India – Turkey Relations

There are deep historical connections between India and Turkey. The first exchange of diplomatic missions between the Ottoman Sultans and the Muslim rulers of the subcontinent dates back to the years 1481-82. India and Turkey also have a cultural overlap. The Sufi philosophy of Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi found natural resonance in the Indian sub-continent with its own traditions of Sufism and the Bhakti movement. There are also many words – running in thousands as per one estimate - common in Hindustani and Turkish languages.

More recent historical contacts between India and Turkey were reflected in the medical mission led by renowned Indian freedom fighter, Dr. M.A. Ansari, to Turkey in 1912 during the Balkan Wars. The Khilafat movement (1919-1924) was a pan-Islamic, political protest campaign launched by Muslims in British India to influence the British government and to protect the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of World War I, with the support of Mahatma Gandhi. India also extended support in the 1920s to Turkey's War of Independence and the formation of the Turkish republic. Mahatma Gandhi himself took a stand against the injustices inflicted on Turkey at the end of World War-I.

Bilateral relations have been strengthened by the exchange of visits of leaders of both countries in recent times. These include visits by the then Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan to India in 2008 and the then Turkish President Abdullah Gul to India in 2010. Hon'ble Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited Turkey from October 10-15, 2011. Rashtrapatiji Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Turkey during October 5-7, 2013 at the invitation of the President of Turkey.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid a working visit to Turkey during 15-16 January, 2015 and held discussions with her counterpart, Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu. Foreign Minister Cavusoglu made a brief transit halt in New Delhi on 19th March, 2015 during which he met with External Affairs Minister. Bilateral and other regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed.

Finance Minister of Turkey, Mr. Mehmet Simsek visited Mumbai and New Delhi on 22-24 February, 2015 and had meetings with Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley and MOS for Petroleum Shri Dharmendra Pradhan. Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan visited India on 3-7 April 2015 to attend the B20 Turkey Regional Consultation Forum meeting in New Delhi, which was hosted by CII. DPM Ali Babacan had meetings with EAM and Finance Minister during his visit.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen. (Retd) Vijay Kumar Singh, led a delegation to Turkey on 24-26 April, 2015, to participate in the 100th anniversary ceremonies of the Canakkale Land and Sea battles of 1915.

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) at Secretary-level were institutionalized through a Protocol signed in April, 2000. The last round of consultations was held on 17 April, 2015 in Ankara. Mid-sessional Foreign Office Consultations were also held in Ankara on 28 November 2014 at the level of Joint Secretary (Central Europe) of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, and Director General (South Asia), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey.

A Protocol on setting up a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism was signed in September, 2003. The 3rd meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held in Ankara on 11 March, 2015. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Vinod Kumar, Additional Secretary(IO), MEA. Working level consultations on Central Asia were held in July, 2012.

Several delegations from India visited Turkey during the course of 2015 to attend G20 meetings. On the margins of the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in Istanbul on 7-8 May 2015, Agriculture Minister Shri Radha Mohan Singh had bilateral talks with Mr. Mehmet Mehdi Eker, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey. Minister of State for Commerce & Industry (Independent Charge) Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the G 20 Trade Ministers' Meeting

in Istanbul on 5-6 October 2015. CIM held bilateral talks with Mr. Nihat Zeybekci, Minister of Economy of Turkey, on the margins of the G 20 meeting.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the G20 Summit held in Antalya on 15-16 November, 2015. On the margins of the Summit, Prime Minister participated in the BRICS Leaders Meeting and also had bilateral meetings with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull of Australia, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy of Spain, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia and President of European Commission Jean-Claude Junker and President of European Council Donald Tusk.

Retracing the voyage of the Ottoman frigate Ertugrul to Japan in the 19th century, Turkish Naval Ship TCG Gediz made a Port Call in Mumbai and Chennai on 20-23 April 2015 and 2-4 July 2015, respectively. A delegation from the National Defence College visited Turkey on 22-26 August 2015 as part of the Strategic Neighbourhood Study Tour. INS Trikand made a port call in Istanbul on 4-6 October 2015.

Economic & Commercial Relations:

India-Turkey economic and commercial cooperation constitutes an important dimension of the bilateral relationship. Several bilateral agreements and institutional mechanisms, at the governmental level as well as B2B, provide the framework for strengthening economic and commercial ties.

