

Ashgabat Agreement, Objective, Significance, Key Details

February 23, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



The Ashgabat Agreement is an important **regional connectivity initiative** that seeks to create a multimodal **transport corridor linking Central Asia with the Persian Gulf**. For India, it holds particular strategic and economic importance as it opens new pathways to Central Asia and strengthens its westward outreach.

Ashgabat Agreement Key Details

Key details of Ashgabat Agreement are:

- Ashgabat Agreement is a **multimodal transport and transit agreement signed in April 2011**.
- It came into force in April **2016**.
- The founding members of the **Ashgabat agreement were Turkmenistan, Iran, Oman and Uzbekistan and Qatar**. Qatar subsequently withdrew from the agreement in 2013.
- **Turkmenistan is the Depository State**, meaning it officially keeps the original Ashgabat Agreement, records ratifications and accessions by member countries, and manages formal treaty-related communications without having decision-making authority over the agreement.

- It aims to establish an **international transport corridor between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf**.
- The main aim is to **reduce transport time and costs and make trade easier across member countries**.
- Its objective is **to enhance connectivity within the Eurasian region** and synchronize it with other regional transport corridors, including the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- Kazakhstan and Pakistan joined in 2016, and **India became a member in 2018**.
- For India, it supports the development of Chabahar Port in Iran as a gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- It is purely a connectivity and trade initiative, **not a defence or security alliance**.

Read about: [Paris Agreement](#)

Ashgabat Agreement Significance for India

Ashgabat Agreement is significant for India due to following reasons:

- **Direct access to Central Asia:** It helps India reach Central Asian countries through Iran and Turkmenistan, since India has no direct land route due to Pakistan.
- **Strengthens Chabahar Port:** The agreement increases the importance of Chabahar Port in Iran, which India is developing as a gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- **Supports INSTC connectivity:** It works well with the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), improving trade links between India, Russia, Central Asia and Europe.
- **Improves energy security:** Central Asia has oil, gas and uranium. Better connectivity makes it easier for India to access these important resources.
- **Enhances India's strategic presence:** It increases India's economic and geopolitical role in the Eurasian region.

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/ashgabat-agreement/>

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