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WORLD NEWS



President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan signed the decision to renew the presidential and parliamentary elections on 14 May. The decision was published in the duplicate issue of the Official Gazette.

Erdoğan signed the decision to renew the elections on 14 May. The decision entered into force by being published in the duplicate issue of the Official Gazette.

"With the authorization given by Article 116 of our Constitution, I signed the decision to renew the elections on May 14, which should be held on June 18, 2023," Erdoğan said.

Erdoğan stated that after the relevant decision is published in the Official Gazette, the Supreme Election Board (YSK) will start the 2-month election calendar.



Israelis have been protesting for weeks against the government's controversial judicial arrangement, despite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's announcement of delaying it.

Israelis, who hold mass demonstrations across the country every Saturday evening, against the judicial regulation of the extreme right-wing coalition government led by Netanyahu, again went down to the squares.

Tens of thousands of Israelis participated in the demonstrations in cities such as West Jerusalem, Haifa, Birüssebi, Nes Ziona and Rehovot, especially Tel Aviv.

The demonstrations were held in the shadow of the region's spiral of violence after Israeli forces attacked the Masjid al-Aqsa and the Muslims worshipping there during Ramadan.

This week, events that increased tensions in the region, such as the firing of rockets from Lebanon to Israel against the Israeli forces' raids on Masjid al-Aqsa, and the Israeli army's response to Gaza by airstrikes, were witnessed.

While protesting groups condemn the recent increasing attacks against Israelis, they argue that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the coalition government led by him are responsible for the current security crisis in the country.



On February 6, 2023, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 and 7.6 occurred, the epicenter of which was Kahramanmaraş Turkey. The earthquake, which affected 11 provinces in Turkey, also caused loss of life in Syria. While it was announced that the number of people who lost their lives in the earthquake was more than 50,000, the number of injured was expressed in the hundreds of thousands.

International Organizations and all the countries of the world tried to help the earthquake in Turkey. The Turkish nation has published a letter of thanks to friendly countries for the help.



The world's first SIHA ship, TCG Anadolu, entered the service of the Turkish navy with a ceremony. With a length of 231 meters and a width of 32 meters, 11 SIHAs can be deployed on the flight deck of TCG Anadolu, and 30 SIHAs can be carried in its hangar. After the delivery ceremony of TCG Anadolu, metal cutting of 3 new MİLGEM frigates was carried out.



Italy took new measures within the scope of combating the ongoing influx of irregular migrants through the Mediterranean.

At the suggestion of Nello Musumeci, Minister of Civil Protection and Maritime Policies of Italy, the government declared a state of emergency for 6 months across the country in order to combat extraordinary illegal immigrant attempts in the Mediterranean Sea.

Noting that they submitted the proposal upon the request of Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi, Minister Musumeci said, "We gladly fulfilled the request of our Minister of Interior, who is well aware of the seriousness of these illegal immigration attempts, which amount to 300 percent."

With the state of emergency, it is aimed to provide a more effective and timely response in terms of the management of irregular migrants and their accommodation on national soil.

On the other hand, since last Friday, Italian Coast Guard teams have rescued over 2,700 irregular migrants.

“Quarterly News-Magazine”

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Right-wing Populism in Germany and The “Reichsbürger” Movement

Ozgur Tufekci
oztufekci@cesran.org

More than 150 residences were searched by German police on December 7, 2022, and 25 people were detained in connection with an alleged coup attempt by followers of the "Reichsbürger" movement. This one was one of the greatest anti-terrorism investigations in the Federal Republic of Germany's history (Falk, 2022).



The German Empire, 1871–1918.

Ozgur Tufekci is Associate Professor of International Relations at Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey. He is also the founder and Director-General of CESRAN International.

Right-wing Populism

Right-wing populism is a political ideology that combines populist rhetoric and policies with right-wing positions on issues such as nationalism, anti-immigration, law and order, and traditional cultural values. It often involves an "us versus them" mentality, portraying the political and economic elites as enemies of the people and champions of the common man. Right-wing populist leaders often advocate for an authoritarian style of governance and emphasize the need to protect the interests of the nation or a specific group of the population.

Right-wing populism is not a recent development. Since the end of World War II, revisionist ideologies have gained traction and been embraced by neo-Nazi or right-wing extremist parties like the British National Party (BNP), French National Front/Le Front National, and Austrian Freedom Party (FP). While many of the "new" right-wing discourses bear similarities to older, well-known ideologies (Mammone, 2009), it has been argued that right-wing populism differs from those other trends in that it does not convey a coherent ideology instead proposing a mixed-bag of beliefs, stereotypes, attitudes, and related programs which aim to address and mobilize a range of equally contradictory segments of the electorate.

Right-wing populism in Germany: Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)

In the grand scheme of history, the past century has been extraordinary for Germany and Germans. A magnificent historical moment occurred in November 1989 with the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Additionally, it indicated the start of a procedure. On October 3, 1990, the two German nations were united politically, but a more extensive and profound social and cultural transition had only begun.

