

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q10

A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India's joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · GS II · 10 marks · Governance and Policy

Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Core demand of the question

- A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India's joining the **Ashgabat Agreement**, 2018
- Place China, Russia and others in the region, then show how the Ashgabat transit pact links to **INSTC** and **Chabahar**

Revision summary

Russia, China and other powers are already entrenched in Central Asia through security, pipelines and BRI.

India's land path is blocked, so it uses Connect Central Asia, SCO, **INSTC** and **Chabahar**.

The **Ashgabat Agreement** is a multimodal transit pact; India acceded in 2018.

Accession offers legal corridor access toward Central Asia via Iran, not an instant rival to BRI.

Iran sanctions and missing rail-customs links are the tests that will decide if 2018 was a turning point or a paper.

Flow diagram

Central Asia -> China BRI SCO
 Central Asia -> Russia CSTO
 India 2018 Ashgabat -> Iran Chabahar
 Iran Chabahar -> Turkmenistan Uzbekistan
 Turkmenistan Uzbekistan -> Central Asia
 India 2018 Ashgabat -> INSTC

Conclusion

- Finish **Chabahar** operational links, harmonise customs with **INSTC**, and run scheduled Indian cargo so the Agreement is a timetable, not a communiqué.

- Use SCO and bilateral energy talks with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to fill the corridor with actual freight.
- Keep a sanctions-aware Iran policy so the 2018 accession does not become a stranded legal asset.

Outside powers are already dug into Central Asia; India's interest is connectivity and energy without a Pakistani land gate. Joining the **Ashgabat Agreement** in 2018 gives India a transit-law foothold that can join **Chabahar** and **INSTC**. The implication is opportunity plus homework: the paper corridor will matter only if ships, rails and Iran policy keep moving.

Facts & figures

Ashgabat Agreement

Multimodal transport and transit corridor agreement among Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, later joined by Kazakhstan, **Pakistan and India (2018)**.

INSTC

International North-South Transport Corridor linking India to Russia and Europe via Iran; complementary to Ashgabat's Central Asia leg.

Chabahar

Iranian port developed with Indian partnership as a gateway toward Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan.

Connect Central Asia Policy (2012)

India's political framework for political, economic and people-to-people ties with the five republics.

SCO membership (2017)

India's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the main Eurasian table where China and Russia already sit.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-2/2018/a-number-of-outside-powers-have-entrenched-themselves-in-central-asia-which-is-a-zone-of-interest-to-india-discuss-the-implications-in-this-context-of-indias-joining-the-ashgabat-agreement-2018/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com