

Embassy of India
Ankara
India-Turkey Relations

There are historical connections between India and Turkey. Diplomatic relations were established and Ambassadors exchanged in 1948. High level visits were exchanged regularly. The visit by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1960 was the first Prime Ministerial visit to Turkey. In 1965, Vice-President Dr. Zakir Hussein visited Turkey. Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal visited India in 1986. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi paid a return visit to Turkey in 1988. This was followed by the visit of Turkish President General Kenan Evren in 1989; visit by President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma in 1993; Turkish President Suleyman Demirel in 1995; the State visit by President K. R. Narayanan in September 1998; and the visit by Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit in April 2000. Vice President Krishan Kant visited Turkey in October 1998 representing India on the occasion of the 75th anniversary celebrations of the Turkish Republic. The visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee in September 2003 was extremely successful. The visit created wider public awareness of a new and progressive image of India.

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. Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited Turkey from October 10-15, 2011. Rashtrapatiji Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Turkey during October 5-7, 2013. 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 held talks with External Affairs Minister. 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. Mr. Mevlut Cavusoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs paid an official visit to India on 18-19 August 2016. Foreign Minister Cavusoglu held talks with Minister of External Affairs. A Road Map between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was finalized during the visit.

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 had bilateral talks with President Erdogan. PM Modi and President Erdogan held talks in Hangzhou on 5 September 2016 on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. The two leaders interacted with each other on the sidelines of BRICs Plus meeting in Johannesburg on 25-27 July 2018 and met on the sidelines of G-20 in Osaka on 29 July 2019. EAM Sushma Swaraj made a transit halt at Erzurum on 19 February 2019. Turkish Trade Minister Rushar Pekcan visited India in December 2018 during which a meeting of the Joint Business Council was also held. Dr. Ibrahim Kalin, Chief Advisor and Spokesperson of the President of Turkey and Deputy Chairman of the Foreign and Security Council visited India on 25 April 2019.

President Erdogan paid a state visit to India on 30 April -1 May, 2017. He was accompanied by a high level delegation and a 150-strong business delegation.

President Erdogan had a meeting with Rashtrapatiji. Prime Minister held a one to one meeting with President Erdogan followed by delegation level talks. Vice-President and External Affairs Minister separately called on President Erdogan. President Erdogan was conferred an honorary degree by Jamia Milia Islamia University. Five bilateral agreements were signed during the visit.

Parliamentary delegations were exchanged on 8 occasions, with the last visit being from our speaker of Parliament in June 2005. Members of Parliament have been regularly participating in multilateral conferences held in Turkey.

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) at Secretary-level were institutionalized through a Protocol signed in April, 2000. The last round of consultations was held on 8 May 2019 in New Delhi. Mid-sessional Foreign Office Consultations at the level of Joint Secretary/Director General were held in Ankara on 28 November, 2014. The 4th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism was held in Ankara on 4 July 2019.

The Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) has MoUs with the Centre for Strategic Research (SAM) of the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the Turkish Asian Centre for Strategic Studies (TASAM). An ICWA delegation visited Turkey in March 2018 and held discussions with SAM & TASAM.

Economic & Commercial Relations:

India-Turkey economic and commercial cooperation constitutes an important dimension of the bilateral relationship. The Bilateral Trade Agreement between India and Turkey was signed in 1973. Institutional arrangements in terms of Joint Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation (JCETC) signed in 1983 and a 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. 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. CII also signed a MOU with DEIK in March 2018. A cooperating agreement between FICCI and TOBB was also signed for establishing India-Turkey Working Committee and Investment Forums. On 6 August 2015, State Bank of India and Turkey's Akbank entered into a cooperation agreement to support bilateral trade and investments. An India Business Forum (IBF) was launched in Istanbul by the Ambassador in December 2018 which holds quarterly meetings.

India's economic engagement with Turkey saw new momentum in recent years. Bilateral trade grew 22% to cross US\$ 8.6 billion in 2018. India ranked 6 in Turkey's overall imports in 2018. The major Indian exports to Turkey include: petroleum products, auto components/parts, man-made yarn, fabrics, made ups, aircraft & spacecraft parts, plastic raw materials, organic chemicals, dyes, industrial machinery, etc. Imports from Turkey include: industrial machinery, 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), granite and marble, etc.

Several Indian companies are registered in Turkey. Indian companies such as TAFE, Mahindra, Sonalika, Tata, Jindal, Indo-Rama, Birla Cellulose, Polyplex Merrill Lynch, Punj Lloyd, Thermax, Wipro, Jain Irrigation, etc. have invested in Turkey to the tune of USD 125 million while Turkish investments in India stands at USD 223 million, according to Turkish data. Turkish companies Koc Holding, Arcelik A.S, Dogus Holding Dogus Construction, Celebi Holding, Orhan Holding, etc. operate in Turkey. An 'Invest in India' Seminar was held in the Embassy on 10 May 2019 where a presentation on investment opportunities in India was made by Ms. Srividya of Invest India to major Turkish companies. India participated as Focus Country for the second time with 80 companies in the 88th Izmir International Fair 2019 held at Izmir from 6-11 September 2019.

Cultural Relations:

India and Turkey share a historical cultural overlap. Cultural exchanges have grown in recent years, especially after the revival of CEP in 2017. Cultural performances, film shows, exhibitions, seminars, outreach to universities are being organized regularly. A Festival of India in Turkey, *India by the Bosphorus*, was held in March-April 2019 showcasing Indian dance, music, food and fashion in major cities in Turkey. The second edition of the *India by the Bosphorus* is planned to be held in March-April 2020. Several events were organized for the celebration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Mission organized 'Glimpses of India Tagore Painting Competition' for school children of Turkey in four cities in April 2019. As part of *Tagore Festival*, a dance drama by the Kalamandalam dance groupe and a lecture sponsored by the ICCR was organized in Ankara and Istanbul, along with a photo exhibition and screening of a film on Tagore. The Indology Department in Ankara University has been in operation since 1930s. Indian Studies have been started at several universities in Turkey including METU, Giresum, Kayseri, Malatya, Istanbul and Koc Universities. Since 1995, an Indian Professor in Hindi language has been attached on deputation by the ICCR with the Indology Department in Ankara University. Turkey has been sending Turkish language professors to JNU and Jamia Milia University. Turkish students are regularly nominated to study Hindi in Central Institute of Hindi (Kendriya Hindi Sansthan), Agra. Slots have been allotted to Turkey under ITEC. In 2018-19, 16 ITEC scholarship slots have been utilized. A Teacher for Indian Culture has also joined the Mission in December 2018.

Indian Community:

Turkey has a small Indian community, mostly in Istanbul and working in commercial organizations, banks and computer firms. A number of Indians work in the faculty of several Turkish universities. There are over 60 Indian students in Turkey. Turkish Airlines (in a code sharing arrangement with Air India) operates daily flights from Istanbul to Mumbai and Delhi. Indigo has started daily flights from New Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul since March 2019.

September 2019