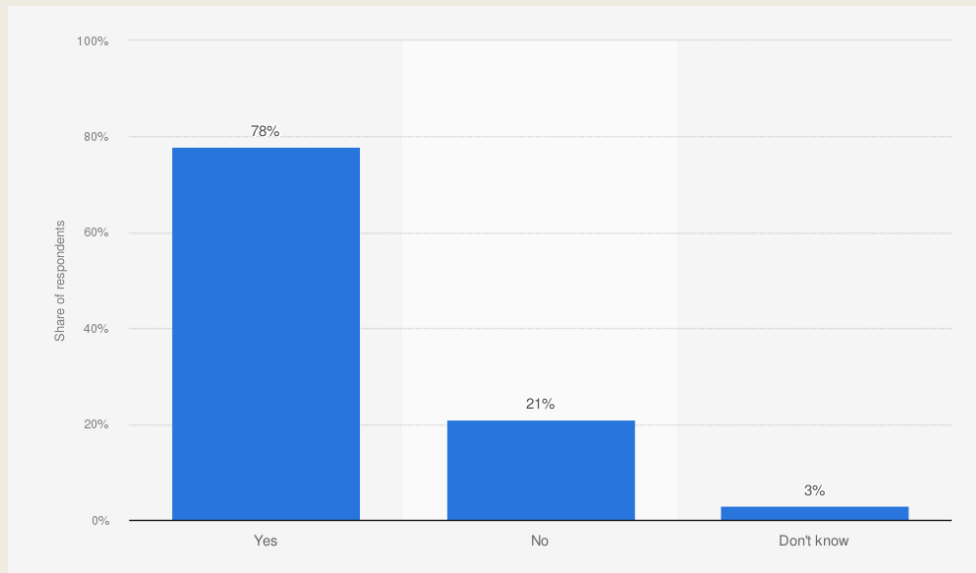
Germany would once again have to reckon with its history, answer concerns about its identity, and struggle to define its connections, position, and duty in a changing Europe after the end of the Cold War.

Right-wing populism in Germany has evolved over the years and has had various political movements and parties associated with it. One of the earliest right-wing populist movements in Germany was the Republicans party¹, formed in 1983. They were anti-immigration and anti-EU, and gained some support in the 1990s, but have since declined in popularity. In recent years,

¹ The Republicans (*Die Republikaner*, REP) is a national conservative political party in Germany. The Republicans' founders were dissident members of the Christian Social Union who had protested that party's role in arranging credit for communist East Germany. They were soon joined by members of the former Citizens' Party outside Bavaria. The Republicans' chairman from 1985 to 1994 was Franz Schönhuber, a former volunteer in the Nazi Waffen SS. The party called for lower business taxes, restrictions on foreign residents and an end to immigration, and an emphasis on law and order. In its first national election in June 1989, the party shocked the political establishment, winning more than 7 percent of the votes for delegates to the European Parliament. Its biggest success came in state elections that year in Bavaria, where it won nearly 15 percent of the vote, and in Baden-Württemberg (Encyclopedia Britannica).

the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party has emerged as a major player in right-wing populist politics.

Do you see the AfD as a threat for democracy in Germany?



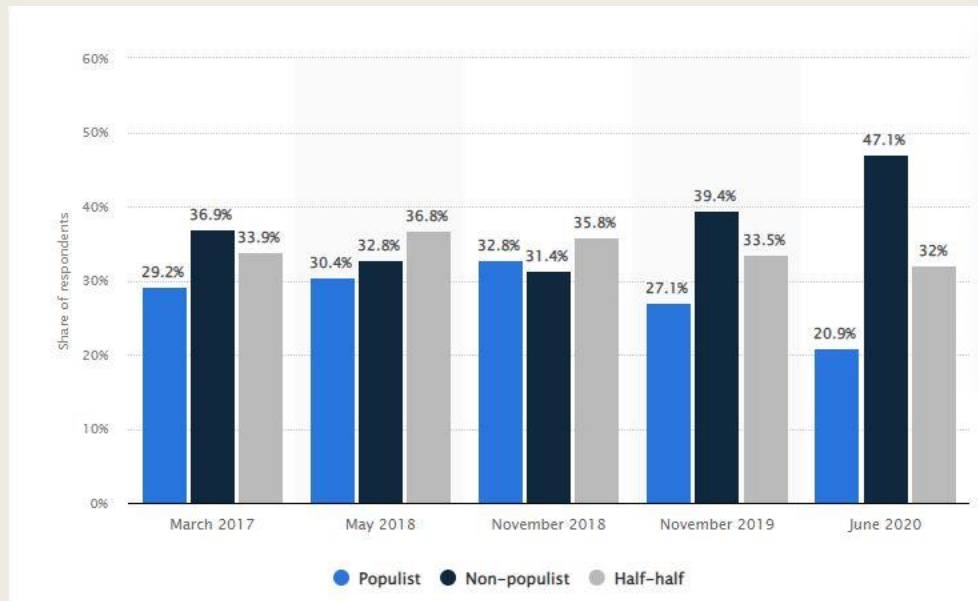
Source: Statista, 2022

In 2013, the populist Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) was founded as a party with a focus on economic and fiscal sovereignty problems in Germany. Before 2015, there didn't appear to be much interest in the topic of immigrants in Germany. Yet, the tone shifted along with the refugee crisis of late summer 2015 which provided the impetus for a veritable resurrection of the demonstrations, and most Germans supported capping the number of refugees.

The AfD won 92 seats in the Bundestag and 12.6 percent of the vote in the elections held in September 2017 to become a member of the national legislature. AfD's nationwide vote percentage decreased in the 2021 federal election to 10.3 percent from 12.6 percent in 2017, but the party still won the most seats in the states of Saxony and Thuringia and performed well in eastern Germany (Deutsche Welle, 2021).

The Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party is typically regarded by the mainstream media and political scholars as a right-wing populist party in Germany. Many experts have labelled the AfD as a populist because of its emphasis on anti-immigration, Euroscepticism, and resistance to liberal democratic institutions, as well as its rhetoric about maintaining German identity. Similar to the rise of right-wing populist parties, Germany has experienced the rise of radical movements, as well. The reichsbürger movement is one of them.