The Bilateral Trade Agreement between India and Turkey was signed in 1973. This was followed by an Agreement on setting up an India–Turkey Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) in 1983. Under this Agreement, JCETC meetings are held alternately in India and Turkey. The 10th session of the JCETC was held in New Delhi in January, 2014. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Anand Sharma, the then Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the Turkish Delegation by Mr. Nihat Zeybekci, Minister for Economy of the Republic of Turkey. The India-Turkey Joint Business Council (JBC) between Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK) was set up in 1996.

Embassy of India, Ankara and Consulate General of India, Istanbul organized presentations on ‘Make-in-India’ in Turkey. Similar presentations were organized for MUSIAD (Independent Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association), Ankara Chambers of Commerce and the Istanbul Chambers of Commerce in 2015. During his visit to Ankara for the G20 Finance Ministers meeting, Finance Minister, Shri Arun Jaitley, attended a CII Business Roundtable with Turkish entrepreneurs on 3 September 2015.

A large delegation of Turkish businessmen from the construction materials sector visited Jaipur on 29 January-1 February, 2015 to attend the India Stonemart 2015. Mr. Adnan Yıldırım, Deputy Minister of Economy, led a delegation of the Turkey Exporters Council to Mumbai on 6-9 April, 2015 to participate in the Turkey-India Business Forum. On 6 April 2015, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) signed an MoU with the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) to promote bilateral trade and economic cooperation. TOBB also signed a cooperation agreement with FICCI for establishing India-Turkey Working Committee and Investment Forums. The Promotion Committee for Olives and Olive Oil (ZZTK) of Turkey participated in the ‘Annapoorna World of Food India’ fair in Mumbai on 22-24 September, 2015. A delegation of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Turkey Hotels Federation (TüROFED), the Union of Turkish Travel Agencies (TüRSAB) and the Turkish Airlines (THY) visited India on 5-7 October, 2015. The Exporters Union of the Istanbul Furniture Paper and Forest Products participated in the ‘Index International Interiors and Design Event’ in Mumbai on 15-18 October, 2015. Business delegations from FICCI, CII, the Confederation of Real Estate Developer’s Association of India, the Synthetic & Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council and the Automobile Component

Manufacturer's Associations of India visited Turkey during 2015. On 6 August 2015, State Bank of India and Turkey's Akbank entered into a cooperation agreement to support bilateral trade and investments.Drug firm Sequent Scientific announced in December, 2015 that its subsidiary Alivira Animal Health had acquired the Turkey based firm, Topkim for 20.7 million Turkish Lira (over Rs. 48 crore).

The Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) project consortium on 25 January, 2016 announced a joint venture initiative composed of India's Punj Lloyd and Turkey's Limak Holding to build a 459-kilometer section of the pipeline from Turkey's Eskişehir province to the border with Greece. The joint venture will carry out construction of a 48-inch, 459-km section of the 1,850-km long TANAP pipeline. Dr. Reddy's Laboratories had entered into a strategic collaboration with TR-Pharm to manufacture and commercialize a portfolio of biosimilar drugs in Turkey on 10 March, 2016. Essar Steel has won a contract for supplying 12,000 tonnes of its Rockstar steel plates, used to fabricate 1,600 excavation tippers for constructing the Istanbul New Airport. Medical technology firm Trivitron Healthcare has acquired 60 per cent stake in Turkish firm Bome Sanayi Urunleri Dis Tic Ltd Sti for 5 million euros (around Rs 37 crore). In June 2016, Zydus Cadila signed a strategic collaboration agreement with Eczacibasi Ilac Pazarlama AS, a Turkish healthcare company, to market biotech products in Turkey.

IOT Infrastructure & Energy Services, a joint venture between Indian Oil Corporation and Oiltanking GmbH, is collaborating with VITO Energy and Investment of Turkey for erection of joint tank farm at the Star Refinery (near Izmir). The USD 72.30 million project started in August 2015 and is expected to be completed in July 2017. About 485 Indian technical staff and workers are employed at the site.

Bilateral India-Turkey trade has increased significantly in the preceding decade and a half. The major Indian exports to Turkey include: medium oils and fuels, man-made filaments and staple fibres, automotive spare parts and accessories, organic chemicals etc. Turkey's exports to India include: broken/unbroken poppy seeds; machinery and mechanical appliances, iron and steel articles thereof, inorganic chemicals, pearls and precious/semi precious stones and metals (including imitation jewellery), marble, etc.

