

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY,
NEW DELHI, INDIA

Course:	M.A.(PISM/SIS/JNU)
Course No:	
Course Title:	Dynamics of Central Asia and India Relations
Course Type:	Optional
Course Duration:	One Semester
Semester:	Monsoon
Course Teacher & Contact Details	Dr. Renu Sain, CRCAS/SIS, 8595182271
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Credits:	4
Contact Hours	4 Hours per week

Course Statement

This course explores the changing dynamics of Central Asia and India. It will specifically focus on these five Countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan). India is viewed as a rising global force and a civilizational partner with shared historical and cultural ties that date back to the Silk Road era. Since gaining independence in 1991, these governments have worked to diversify their foreign policies and strengthen their relations with India. The course emphasises how Central Asian States are interested in Indian technology, investment, and knowledge in important fields, including renewable energy, healthcare, IT, education, and pharmaceuticals. Through platforms like the SCO and India-Central Asia Summit, it also looks at ways to work together in counterterrorism, regional security, and international diplomacy. The difficulties Central Asian nations encounter in strengthening their relations with India, such as geographical obstacles, poor connectivity, and competition from other powerful countries in the region. This course will elaborate on how Central Asians perceive Indian efforts like the Chabahar Port, INSTC, and ITEC programs. In essence, the course offers a sophisticated grasp of Central Asian -India relations, emphasising the Central Asian states' goals, plans, and objectives.

Course Objectives

1. To evaluate different aspects of the Security/strategic, economic, and cultural relations of Central Asia states with India.
2. Evaluate the challenges and opportunities of cooperation between Central Asian countries and India.
3. To assess regional cooperation between Central Asian States and India.

Learning Outcomes

Toward the end of the Course, the student will be able to:

1. Gain an in-depth understanding of the historical, political, and economic linkages between Central Asia and India.
2. Make assignments and oral presentations with a nuanced understanding.

Evaluation Methods

(Mid Sem 50% and End Sem 50 %)

- Mid-semester evaluation (50%)
 - Term Paper – 30%
 - Presentation – 20%
- End-semester evaluation (50%)
 - written Exam
- The SIS Research Manual should be used as a guide for written assignments. Available at https://www.jnu.ac.in/sites/default/files/SIS_Research_Manual_0.pdf Students must maintain a high degree of academic integrity, which includes abstaining from copying and plagiarism. For details on plagiarism and research ethics, refer to SIS Research Manua

Course Outline

Unit I. Central Asian States and India: Historical Background. This Unit examines the shared civilizational links, cultural exchanges, heritage, and geopolitical connections between Central Asia and India (rooted in the Silk Road trade and intellectual and scientific exchanges) during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

- i. **Soviet Period (1917-1991)**
- ii. **Post- Soviet Period (Since 1991)**

Essential Readings

Dar, S. Showkat (2014), “Strategic Significance of Central Asia in 21st Century”, *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, 21:59-67.

Marat, Erica (2021),” Introduction: 30 years of Central Asian studies”, *Central Asian Survey*, 40(4):477-482.

Sahni, Gokul (2024), “The Main Drivers of Soviet Foreign Policy Towards India, 1955–1991”, *The Texas National Security Review*, 8 (1):49-72.

Sain, Renu (2021), “India-Central Asia Relations in Modi Regime”, *International Journal of Applied Social Science*, 8 (1):66-68,

Warikoo, K. (2015), *Central Asia and Kashmir: A Study in the Context of Anglo- Russian Rivalry*, Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

Additional Readings

Blank, Stephen (2012), “Whither the New Great Game in Central Asia?”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 3 (2): 147-160.

Contessi, Nicola P. (2016), “Central Asia in Asia; Charting Growing Trans-Regional Linkages”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 7 (1): 3-13.

Millward, James A. (2018), "The Silk Road and the Sitar: Finding Centuries of Socio-Cultural Exchange in the History of an Instrument", *Journal of Social History*, 52 (2): 206-233.