Share of Eligible Voters With Populist Attitudes in Germany in 2020



Source: Statista, 2020

The Reichsbürger movement

The "citizens of the empire" (or "reichsbürger") movement originated in Germany and shares ideas with the "sovereign citizens" movements² in the US, Canada, and the UK. The Federal Republic of Germany is not a sovereign state, and as a result, the laws and regulations it enforces are not enforceable, according to the Reichsbürger movement, which covers a variety of ideologies.

The Federal Republic of Germany, commonly referred to as the "BRD GmbH" (Federal Republic of Germany - Limited Liability Company), is believed by many members of the Reichsbürger movement to be a company (Kleikamp, 2015). Similar assertions are common among groups of sovereign citizens in the US who feel their nation has turned into a company, however they dispute as to whether this occurred in the 1800s or after the US abandoned the gold standard.

There is no agreement among Reichsbürgers on Germany's final lawful form of governance, much like among their American counterparts. The Third Reich, according to certain members of the Reichsbürger movement, is still there but occupied. Some claim that the German Empire of 1871 is still in effect.

² The Sovereign Citizens movement comprises a highly heterogenous anti-government ideology that originated in the United States spreading to other Commonwealth countries. Adherents are united in their belief that governments illegitimately rules over them. They live under the assumption that by declaring themselves sovereign, they are not obliged to abide with government legislation (ISD Global, 2021).

Right-wing extremist and antisemitic organizations in Germany find the Reichsbürger movement to be the perfect ally because of their historical revisionism. However, not all supporters of the Reichsbürger movement are right-wing extremists; just around 5% of the Reichsbürger, according to the German domestic intelligence agencies (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz), fall into this category.

This number, however it may appear small, illustrates the enormous variety of philosophies and views present in the scene. Reichsbürger beliefs are less of an all-encompassing worldview than they are a piece of a growing patchwork of conspiracy-theory-based ideologies, which expanded more quickly as anti-lockdown groups gained popularity. The intelligence services believed that 19,000 persons in Germany were affiliated with the Reichsbürger movement in 2019. The amount had increased to 23,000 by 2022 (Tanno and Schmidt, 2023).

Coup Attempt and What to Expect Now?

To achieve its main aim, the members of the Reichsbürger movement attempted a coup on December 7, 2022. As a result, more than 150 residences were searched by German police and 25 people were detained in connection with an alleged coup attempt by followers of the "Reichsbürger" movement. A German noble dynasty Prince, an active-duty judge who is also a former AfD politician, an active-duty soldier, and former members of the German army are among the members of the group who were detained on allegations of organizing an armed coup attempt with an operation. With the exception of one person, who is a Russian citizen, all the inmates are citizens of Germany. They were charged with forming a terrorist organization that planned to carry out an armed coup against the constitutional order of the Federal Republic of Germany.

They were led by a businessman Heinrich XIII, Prince Reuss, and the conspirators—including soldiers, police officers, and a judge—aimed to forcibly replace the incumbent government with a new political system. These individuals share the ideological foundation of the so-called *Reichsbürger* ("citizens of the Reich") ideology (Juling, 2023).

It is evident that during the previous years, the Reichsbürger movement's way of thinkings and conspiracy theories have transitioned from an under-the-radar movement to a tangible and significant terrorist danger in the eyes of German institutions. For now, it seems that the Reichsbürger movement lost its abilities and influence. Yet, considering the right-wing populism influence in Germany, it would not naïve to expect new fring groups to erupt in the coming days/years.

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Hereditary Succession Politicians in Japan: It is Time to Reconsider

Yukio Sakurai
yukio1887@gmail.com

What is hereditary succession?

Hereditary succession refers to the inheritance of a specific position such as official rank or peerage, occupation, property, etc., from generation to generation. Hereditary succession is a phenomenon that is widely seen in Japan, such as the imperial family system, court nobles, traditional cultures such as tea ceremony and flower arrangement, traditional crafts, traditional arts, sports, medical doctors, pharmacies, legal professions, diplomats, executive corporate management, merchants, temples and shrines, and agriculture and forestry.

Hereditary succession is part of the traditional authority that Max Weber defined as one of the legitimate rules. The imperial family system is legitimated in the constitution of Japan, saying that, “The Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the People, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power (Article 1)” and “The Imperial Throne shall be dynastic and succeeded to in accordance with the Imperial House Law passed by the Diet (Article 2).” This is the public system by law and others mentioned above are private systems, which are categorized as a unique skill, privilege, or property succeeded from generation to generation, or a traditional family-run business.

When Japan had the household legal structure system (family system) in the previous civil code (1898 to 1947), a succession of the household was considered the most important in lives, so it may be possible to consider the primogeniture heritage system to be part of the hereditary succession system. If it is so, Japanese people lived in a hereditary succession system nationwide. The family system was abolished in the civil code of 1947; however, some hereditary traditions and businesses remain unchanged by their mission. It implies that these hereditary traditions and businesses have a unique culture in the foundation that has never been changed as time goes by.

Everybody recognizes with respect the value of inheriting traditional skills or businesses through hereditary succession and one of the unique examples in Japan is *kabuki* actors. They are hereditary succession actors of

Yukio Sakurai,
Doctor of Laws
(Yokohama
National
University, Japan)
is a member of the
Japan Association
of Social Security
Law, the Elder
Law Society
Japan, and the
Japan Institute of
Comparative
Guardianship Law
who researches
social security
law, elder law,
comparative
guardianship law
in the field of
Japan and
Australia, and
global governance
studies. ORCID
ID: 0000-0003-
1273-9227

Japanese traditional performing art, who succeed in their stage names from the grandfather to the father and from the father to the child for 400 years. Nobody complains about such hereditary succession in *kabuki* actors.

