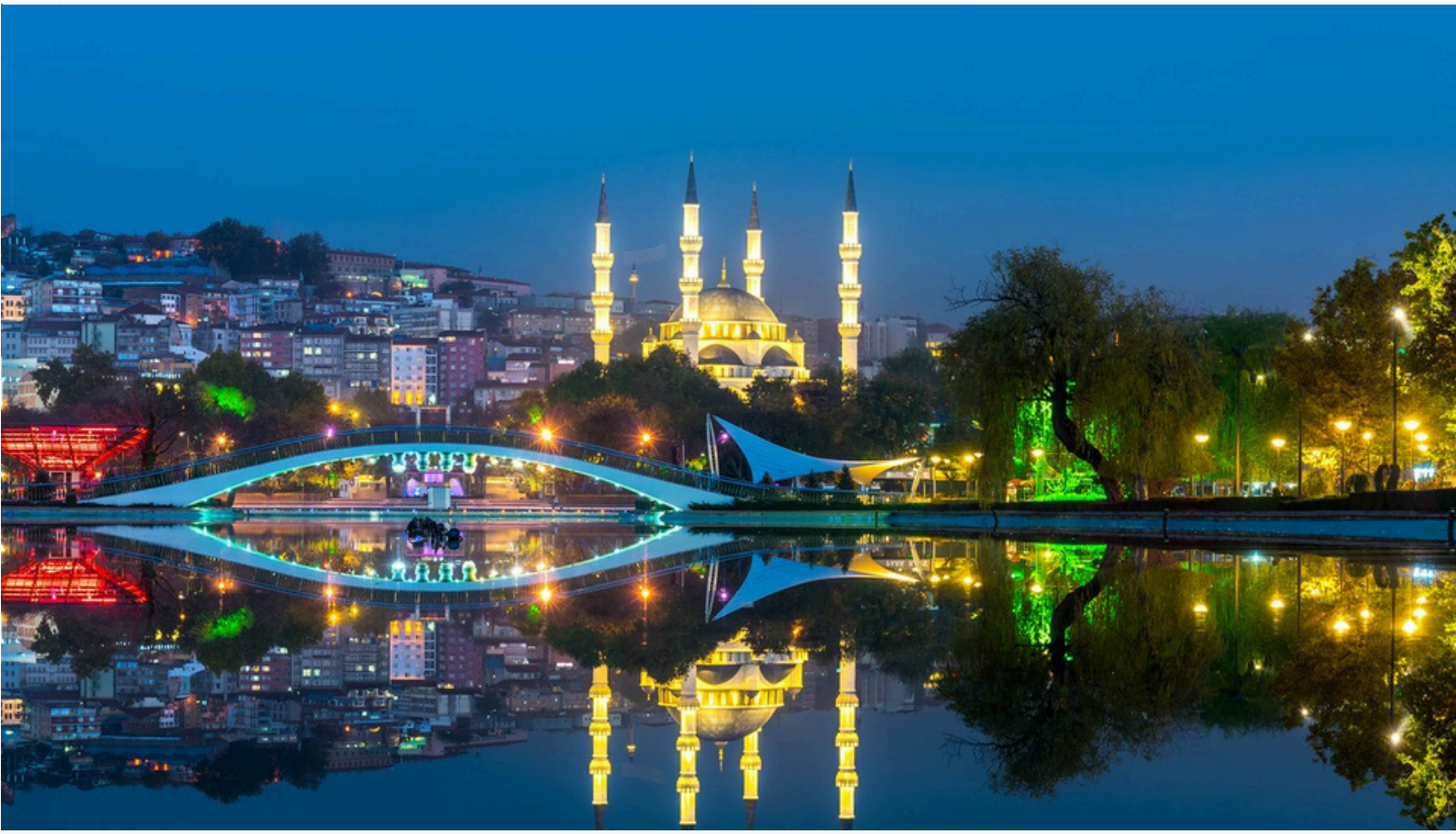
Chandrawat & Partners



BILATERAL RELATIONS

INDIA - TURKEY

INTRODUCTION

India–Turkey relations (Hindi: **भारत-तुक संबंध**; Turkish: Hindistan-Türkiye ilişkileri), also called Indian-Turkish relations or Indo-Turkish relations are the bilateral relations between India and Turkey. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Turkey in 1948, political and bilateral relations have been usually characterised by warmth and cordiality, although some sporadic tensions remain due to Turkey's support for Pakistan, India's rival. India has an embassy in Ankara and a consulate–general in Istanbul. Turkey has an embassy in New Delhi and a consulate-general in Mumbai. As of 2015, the bilateral trade between India and Turkey stood at US$6.26 billion.