Qadri, Shahnawaz (2017), "Central Asian Integration and Regional Development a Greater Central Asian Approach", *The Journal of Central Asian Studies*, 24:43-57.

Unit II. Central Asian States and India: Strategic and Security Relations. Security cooperation between Central Asian States and India has emerged as a significant component, rooted in shared threats such as terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, and instability. Both regions' engagement focuses on counterterrorism, military training, intelligence sharing, and regional stability.

- i. Central Asian States' Bilateral Relations/Agreements with India**
- ii. Common Security Concerns: Terrorism, Drug Trafficking, and Regional Instability**
- iii. Cooperation and Contest with External Powers**

Essential Readings

Awasthi, A. (2024), "Challenges and Responses: Drug Trafficking in the India-Central Asia Context", *Current Research Journal of History*, 5(11):1-6.

Kandeel, Ghady Hassan (2022), "Iran-Turkey Rivalry in Central Asia", *Journal for Iranian Studies*, 6(15):69-84.

Rahim, Abdul et al. (2024), "China's Relations with Central Asia in the Twenty-First Century: Strategy Behind Strong Ties", *Contemporary Journal of Social Science Review*, 02 (04):390-406.

Roy, Meena Singh, et al. (2017), "Placing India in the Emerging Regional Dynamics of Central Asia", *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, 45:85-115.

Tolipov, F. (2024), "The "C5+1" on the Central Asian Geopolitical Chessboard", *Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, (27):254-265.

Troitskiy, Evgeny F. (2015), "Central Asian Regional Security Complex: The Impact of Russian and US Policies", *Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations*, 29 (1): 2-22.

Additional Readings

Ahmar, D. M. (2023), "India and the New Great Game in Central Asia", *IPRI Journal*, 23(02):111-129.

Daneykin, Yury, et al. (2015), "Threats and Challenges to the Regional Security in Central Asian Region", *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 166: 86-91.

Karaganov, S. (2018), "The New Cold War and The Emerging Greater Eurasia", *Journal of Eurasian studies*, 9(2), 85-93.

Kothari, Raj Kumar (2020), "India's Strategic Interests in Central Asia: Expanding Vistas of Partnership in the Post-Soviet Era", *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 24 (1):100-117.

Macfarlane, S. Neil (2004), "The United States and Regionalism in Central Asia", *International Affairs*, 80 (3): 447-461.

Omelicheva, Mariya Y. (2013), "Terrorism in Central Asia: Dynamics, Dimensions, and Sources", *Education About Asia* 18(3):1-6.

Ziegler, Charles E. (2014), "Russia in Central Asia: The Dynamics of Great-Power Politics in a Volatile Region", *Asian Perspective*, 38 (4): 589-617.

Gupta, Pravesh Kumar (2021), "India and Central Asia Defence Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities", *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, 16(4):331-340.

Mohapatra, Nalin Kumar (2007), “Political and Security Challenges in Central Asia: The Drug Trafficking Dimension”, *International Studies*, 44 (2): 157-74.

Unit III. Central Asian States and India: Economic Relations. This unit offers an in-depth analysis of the evolving economic relationship between the Central Asian States and India. Emphasizing post-1991 developments, the course critically examines the opportunities, challenges, and strategic imperatives shaping Both’s engagement with this resource-rich and geopolitically vital region.

- i. **Trade Relations and Energy Security**
- ii. **Infrastructure Development and Connectivity Projects**
- iii. **Participation in the Regional Economic Organization (EAEU)**

Essential Readings

Bhattacharya, Debasis (2021), “India-Central Asia Relations”, *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, 16 (4):341-350.

Gugnani, Ritika (2020), “A Study on Trade Intensity between Central Asian Countries and India”, *Jaipuria International Journal of Management Research*, 6 (1): 40-46.