In contrast, people tend not to like hereditary succession when they are in public office. A typical example is a hereditary politician. This type of hereditary succession is seen not only in Diet members but also in local assembly members nationwide. Why are there so many hereditary succession politicians in Japan? This essay focuses on hereditary succession politicians and discusses their characteristics and impacts on politics in Japan.

What is a hereditary succession politician?

There are approximately a total of 35,000 political professions in Japan (Statistics Bureau of Japan as of March 2021). Of these, 713 are members of the Diet (i.e., the House of Representatives 465, the House of Councilors 248). In addition, 47 prefectural governors, 1,737 municipal mayors, 2,598 prefectural assembly members, and 29,423 municipal assembly members. Below, members in the House of Representatives are focused.

The Diet members are often a group of people who ascended office through hereditary succession. In the period 1970 to 2000, it was an average of 25% of hereditary succession politicians in the House of Representatives (Tamura 2007, 93). The remaining 75% of members are ex-bureaucrats, representatives of trade unions or some industry groups, celebrities (in entertainment, sports, etc.), and ex. local parliament members.

It is considered typical of hereditary succession politicians that the position of a member of the Diet is inherited from the grandfather to the father and from the father to the child like a *kabuki* actor. There are cases where the politician's position is inherited by an adopted child or a son-in-law. The politician's position is taken over one generation, sometimes two generations to the succession. There are cases in which children run for office in the House of Representatives single-seat constituencies within the constituencies whose fathers or relatives are members of the House of Councilors (Tamura 2007, 88).

The current Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida, is the third generation of hereditary succession politicians. His Cabinet members have 12 hereditary politician ministers out of 20 ministers. Kishida appointed his son as the executive secretary to the Premier. Before that, Yoshihide Suga was not a hereditary politician and emphasized it for his rare characteristic. In other words, "non-hereditary" is rare in the ministers appointed among the members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in the Diet.

Shinzo Abe was a typical hereditary succession politician. The father of Abe was former Minister of Foreign Affairs Shintaro Abe (1924-1991), his grandfather was former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi (1896-1987), and his great-uncle was former Prime Minister Eisaku Sato (1901-1975). His brother Nobuo Kishi was the former Minister of Defense. Abe's profession was part of the family business. Abe was first elected to the House of

Representatives in 1993. After serving as deputy chief cabinet secretary, secretary-general of the LDP, and chief cabinet secretary, Abe served as prime minister from 2006 to 2007 and from 2012 to 2020 for eight years and eight months as the longest record in the postwar.

Current status of hereditary succession politicians

The number of hereditary politicians does not appear in official statistics but appears in private research. The number of hereditary succession politicians depends on the definition of hereditary. A hereditary succession politician is hereby defined as “a person whose parent, stepparent, or grandparent is a member of the Diet, or who has a member of the Diet among relatives within the third degree of kinship and who runs from the same constituency.”

According to the recent research blog as of September 2021, 91 are hereditary members (i.e., 79 in the House of Representatives and 12 in the House of Councilors), which is equivalent to 14% (i.e., 19% in the House of Representatives and 5% in the House of Councilors). It shows that the ratio of hereditary politicians in the House of Representatives slightly downed from 25% (1970 to 2000) to 20% now.

Of the 91 hereditary members, 46 are second-generation members, 28 are third-generation members, and three are fourth-generation members. There are 2 members who succeeded their spouses after their husband's members' deaths, and 12 others such as succession to relatives including a son-in-law. The number of hereditary members by Diet faction is 78 LDP and 9 members of the Constitutional Democratic Party. There are no hereditary members in *Komeito*, another coalition ruling party, and the Communist Party.

It is apparent that hereditary succession politicians appear mainly in the LDP in the House of Representatives. They mostly occupy prime ministers and ministers in office. In fact, among 33 prime ministers in the post-war, 16 were hereditary politicians at 48% (Nakagawa 2022). Particularly, after 1989 when the Showa emperor passed away, 11 prime ministers were hereditary politicians out of 18 at 61%. This fact makes people believe that Japanese politicians are mostly by hereditary succession.

Considering heredity, including the cases where there are governors or mayors and local assembly members among relatives, the number of hereditary politicians is even greater. In Asia, hereditary succession politics in top leaders is seen in North Korea, India, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Japan (Thompson 2012). In the case of Japan, hereditary politics covers the national and local assembly members, which is unique in the world.

What impacts do hereditary succession politicians take on politics?

Hereditary succession is a system that places the highest priority on blood ties or alternatives and does not necessarily emphasize the capability and efforts of politicians. This is based on pedigree legitimacy, which was seen

in *samurai* society before the 19th century. This system is closely related to the traditional culture of Japanese rule.

In hereditary succession, politicians inherit the support groups and individual supporters of the single-seat constituency system. In general, this method brings the interest of maintaining vested interests for both politicians and supporters. The ties between politicians and supporters lead to a distribution of wealth from the centre to the periphery. Such a mechanism has been at the heart of the LDP politics since 1955 when the LDP was founded.

As hereditary politicians are so strong in the election being supported by inherited support groups and individual supporters. Consequently, eight House of Representatives elections have been held since October 1996, and only about 20% of the 8,803 candidates who have run for single-seat constituencies are newcomers (Nikkei 2021). Hereditary succession politics, therefore, create a negative effect that prevents new entrants from politicians.