(Source : Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI) (fig in USD million)

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
India's Exports	2749.15	3547.26	3963.66	4433.75	5358.90	4140.11
% growth		29.03	11.74	11.83	**-1.29**	-22.74
India's Imports	821.06	1021.91	2034.18	760.74	1463.87	776.94
% growth		24.46	99.06	-62.6	-0.48	-46.93
Total Trade	3570.21	4569.17	5997.84	5193.21	6822.77	4917.05

According to the Turkish Statistical Institution, Turkey's imports from India during 2015 amounted to USD 5.61 bllion. Turkey's exports to India during the same period were USD 650.3 million. For the period January-June 2016, Turkey`s imports from India were USD 2.99 billion and exports from India were USD 316.25 million.

Cultural Relations:

India and Turkey share traditional cultural overlap and numerous cultural events have enhanced bilateral cultural cooperation. The Turkish edition of Ambassador Pascal Alan Nazareth's book on Gandhi's Outstanding Leadership was released at the prestigious Koç University in 2015. In association with the Middle East Technical University, Ankara Centre for the Study of Developing

Societies, New Delhi organised a Symposium in New Delhi titled 'Past Connections, Contemporary Debates: India and Turkey' from February 12-13, 2015. Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Turkish Historical Society organized a seminar in New Delhi on "India-Turkey Past and Emerging Ties" on 26-27 March, 2015. Mr. Mehmet Yegin, Head of Centre for American Studies at USAK (International Strategic Research Organisation) participated in the ORF-MEA Conference on "Transformation in West Asia" in New Delhi on 27-28 April, 2015. Professor Korhan Kaya, Head of Indology Department, Ankara University attended the International Conference on Indology from 21-25 November, 2015 at New Delhi.

The Mission organized a photo exhibition, titled "Colours of India", in Ankara on 20-22 March, 2015, in collaboration with noted Turkish photographer Seyyaz Cetinel from Balikesir. A delegation consisting of journalists and representatives of civil society from India visited Ankara, Gaziantep and Istanbul from 23-29 March, 2015. The Taj Express Bollywood musical group from India was invited by the local authorities of Antalya to the International Theatre Festival in Antalya in 2015 and again in May, 2016. Indian theatre group Qadir Ali Baig Foundation showcased a retrospective of their plays in Istanbul from 21-23 May, 2015.

A photo exhibition on `Temples, Forts and Palaces - 2000 years of Indian Architecture' was organized in 2016 at Ankara University, Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Erciyes University, Kayseri and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul. Hindi books have been presented to the Indology Department of Erciyes University and Ankara University.

ICCR has a Hindi Chair at the Indology Department of Ankara University and presently a Professor from India is in position, teaching more than 50 local students. In 2015, four Turkish students studied Hindi in Central Institute of Hindi and one Turkish diplomat participated in Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) in India. The Mission celebrated ITEC Day on 15 September, 2015. 16 students from Turkey studied in India on ITEC scholarship in 2015-16. World Hindi Day was celebrated at the Embassy in collaboration with the Indology Department, Ankara University on 09 January, 2016. Faculty members and students from Ankara University participated in the event.

On the occasion of the 2nd International Day of Yoga (IDY), the Embassy has organized events on Yoga in collaboration with Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara on 18 June 2016. A master class on Yoga was conducted during the event. On 21 June 2016, Mission celebrated 2nd IDY on the Embassy auditorium. Turkish Yoga guru Shri Rama Ray (Hakdan Agun) conducted a session on Hatha Yoga.Embassy assisted Govinda Math Yoga and Meditation Centre, Ankara to organize "Yoga and Pranayam" on 22 June 2016. A demonstration on Yoga was held on 25 June 2016 at India Garden in Antalya Expo-2016. Embassy also assisted Spice Hotel, Antalya to organize a week long celebrations on "India and Yoga" from 21-28 June.2016.

India is participating in the Horticulture Expo 2016.

Indian Community in Turkey:

The Indian Community in Turkey is small, mostly working in business establishments and universities in Istanbul and Ankara. State Bank of India has a representative office in Istanbul. Turkish Airlines (in a code sharing arrangement with Air India) operates daily flights from Istanbul to Mumbai and Delhi.

Useful resources:
Website: www.indembassy.org.tr
Facebook: India in Turkey (Embassy of India, Ankara)
http://www.facebook.com/EmbassyofIndiaAnkara
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