Malik, Ishfaq Ahamd et al. (2014), “India’s Trade Potential with Central Asia: An Application of Gravity Model Analysis”, *International Journal on World Peace*, 31(3): 53-69.

Pradhan, Rama Krushna (2019), “Petropolitics and Pipeline Diplomacy in Central Asia: Can India Afford to Wait in the Wings?”, *India Quarterly*, 75(4): 472-489.

Stobdan, P. (2016), “India and Central Asia: Untying the Energy Knot”, *Strategic Analysis*, 40 (1): 14-25.

Malyshev, D. et al. (2024), "India's Cooperation with the EAEU and the SCO", *World Economy and International Relations*, 68(11):115-124.

Additional Readings

Gaur, Punit (2019), "New Silk Road Diplomacy: India's Challenges and Responses", *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 20 (1):55-61.

Kukreja, Veena (2020), "India in the Emergent Multipolar World: Dynamics and Strategic Challenges", *India Quarterly*, 76 (1): 8-23.

Kurylev, Konstantin Petrovich and et al. (2024), "India's Cooperation with the EAEU and the SCO", *World Economy and International Relations* 68(11):115-124.

Munir, Fakhr ul et al. (2021), "Strategic and Economic Importance of Chabahar Port", *Global Economics Review*, 6(2): 67-74.

Unit IV. Central Asian States and India: Cultural Relations. This Unit will help students understand how cultural diplomacy serves as a vital tool of soft power in Central Asian States and India, fostering goodwill, mutual respect, and long-term strategic influence.

- i. Cultural Ties and Educational Exchanges**
- ii. Yoga, Buddhism, and Tourism in Central Asia**
- iii. People-to-people Ties, Through Cultural and Academic Initiative**

Essential Readings

Amil, S. (2024), "Culture and Linguistic Links Between Bharat and Central Asia", *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 11(8): 116-119.

Kumar, Deepak (2021), "What can India and Central Asia Offer to Each Other?", *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, 16(4):367-372.

Mammadov, Ingilab (2024), “Tech, tourism, education main attraction for Central Asian countries in India”, Accessed on 1 July 2025, URL: <https://en.trend.az/world/other/3867358.html>.

Mazumdar, Arijit (2018), “India’s Soft Power Diplomacy Under the Modi Administration: Buddhism, Diaspora, and Yoga”, *Asian Affairs*, 49(3):468-491.

Pandita K.N. (2022), “The birth of Central Asian Studies in KU (Kashmir University, India)”, Accessed on 2 May 2025, URL:<https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/the-birth-of-central-asian-studies-in-ku/>.

Pathak, Himanshu (2023), “India to Host the Central Asian Youth Delegation”, Accessed on 1 June 2025, URL: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2113608>.

MMT (2024), “Medical Tourism Company in Kazakhstan for Treatment in India”, Accessed on 2 May 2025, URL: <https://mymedtrip.com/medical-tourism-company-in-kazakhstan-for-treatment-in-india/>.

Additional Readings

Geary, David (2018), “India’s Buddhist Circuit(S): A Growing Investment Market for a Rising Asia”, *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 6 (1):46-57.

Husain, Syed Akhtar (2024), *Confluence of India and Central Asia Through the Ages*, Delhi: Primus Books.

Mahanirban, Anita Sengupta (2019), “Connectivity as Influence, India’s Policy in Central Asia in the Era of the ‘New Silk Road’”, *Revista UNISCI*, (49): 209-220.

Mitra, Arpita (2023), “India’s Civilisational Ties with the World, An Underexplored Theme in India’s Soft Power Discourse”, *Journal of Defence Studies*, 17(1):45–70.

Salvi, Shambhu Lal (2017), "India's 'Soft Power' Approach towards Central Asia: Challenges, ahead", *International Journal of Information Movement*, 2(7): 292-296.

Note: As per the requirements, the reading materials shall be updated regularly with the development in mutual relations between Central Asian States and India.