Hereditary succession politics contributed to a distribution mechanism during economic growth. There is however an analysis that attracting subsidies to local industries by hereditary succession politicians weakened the industrial competitiveness of the region overall (Asako et al. 2015). Japan is turning the corner into a super-aged society, and the social system, industrial structure, and working environment must be renovated. In this regard, the importance is wisdom and leadership of politicians, not just hereditary.

Crisis in Democracy

Hereditary succession politicians have played an important role in postwar politics in Japan. They can share the mission spirits of the political professions that have been succeeded from generation to generation. After generation changes, they seem to have lost mission spirit on what they must do and instead are satisfied with what they are in their Diet.

As a behaviour pattern, it is conspicuous that hereditary Prime Ministers tend to ignore proper constitutionalism, disregarding the Diet debate. They are sometimes not so diligent to respect the ethics of politicians such as accountability, honesty, and fairness that they behave like a tycoon. Many of the politicians who act in this way are hereditary succession politicians. In this sense, it is the time to review everything from scratch, from the ethics of politicians to the national electoral system.

The crisis in democracy is happening not only in the United States but also in Japan. In the U.S., it is due to a division between two political parties and citizens. In Japan, it is due to little mobility of able human resources into politics in part because hereditary succession politicians occupy 20% of the House of Representatives. Consequently, the young generation sees politics as something out of their reach and irrelevant to them. This is a crisis in democracy, not just anomie or apathy.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that hereditary succession politics is undoubtedly one of the root causes of the stagnation of politics such that the young generation particularly is not interested in Japanese politics. The time has come to reconsider whether this is the right thing to do about hereditary succession, which is a crucial issue in Japanese politics (Nakagawa 2022).

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Speculations on Georgia's Status in the Light of Regional Changes

Gökhan Sirmali

gokhan.sirmali@erdogan.edu.tr

From a free-wheeling kleptocracy to “a Western country”

Although Georgia had not explicitly progressed towards a democratic ruling system due to the ethnic problems under Zviad Gamsakhurdia's presidency at the beginning of the 1990s, it commenced taking democratic steps in Eduard Shevardnadze's term due to the credibility of Shevardnadze as a reformist in the eyes of western politicians. He was known as the 'gatekeeper' of Western funds (Christophe, 2004, p. 10). However, as mentioned by Lazarus (2010, p. 5), this age can be explained by three concepts: feckless pluralism (Carothers, 2002, pp. 10-14); chaotic pluralism; and a mafia-dominated state which corresponded to Georgian political atmosphere under Shevardnadze with his authoritarian power. The late years of Shevardnadze rule is even identified with the notion of 'free-wheeling kleptocracies' by Mitchell and Philips (2008, p. 164).

According to Mitchell, (2012, pp. 101-102), three features explain and provide clues as to why the post-Soviet Central Asia, and the South Caucasus countries have authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes. The first feature is that these regimes are not dominated by strong parties. Throughout the regions, individuals are stronger than the formal party mechanisms. The second is that the leadership of those countries is highly centralised. As a common result of this, all governors, majors, and leaders of other sub-national policies are almost entirely appointed by the president rather than directly elected. Thirdly, the legislative bodies of those post-Soviet countries are powerless. Mitchell claims that many parliamentary members see the parliament as a way to make business networks and gain access to corruption rather than a place of decision-making (Mitchell, 2012, p. 102).

Democracy promotion played a key role in the political transformation of Georgia from 1995 to 2003. Looking at the volume of external aids, from 1992 to 2007, the US provided \$778 million to Georgia in order to flourish and strengthen democracy in this country (Jakopovich, 2007, p. 213). As for the EU, the financial contribution was £420 million between 1992 and 2004, and this amount excluded individual aid from separate member states (Tudoroiu, 2007, p. 323).

Gökhan SIRMALI is a lecturer in the International Relations department of Recep Tayyip Erdogan University and a PhD Candidate, Political Science and International Relations, at Istanbul University. He holds a master's degree in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies from Glasgow University.

The leading role of the US in the democratisation process of Georgia clearly affected the destiny of Georgia. The demonstrators of the RR waved American flags while protesting against Shevardnadze for his resignation. After Shevardnadze was removed from power, a billboard located in downtown Tbilisi had the words 'Thank you, USA' written on it (Mitchell, 2006, p. 671). Having succeeded in Georgia's RR, the US president, George Bush, held an open-air meeting with the young western-educated Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili, at Freedom Square, Tbilisi, on 10 May 2005. Bush hailed Georgian democracy and stated in his speech that Georgia was a beacon of liberty¹ (The Guardian, 2005; Muskhelishvili & Jorjoliani, 2009, p. 684; Jones, 2015, p. 139). The RR was a milestone in the democratic transition of Georgian history that was mainly encouraged by the US. Furthermore, the revolution of Georgia in 2003 was called a 'short-lived fourth wave of democratization that spread over the countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, and Lebanon (Mitchell, 2009, p. 2).

According to Wertsch (2005, pp. 520-521), a couple of basic forces at work prior to the RR provide insight into why it took place. These are civil society; a vibrant free press; a lack of state authority; and lastly Georgian national identity and unity. However, this democratic enrichment in Georgia lost its speed due to political issues that range from the centralisation of power to intolerant, and aggressive political discourse towards political opponents (Muskhelishvili & Jorjoliani, 2009, p. 693). Nevertheless, the interest of donors has maintained in some various degrees over a quarter century.

The democratic transition in Georgia reached another peak point. A new political protest wave flourished in Georgia between 2007 and 2008 though foreign actors did not play the same role as they had done in the RR (Muskhelishvili & Jorjoliani, 2009, p. 682).

