

An Opinion Piece on
Uzbekistan
A Key Regional Country
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Central Asian Republics are rich in natural resources but this area is landlocked. In neighborhood it has countries having access to warm waters. The relation among these countries can enhance the trade of this area to the world and can start new era of progress for the whole region. These landlocked states also include state of Uzbekistan which is situated in middle of central Asia. It is the only state which has borders with all other Central Asian republics. It has an area of 447,400 sq km. Total length of its borders is 6221 km which meet Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. According to 2014 census, its population is more than thirty million and in it almost ninety percent are Muslims. With regard to population and army it is the leading country of Central Asia.





Historically in this area Islam came during the caliphate of governor, Qutaibah bin Muslim. Abu Mansur Sabuktigin laid the foundations of Ghaznavid dynasty on the end of tenth century which was consisting of the areas from Middle East to Sub-Continent. Sabuktigin was famous in public due to his kind nature and for maintaining justice in the society. Afterwards in eleventh century Samani family ruled the area whereas Seljuk family ruled the area from end of eleventh century to thirteenth century which was removed by Chingiz Khan, a cruel Mongol. In the thirteenth century Mongols did large destruction in the area. On the end of Mongols, Amir Temur ruled the area and focused on rebuilding and progress of the region. Amir Temur's memorial portrait is present in Samarqand today.

In the start of fifteenth century this state got weakened and at last Uzbek clans conquered the area under the leadership of M Sheibani-Khan which lasted in the nineteenth century with the Russian occupation of this land. In 1954 Uzbekistan became the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. During the Second World War, more than hundred thousand Uzbeks died as a result of conflict between USSR and Germany. After the Second World War the independence movement began. The supreme council of Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic announced independence of Uzbekistan on 31st August 1990. Islam Karimov became the first president of Uzbekistan. Official day of independence of Uzbekistan is celebrated on 1st September each year.



After getting independence, Uzbekistan is progressing rapidly which is evident by the fact that in 2013, its imports were more than twelve billion dollars and exports were about fifteen billion dollars. In 2013, its GDP rate was 7 and by this factor, it is on twenty-third number in the world. It is 6th largest producer of cotton and fifth biggest exporter of cotton in the world. It has fourth largest gold reserves in the world. It has vast resources of oil and gas as well. It has two trillion cubic meters of proven resources of natural gas and stands at nineteenth number in the world. With six hundred million barrels of oil resources, it is on 48th number in the world. Uranium, copper, lead, silver etc are also found here. Uzbekistan soum is the official currency and official language is Uzbek.

The land of Uzbekistan is remembered in golden words in Islamic history because it gave birth to many intellectuals and researchers. Abu Ali Ibn e Sina was born in Bukhara (Uzbekistan) who wrote different books. Among the most important of his works are "The Book of Knowledge", "Book of Healing", "Drugs", "Canon of Medicine" (5 books), the latter is considered to be one of the most famous books in the history of medicine. Abu al Rehan Al-Beruni was born in 973 in Uzbekistan whose tomb is in Afghanistan. He was a great Muslim scientist, thinker and historian. He wrote a book on the history of Hindustan "Kitab-ul-hind". According to some historians, the founder of classical algebra, Abu Abdullah M Bin Al also belonged to Uzbekistan. The founder of Mughal era in sub-continent, Zakhiriddin Muhammad Bobur was born in 1483 in Uzbekistan and became the leader of Fergana at the age of eleven. Writer of Sahih Al-Bukhari, Imam Al-Bukhari was also born in Uzbekistan who collected around



six hundred thousand Hadith which is his great contribution in promoting Islamic teachings. His tomb is also in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan is enriched with natural beauty as well. Mosques, museums, historical great cities and different tourist places attract tourists from all over the world. Amir Timur Museum, State museum of history of Uzbekistan, Ugam-Chatkal National Park, Tashkent TV tower, Monument of Independence which is a globe of gold having map of Uzbekistan are some of famous tourist places. Tashkent, Samarqand, Bukhara and Khiva are historical famous cities. Mosques built indifferent eras of history represent the art of Muslim architecture which includes Imam Bukhari Masjid, Bibi-Khanym Mosque, Jumah Masjid and Abul Qasim Madrasah. Famous Sufi orders in Uzbekistan include Naqshbandia and Yasawiya which played their keen role in spread of Islam in the region. The public of Uzbekistan has great affiliation to Sufism even today. Geographically Uzbekistan is very important location for trade among Central Asia, South Asia, China, Russia, Middle East, and Europe. Its cities and natural resources situated on Silk Route give it a special importance in trade. Uzbekistan has good diplomatic relations with regional countries. Turkey and Uzbekistan signed about ninety treaties and they had trade of about two billion dollars from 1990 to 2012. China is having trade with resources rich Central Asia and had trade of 2.5 billion dollar with Uzbekistan in 2012. Uzbekistan is also member of Economic Cooperation Organization, OIC, UNO, SCO, World Bank, ADB, ECO and OSS.



Relations between Pakistan are based on geographical and historical links, religious and cultural harmony. Both have mutual trade of about four million dollars which is expected to be doubled in coming few years. Both countries have capacity to enhance relations in the fields of education, defense, tourism, banking, trade and industrial cooperation. Pakistan can meet its energy needs by importing energy from this region whereas Uzbekistan by having access to Pakistani sea ports can enhance its trade with the world and can have easy access to international markets. Pakistan

should enhance projects of providing trade route to China and Central Asian states by which a new era of progress can start in the whole region. After US withdrawal from Afghanistan when there is internal stability in Afghanistan, a rail track can be laid between Pakistan and Central Asia. Along with Afghanistan, Pakistan should start projects of different trade routes with other countries which can include extension of ancient Silk Route from Kashgar to Samarkand and Tashkent which can provide access to Central Asia and China to Gawadar port and hence providing opportunities of trade and progress in the region. Pakistan should make a unified policy with other countries of region to enhance security and for peace and prosperity in the region. It will help in dealing with challenges faced by Muslim world and pave the way towards unity.