HISTORY

In 1212, the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum was gifted a colony in Koothanallur from the Chola Emperor of Tamilakam. The first exchange of diplomatic missions between the Ottoman Sultans and the Muslim rulers of the sub-continent dates back to the years 1481–82. Ottoman expeditions to the sultanates of Gujarat, Bijapur, and Ahmednagar were motivated by mutual anti-Portuguese sentiment; Ottoman artillery contributed to the fall of the pro-Portuguese Vijayanagara Empire. Turkish-Indian relations soured when the Mughals conquered most of India, since the Mughal Empire was a symbolic threat to the Ottoman Empire's position as the universal caliphate, despite contemplation for a Mughal-Ottoman-Uzbek alliance against Iran. After the Mughal Empire collapsed, Muslim rulers of Mysore like Tipu Sultan sought Ottoman aid in driving out the British, but the Ottomans were weakened by wars with Russia and in no position to help.

Economic and cultural relations between ancient India and Anatolia date back to the Vedic age (before 1500 BCE). India and Turkey also have a cultural overlap. A strong historical connection between Indian Muslims and Turkey exists dating back to the medieval era and fostered with the late 19th and 20th century interaction between the two. There are also over 9,000 words common in Hindi 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. During World War I, the British Raj played a pivotal role in the successful Allied campaign against the Ottoman Empire. There are deep historical connections between India and Turkey. However, 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.

Turkey recognised India right after its declaration of independence on 15 August 1947 and diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. As Turkey was part of the Western Alliance and India of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War era, the bilateral relations did not develop at a desired pace. However, since the end of the Cold War era, both sides put in effort in developing their bilateral relations in every field. In contemporary times, relations between India and Turkey have been strained due to Turkey's religious mutuality with Pakistan. Until recently, Turkey was a vocal advocate of Pakistan's position on the Kashmir dispute. Turkey was also one of the few opponents to India's inclusion into the Nuclear Suppliers Group. India's GMR Group is one of the main stakeholders in the new Sabiha Gökçen International Airport in İstanbul. Both the countries are members of the G20 group of major economies, where the two countries have closely cooperated on the management of the world economy. Bilateral trade in July 2012 stood at US$7.5 billion, a figure that is expected to double to US$15 billion by 2015.

Strategically too, there are growing areas of consensus. On Afghanistan, Turkey had taken the lead in 2011 to begin the Istanbul Process to find meaningful and sustainable solutions to Afghanistan's problems. The Istanbul Process culminated in the annual "Heart of Asia" regional conference on Afghanistan held in Kazakhstan's former capital, Almaty, with both India and Turkey playing important roles. In the context of the planned 2014 withdrawal of NATO and US troops from Afghanistan, the need for Delhi and Ankara to intensify dialogue over Afghanistan has acquired a particular importance.

In September 2019, Turkey had criticized India on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and the revocation of article 370. It made vocal comments against India at the United Nations. Thereby it favoured the position of Pakistan in this respect. Due to this the relationship between India and Turkey are strained.

India condemned Turkey for its military offensive into north-eastern Syria, claiming it would undermine regional stability and the fight against terrorism. India also called upon Turkey to exercise restraint and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria.

On 24 December 2020, Turkish authorities' shutdown a website which according to Pakistani officials, was operated by India and used propaganda against Pakistan.

Turkey has repeatedly condemned attacks on Indian forces by Naxalites during the Naxalite–Maoist insurgency, which India has claimed have links to groups involved in the Maoist insurgency in Turkey.



BILATERAL TRADE RELATION

Bilateral trade relations between India and Türkiye have entered a highly dynamic phase, with both nations emphasizing comprehensive economic cooperation frameworks designed to boost commercial exchange on a mutually beneficial and sustainable basis. As the world's most populous country, India's ascendancy in the global economy and international politics has driven Türkiye to recalibrate its South Asian strategic outlook. While maintaining its traditional ties in the region, Türkiye has increasingly prioritized robust economic engagement with New Delhi. Commercial relations have steadily diversified, anchored by accelerating cooperation in technology, education, and raw material exchange.