The regional disputes and the enlargement policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU have been the top issues that have affected the interactions of the Western countries with Georgia in the context of democratic reforms (Mitchell, 2012, p. 104). At that point, the August 2008 War between Georgia and Russia in the region played a vital role which concluded with Russia recognising two regions of Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, as an independent country. This catastrophic war was also supposed to be a milestone in terms of the relationships between regional and international powers with Georgia and Russia.

Dance of Georgia and European Union Together

According to Kopstein (2006, p. 86), the US and EU differ from each other through their interpretations of 1989's lessons. European statespersons encouraged the elites to build stable and democratic states on their periphery where the Yugoslav tragedy occurred. To achieve these aims, the post-communist elites were supported in order to strengthen their enthusiasm for joining the EU as a grant project of reconstruction since democracy promotion was principally a top-down project in the eyes of Western Europe

¹ Although the original saying of Bush was 'beacon of liberty', Muskhelishvili and Jorjoliani used the term beacon of democracy, possibly to emphasise its influence on democracy.

(Kopstein, 2006, p. 90). Moreover, according to Youngs (2009, p. 895), while promoting democratic norms in third-world countries, the EU uses networks more than hierarchical approaches to governance.

Looking at the European Union, it can be seen that programmes such as PHARE²) were carried out firstly in Poland and Hungary and then in some other countries. Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) and the Freedom of Support Act were launched with a broad democracy assistance perspective by the EU (Bishku, 2015, p. 45). It should not be forgotten that the EU also implemented a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Georgia in 1999. In the following years, as mentioned by Bishku, new instruments of the EU, the ENP and its specific dimension the EaP, were enacted. At this stage, as emphasised by Nilsson and Silander (2016, p. 44), the EU's policies to promote democracy, and sustain peace and security were embedded into its foreign and security policies, development aid, international treaties with third states, and all potential member states. The EU-Georgia Association Agreement entered into force in July 2016 and is occupied with doing political association and economic integration between the EU and Georgia. Indeed, economic indicators show the European Union as Georgia's largest trading partner. Georgian citizens have benefitted from visa-free travel to the Schengen area since 2017.

The Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) is a network of research, resource and training centres established in 2003 in the capital cities of South Caucasus to strengthen social science research and public policy analysis. Having looked at CRRC's datasets (2014-2020) regarding the most important national issues of Georgia, such as territorial-related issues, EU membership, NATO membership and democracy-related problems are not listed but jobs, poverty, and rising prices/high inflations are on the agenda of Georgia.

Instead of a Conclusion, Some Speculations: from “a Western country” to uncertainty

Georgia, which is the more western state of the South Caucasus, is open to various crises due to the recent regional-global events. Firstly, in the face of the ever-increasing tension between the EU and Russia, the failure to find a solution regarding Georgia's use of its sovereignty rights based on Abkhazia and South Ossetia may damage relations of trust in the medium term. Because the EU has not been successful in this issue for more than a quarter of a century. Secondly, Although Georgia, which has not found a solution to the problems of Abkhazia and Ossetia due to sovereignty, is eager for the EU and NATO, it has not been given the green light due to the reservations of its interlocutors. Thirdly, the progress of the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict, which has not been resolved in the region for many years, with moves that strengthen the territorial sovereignty of Azerbaijan, will potentially open new avenues to various economic, political, and military changes in the region. Fourthly, the development of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia under

² Poland and Hungary Assistance for the Restructuring of the Economy.

the mediation of China will also bring about regional changes. Lastly, when we add the rising populist politics and the influence of regional autocratic regimes to all regional developments, it is hardly possible to think that this atmosphere will not affect Georgia's domestic politics.

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Tower Court, Oakdale Road, York YO30 4XL, UK

An Overview of the India-Kyrgyzstan Relationships: Challenges and Opportunities

Chitra Rajora
dr.chitrarajora@gmail.com

Introduction

Historically, the relations between India and Kyrgyzstan have been close for three reasons, first, in the second century AD, the Sakas located in the Issyk-Kul region of Kyrgyzstan and the expansion of the Scythian kingdom spread near the southern coast of India to form an empire called Indo-Scythian establishment took place in 110 to 80 BC. Second, the exchange of philosophical ideologies between the two countries under the influence of Buddhism and third, Kyrgyzstan is historically linked to the Fergana Valley and the Silk Road, which paves the way for India's historical cultural and trade links with Kyrgyzstan.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990, relations between India and Kyrgyzstan were limited, but soon after the independence of Kyrgyzstan, India laid the foundation of diplomatic relations by formulating its foreign policy towards Kyrgyzstan. There are three reasons for India's inclination towards Kyrgyzstan. First, commitment to secularism and cooperation with India in the field of Islamic fundamentalism. Second, promoting investment in new areas of economic cooperation and accelerating new opportunities for cottage industry and entrepreneurship. Kyrgyzstan being an upstream country, they are rich in water resources. India may have new investment opportunities in the hydroelectric sector. Third, Kyrgyzstan can pave the way in future for a corridor connecting India with Europe and other Central Asian countries. If the geographical location of Kyrgyzstan is described, then its geographical range is Kazakhstan in the north, Uzbekistan in the southwest, Tajikistan in the south and China in the east.

