(4), 679–690.

<https://doi.org/10.15549/jeecar.v9i4.1107>

Sangwan, P., Kumar, A. (2024). Investigate the impact of globalization on cultural diversity and local identities. *International Journal of Social Sciences Arts and Humanities*, 11(2), 49–54. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14843.94247>.

Sarma, A.S. (2024). *India's policy towards Central Asia: Navigating the external challenges*. Occasional Paper. Policy Perspectives Foundation, Centre for Neighbourhood Studies. [https://ppf.org.in/assets/web/images/category/240903\\_-\\_India%E2%80%99s\\_Policy\\_towards\\_Central\\_Asia-\\_Navigating\\_the\\_External\\_Challenges\\_-by\\_Angira\\_Sen.pdf](https://ppf.org.in/assets/web/images/category/240903_-_India%E2%80%99s_Policy_towards_Central_Asia-_Navigating_the_External_Challenges_-by_Angira_Sen.pdf)

Shahbaz, A. (2024). Cultural and linguistic links between Bharat and Central Asia. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 11(8), 116–119. <https://www.allsubjectjournal.com/assets/archives/2024/vol11issue8/11203.pdf>.

Sharma, V.K. (2011). *Repercussions of globalization on Indian culture*. Paper presented at the National Conference on “The Repercussions of Globalization on Indian Culture”, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283792860\\_Repercussions\\_of\\_Globalization\\_on\\_Indian\\_Culture](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283792860_Repercussions_of_Globalization_on_Indian_Culture)

Singh, B., Bawa, J., Bhalla, S. (2023). *Cultural diplomacy between India and Central Asia: Navigating complex challenges in a changing world – Analysis*. <https://www.eurasiareview.com/13092023-cultural-diplomacy-between-india-and-central-asia-navigating-complex-challenges-in-a-changing-world-analysis/>.

Stobdan, P. (2021). India and Central Asia. *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, 16(4), 300–311. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48733881>.

Subrat, B. (2024). Relations between India and central Asia in globalized era. *International Journal of Political Science and Governance*, 6(1), 197–200.

<https://doi.org/10.33545/26646021.2024.v6.i1c.324>.

Supyaldiyarov, I. (2024). Charting new (old) paths: Unraveling India-Kazakhstan ties in Eurasian geopolitics. *Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies*, 5(6), 8–23. <https://doi.org/10.47362/EJSS.2024.5601>.

Team Niyo. (2024). *2024 Ultimate Scholarship Guide for Indian Students to study in Kazakhstan*. <https://goniyo.com/blog/indian-students-to-study-in-kazakhstan>.

Tezekbay, Y., Tolessin, A., & Alibek, D. (2024, October). The cultural landscape of Kazakhstan in the context of globalization. *ResearchGate*. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/384764317\\_The\\_Cultural\\_Landscape\\_of\\_Kazakhstan\\_in\\_the\\_Context\\_of\\_Globalization\\_The\\_Cultural\\_Landscape\\_of\\_Kazakhstan\\_in\\_the\\_Context\\_of\\_Globalization](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/384764317_The_Cultural_Landscape_of_Kazakhstan_in_the_Context_of_Globalization_The_Cultural_Landscape_of_Kazakhstan_in_the_Context_of_Globalization)

Umbetbayeva, Z., Suleimenova, S., Ospanova, D., Nurahmetova, G., Aigarinova, G. (2024). National Legislations on Air Quality Protection and Penalties for Atmospheric Air Pollution in Central Asia. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, 16(3), 171–190. <https://doi.org/10.62271/pjc.16.3.171.190>

Umbetbayeva, Z.B., Suleimenova, S.Zh., Nurakhmetova, G.G., Saimova, S.A., Baitukayeva, D. (2023). The Vienna Convention for the protection of the ozone layer and its role in promoting environmental sustainability and implementation in the national legislations of participating states. *Rivista di Studi sulla Sostenibilita*, 13(1), 313–330. <https://doi.org/10.3280/RISS2023-001-S1020>

University of Central Asia. (2025). *UCA Central Asian faculty development programme doctoral scholarship for the 2025-2026 academic year*. <https://ucentralasia.org/resources-and-media/news/2025/april/uca-central-asian-faculty-development-programme-doctoral-scholarship-for-the-2025-2026-academic-year>.

Vichare, J. (2024). The impact of the Silk Road on global trade: A historical perspective. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 9(5), 92-95.  
<https://www.ijnrd.org/papers/IJNRDC001014.pdf>.

Vision IAS. (2024). *Updated value addition material 2024: Indian society and social justice: Effects of globalisation on Indian society*.  
[https://cdn.visionias.in/value\\_added\\_material/50edb-effects-of-globalisation-on-indian-society.pdf](https://cdn.visionias.in/value_added_material/50edb-effects-of-globalisation-on-indian-society.pdf)

Yakubov, S.B. (2021). Cultural relationship of Uzbekistan and Germany (in historical aspect). *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 8(4), 156-159.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i4.2563>.

Zharkynbekova, S., Tazhibayeva, S., Shakhputova, Z., Agabekova, Z., Azamatova, A., Kuzar, Z. (2024). Transnational policies of Kazakh repatriates: The role of family in the adaptation of Kazakh students from Mongolia and China. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 9, 1452785.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2024.1452785>.

Zhikeyev, A., Khankelov, T., Irisbekova, M., Sabirova, D., Muxamedova, N. (2024). Selection of an optimal set of machines for sorting and crushing municipal solid waste. *Bio Web of Conferences*, 130, 03015.  
<https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/202413003015>

### Ethical Approval

Not applicable. The study was based exclusively on publicly available secondary data, official

documents, institutional reports, and published sources and did not involve human participants or the collection of personal data.

### AI Use Statement

Artificial intelligence–assisted tools were used solely for limited linguistic and editorial refinement of the manuscript. All research design, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions were developed by the authors, who reviewed and approved the final text and assume full responsibility for its content

### Author Contributions

Conceptualisation: LN, KY

Methodology: GS, AK, KN

Investigation: LN, GS

Resources: LN, KY, KN

Data curation: GS, KY, KN

Writing (original draft preparation): LN, AK

Writing (review and editing): GS, AK, KN

Visualisation: KY, AK

### Funding

This research received no external funding.

### Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

### Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the academic and institutional support that contributed to the preparation of this study