According to data from the Ministry of External Affairs, bilateral trade reached $13.8 billion in FY 2022-23, and stood at $6.88 billion during FY 2025-26. India remains a key exporter of engineering goods, petroleum products, and iron and steel to Türkiye, while importing industrial machinery, minerals, and inorganic chemicals. A landmark MoU executed between the World Trade Center Mumbai and the DEIK-Türkiye-India Business Council has set an aggressive target to scale bilateral trade to $20 billion over the turn of the decade. While a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has been studied and remains an active point of discussion, alternative preferential trade mechanisms continue to be explored.

Connectivity has adapted significantly to meet this economic demand. While Turkish Airlines continues to operate direct wide-body passenger flights from Istanbul to New Delhi and Mumbai, its operational footprint has expanded across India. Through a comprehensive codeshare agreement with IndiGo, seamless single-ticket connectivity has been extended to key economic centers including Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Kolkata. Furthermore, diplomatic and commercial infrastructure has matured significantly, highlighted by the fully operational Turkish Consulate General in Hyderabad, which services growing corporate and consular needs in southern India.



COOPERATION IN SPACE TECHNOLOGY

Turkey's first nano satellite "ITUpSAT1", manufactured at the Istanbul Technical University's Faculty of Aeronautics was sent to space on a PSLV C-14 rocket by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on 23 September 2009. The satellite orbited the earth at an altitude of 720 kilometres and had the capacity to take continental photos. Its orbital life was six months. Turkey is keen to expand cooperation in space technology with India.



DEFENCE COOPERATION

Admiral E Murat Bilgel, Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, accorded with a guard of honour by the Indian Navy at South Block lawn, New Delhi.

During the visit of Prime Minister Turgut Ozal to India in 1986, it was agreed that the two embassies will house Defence Attaché office. During the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee in September 2003, it was decided that Defence Ministers of both countries should remain in closer touch. India conveyed its willingness to expand military to military contacts, and mutual exchange of delegations to training facilities. During the visit of the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan to India in November 2008, both prime ministers agreed to enhance cooperation between the two defence forces. As far as the military exercises between India and Turkey is concerned, there has been a regular but a low profile passage exercises (PASSEX) between the Navies of the two countries.



BILATERAL INVESTMENT

Bilateral investment relations between India and Saudi Arabia have evolved from foundational capital flows into a corner-stone of strategic economic integration, driven by India's structural economic expansion and Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Following the formalization of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC), the investment paradigm has shifted toward macro-infrastructure, clean tech, and global supply chains. To support this rapid scaling of mutual cross-border capital, both nations have advanced negotiations toward a comprehensive Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) to establish long-term regulatory protections and drive investment security.

Total Saudi Arabian deployment in the Indian economy has crossed $10 billion, including large-scale allocations from the Public Investment Fund (PIF) and major conglomerates. According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Saudi Arabia holds a strong baseline position in cumulative equity inflows, anchored by massive institutional plays. Key sovereign investments include PIF's multi-billion dollar stakes in Reliance Jio and Reliance Retail, alongside agriculture-backed acquisitions by SALIC to reinforce food security. Furthermore, private entities like Alfanar have injected $700 million into green energy projects, while global giants like Aramco and SABIC spearhead major downstream energy and petrochemical partnerships.

Reciprocally, Indian corporate commitment within the Kingdom has reached approximately $3 billion, backed by nearly 3,000 corporate operating licenses. Indian conglomerates have successfully integrated into the Saudi market, moving beyond traditional construction and management consulting into tech-heavy ecosystems. Major Indian presence is now concentrated in information technology, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and engineering design. With the activation of the Joint High-Level Task Force on Investment, corporate corridors continue to expand rapidly, leveraging Saudi industrial zones to anchor Indian manufacturing, fintech, and digital transformation initiatives in the Middle East.





The information contained herein is of a general nature. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. The information is not offered as an advice on any matter, and no one should act or fail to act based on such information without appropriate legal advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation. The information does not make us responsible or liable for any errors and/or omissions, whether it is now or in the future. We do not assume any responsibility and/or liability for any consequences.

Key Contact



Surendra Singh Chandrawat
Global Managing Partner

surendra@chandrawatpartners.com

Connect Surendra on

LinkedIn WhatsApp

Chandrawat & Partners is a leading and rapidly growing full-service firm providing high quality professional and corporate services to foreign and local clients, representing companies and individuals in a wide range of sectors through separate entities established in various countries worldwide.

Copyright © 2027 I All rights reserved I Chandrawat & Partners I Email: enquiries@chandrawatpartners.com I Website: www.chandrawatpartners.com

Follow us on: LinkedIn twitter facebook Instagram