*Dr. Chitra Rajora,
PhD in
International
Relations from
Jawaharlal Nehru
University, India.
Chitra Rajora
studies the History
of Central Asia,
and Russia, the
foreign policy of
India and India's
political system.*

At present, Kyrgyzstan as an independent nation preferred political reforms over economic reforms. The reign of the former President Almazbek Sharshenovich Atambayev ended in 2011-2017. Former Prime Minister (2016) Sooronbay Jeenbekov Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (Sooronbay Jeenbekov) was elected to the presidency with 54% of the vote. As a result, it was a transfer of power, a milestone in Kyrgyzstan's political development and the normal transfer of power between two elected persons. Snap parliamentary elections were held in Kyrgyzstan on 28 November 2021. They followed the annulment of the results of the October 2020

elections and the subsequent protests against the election's conduct. Seven parties passed the 5% threshold and will take up seats in the parliament. Turnout hit a record low at less than 35%.

The beginning of diplomatic relations between India and Kyrgyzstan After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990, former Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited Kyrgyzstan in 1995 and Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi visited Bishkek and Issyk-Kul Lake in 1985. Launched its Connect Central Asia policy in Bishkek during the first Central Asia-India Dialogue in 2012. India extended US\$ 5 million credit for the commissioning of various project plants in Kyrgyzstan. Since independence, Kyrgyzstan has received a total of \$9.2 billion in financial aid from world countries and multilateral sectors since 1992. Including Line of Credit, assistance program by India (mini dairy plant in 1997-2000, potato processing plant in 2002, 2010 assistance for parliamentary elections, 2011 supply of medical equipment, 2015.

On November 14, 2022, Indian-Kyrgyz inter-MFA consultations were held in Bishkek. The parties conducted a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and concluded that they are developing satisfactorily in various areas, including political and economic spheres, as well as trade, defense and education. And on November 3, the Indian-Kyrgyz Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held a regular meeting in a virtual format chaired by the Minister of Trade and Industry of the Government of India, Piyush Goyal, and the Minister of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic, Talantbek Imanov.

Trade Relations

After Kyrgyzstan declared its independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan emerged as the first Central Asian republic as a democratic and liberal reform-oriented country. In the economic field, Kyrgyzstan has initiated a comprehensive program policy in market reforms such as privatisation, restructuring, price liberalisation, and modern trade policy and progress has been made towards creating a dynamic financial sector. At present, India is in a strong position economically. But both countries lack a direct route of trade which affects the trade of both countries.

Indian exports to Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyz exports to India
readymade garments and textile products, pharmaceutical products, agro-food products (tea, coffee and spices), colouring material, electrical and electronic products, machines, vehicles and spare parts, essential oils and cosmetics, perfumery, electric machines, footwear, precious stones, ferrous and non-ferrous metals etc	plastic items, raw hides and skins, woollen products, machinery and mechanical appliances, home furnishing material, canned meat, jet fuel etc

Source: <https://www.embassyofindia/kg/pages/php?id=264>

In other areas of business, joint business and investment opportunities can be explored in metals and minerals, pharma, information sector and textiles etc. On this side, during the 2019 meeting with the Prime Minister of India, Suronbay Jeenbekov said, “We have Bilateral Investment Treaty and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. Both countries have also agreed on a five-year road measure in the field of trade and economic cooperation. Also, jointly launched the India-Kyrgyz Republic Business Forum to enhance B-2-B cooperation and study opportunities in other areas.

India trade with Kyrgyzstan (Value in US \$ Millions)

S.No.	Years	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1	Export	30.02	29.13	38.71	32.89
2	Import	2.59	1.33	5.16	1.79
3	Total Trade	32.60	30.46	43.87	34.68

Source: Export Import Data Bank (commerce.gov.in)

The Embassy of India in Kyrgyzstan hosted a reception in honour of the 74th anniversary of the Republic of India. 2022 was a special year for both countries: India and Kyrgyzstan celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. A year ago, at the initiative of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the 1st India-Central Asia Summit was held online, in which the President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Japarov took part. The participation of the Secretary of the Security Council of the Kyrgyz Republic Marat Imankulov in the first meeting of advisers/secretaries of the India-Central Asia Security Councils in December 2022 in India is one of the institutional mechanisms for interaction.

India-Kyrgyzstan: Challenges

Indian investment in Kyrgyzstan is faced with many constraints such as a lack of investment environment, a banking system and financial institutions are not developed in Kyrgyzstan. The current visa system of Kyrgyzstan creates barriers to travel for Indian businessmen, as a result of which other countries do not get a fair opportunity to compete. Indian companies invested in mining and manufacturing in Kyrgyzstan but with no success.

Challenges like terrorism, extremism and extremism pose a great obstacle to the security of the youth and society of both countries. To create an area of lasting peace, stability and prosperity in the world, we must participate in a common goal. On the other hand, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are concerned about the increase in religion.

extremism and terrorism, so the SCO can help end this problem. For example, RATS (Regional Counter-Terrorism Framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization) can provide a platform for information sharing to tackle common problems in the region. During the visit of Kyrgyzstan President Almazbek Sharshenov to India in 2016, Indian President Pranab Mukherjee said during that time that "there is a shared concern over the threat of terrorism and drug trafficking.

Kyrgyzstan lacks a direct route from India's border. Due to this, the economic relations between India-Kyrgyzstan seem to be less compared to other Central Asia countries. Trade between the two countries is affected due to the lack of direct road connectivity and more time taken due to winding roads as well as cost escalation. Under the India and Kyrgyzstan Memorandum on Military Technical Cooperation, India proposed to Kyrgyzstan the use of its satellite imagery to prevent terrorist activities and drug smuggling in the Batken (Batken) region of Kyrgyzstan special Terrorism Military Training has been formed jointly. Kyrgyzstan's internal disputes that can affect bilateral relations between the two countries Recently dispute, affecting the political legitimacy of Kyrgyzstan. This dispute is the allegations against the former President and internal violence.

India-Kyrgyzstan: Exploring New Opportunities

India and Kyrgyzstan should focus on the following areas and cooperation to strengthen their bilateral relations.

1. Keeping in view the commonality of their domestic supply and foreign policy imperatives, Kyrgyzstan has prioritised favourable sectors such as tourism, small and medium-sized businesses, processing and mining industries and technology information for Kyrgyzstan to engage with India.
2. It is cheaper for India to do business in Kyrgyzstan than in other Central Asian republics. Because a skilled and educated workforce is present in Kyrgyzstan. Its economy is stable, the national currency is easily convertible and it is committed to a low inflation and liberal foreign investment regime. Most important is direct access to the CIS and Chinese consumer markets.
3. In addition, there are huge opportunities for investment such as agriculture (university-to-university cooperation between the two sides, setting up of a demonstration unit for drip irrigation and Kyrgyz opening of the joint industry with India in the organic farming sector), manufacturing, electronics, energy and transport sectors. available.
4. The integration of India and Kyrgyzstan into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) may result in new opportunities for Indian entrepreneurs. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has also emerged as an important forum for regional security and economic cooperation. India has been an observer member of this group since 2005. Now

the inclusion of India as a full member of the SCO (2017) will help in moving forward towards meeting the expectations of the Asian century.

5. The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) came into force in 2015, which includes Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Armenia. EEU aims to emerge as a market with 176 million people and a 4 trillion GDP. Because the EEU has reserves of natural resources like oil, gas, minerals, coal, iron and steel etc.
6. India was invited by Russia to Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with EEU countries. The feasibility of a free trade agreement between India and the EEU is being considered. Which will provide a ready market to India, and will be very beneficial for India's economy. CIS country can become the best market for India's pharmaceuticals which will provide a huge opportunity for the Indian pharma industry through FTA. The FTA will also improve India's connectivity with Central Asia and the EEU countries, but also reduce the speed, time and cost of goods by accelerating trade relations among EEU members as well as connecting to the Iran-North-South-Transport Corridor. It would be easy to be sure.
7. Connectivity between India and Kyrgyzstan should be considered. The movement of goods with the help of INSTC (North-South Transit Corridor) will be an effective step towards solving the rich issues. India-Kyrgyzstan trade relations will get a boost. On the other hand, Chabahar Port in Iran will provide the shortest connectivity from Kyrgyzstan to India.
8. India should invest in Kyrgyzstan's natural resources like gold, coal, ore and placer gold etc. Because Kyrgyzstan is an important producer of about 20 tonnes annually. India can explore the possibilities of manufacturing jewellery in Kyrgyzstan. This will benefit the progress of Kyrgyzstan's employment and revenue sector. Tourism can become another opportunity for bilateral economic cooperation between the two countries. Issyk Kul Lake, the sky-touching mountains in Kyrgyzstan, has become a factor in attracting tourists from all over the world. The Indian experience in the tourism sector, especially hotels, travel facilities, and mountain tourism such as mountain expeditions can be used to better economic benefits in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan should be added to Visa on Arrival to simplify the visa facility to India. There is a need to discuss between the two countries to increase their exposure in the banking sector. Due to this, both countries will be able to import and export in economic and stable commercial areas.

Conclusion

Despite the shortest distance between India and Kyrgyzstan, diplomatic, economic and cultural relations have existed between the two countries since ancient times. At present, India and Kyrgyzstan are playing an important role in bilateral and multilateral (SCO, UN, CICA) fields. Which proves helpful in

following the India-Central Asia connectivity policy. Both countries should meet at regular intervals to maintain their diplomatic relations and implement new options for trade, educational and cultural exchange. Both countries should step forward in the field of national security in the face of terrorism, extremism and drug smuggling, only then both countries can get a proper environment to establish their bilateral relations. But Kyrgyzstan is so engrossed in its internal political situation that they are only engaged in reforming its political complex. For example, due to the controversy on 8 August 2019, political upheaval is going on in Kyrgyzstan. He was detained by the Kyrgyz police for spreading violence and corruption against the ex-president of Kyrgyzstan. He is alleged to have conspired to commit corruption during the modernization of the thermal power station in Bishkek and the privatisation of the building. His lawyer, Sergei Slesarev, stated that “the use of violence, mass unrest, attempt to murder, etc. charges against the representative of the Prosecutor-General’s Office, soldiers and their supporters in their residential complex in the village of Koi-Tash, Bishkek, on 8 August 2019. Atambadev surrendered to the police after a deadly two-day standoff (in which a special forces officer was killed and over 170 injured, including 79 law enforcement officers).”

For this reason, Jeenbekov accused Atambayev of violating the constitution during the immediate meeting of the Security Council. According to the Interfax news agency, “The President seriously trampled on the Constitution and laws of Kyrgyzstan by keeping within the framework of the law the fierce armed resistance that was carried out within the framework of the law. Its effect hurts the faith of the people of Kyrgyzstan in their country’s constitution. This whole matter is becoming a big challenge for the political stability of the country.”

This political upheaval may have an impact on India-Kyrgyzstan bilateral relations. Because both countries give priority to the internal security of their country and are committed to cooperating in establishing security with other countries in the world. Therefore, India not only gives importance to economic relations but also emphasises the initiative of political stability and peace. Therefore, it becomes very important to establish each other’s cooperation to further strengthen the bilateral relations in every field between the two countries because of the situation in which Kyrgyzstan. It is feared that Kyrgyzstan is once again headed for political anarchy, requiring the current president to reconcile the situation with the opposition. Otherwise, it may lead to another rebellion in the Central Asian country.

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