

Energy Studies Programme
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University

Course	:	Ph.D.
Course No.	:	EG609
Course Title	:	Energy Security and International Relations
Course Type	:	Optional
Course Teacher	:	Dr. Nalin Kumar Mohapatra
Credits	:	4
Semester	:	Monsoon
Course Duration	:	One Semester
Contact Hours	:	4 hours per week
Evaluation Method	:	Mid Sem Exam / Term Paper Presentation, End Sem Exam

Course Rationale

Energy is going to shape the nature of International Relations in the 21st century. The uneven demand and supply of the same accentuate growing insecurity for the world politics. Some of the major developments in the annals of international relations like the First World War, the Second World War or more recent conflicts in Africa, Central Asia and the Caspian region, Indo-Pacific, Latin America and West Asia are primarily rooted in the need for energy. The present course attempts to look at issues confronting energy security and its implications for global politics from four distinct theoretical approaches in International Relations, namely, Realism, Neorealism, Social Constructivism and Neoliberalism.

It has been observed that in the realist framework of International Relations, states are treated as 'rational actors' in global politics. They seek to promote their own 'national interests' vis-à-vis others in securing natural resources like energy. The competition often assumes the form of 'zero-sum' and could appear at various moments as 'relative gains'. The rivalry among these state actors to secure access to the same and thereby expand their leverage in global politics is contributing to new forms of 'security dilemmas' both in terms of 'resources securitization' and 'resources maximization'. This can be observed from some of the major developments that are currently underway in Africa, the Caspian region, Latin America, West Asia and also in the newly emerging Arctic region.

Since there is growing uncertainty of access to energy, the 'structure' of the international system in a neo-realist framework is generating 'fear' for both energy-producing and consuming states. In the light of processes associated particularly with 'resources securitization' the non-state actors like oil industries are also playing a critical role in shaping

and influencing the institutional mechanisms of some of the resources-rich states like Azerbaijan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Kuwait, Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria or as in Kazakhstan. This results in weakening of the polity of some of these above-mentioned energy rich states.

Energy Security in international relations not merely involves energy producing and energy supplying states; even transit states play an important role. This brings into focus the geopolitics of pipeline diplomacy in the forefront. For instance, due to the laying of Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan pipeline route there has been a growing conflict in the Caspian region among the regional actors of the region. Similar trends may be witnessed in the South China Sea region and the Hormuz Strait.

The present course shall also critically examine the interaction between energy security and 'societal security from the perspective of 'Constructivism' in international relations. In recent years more such societal conflicts are taking place in hydrocarbon-rich regions like Nigeria, Azerbaijan, Sudan, South Sudan, Colombia, Iraq, Kazakhstan and Russia. To a great extent, the growing mismatch between 'resources distribution' and 'mobilization of masses' based on 'primordial loyalty' in the energy resources-rich region is contributing to state weaknesses. This, in turn, impacts the growing societal conflict and adversely affects the security of the adjoining regions through spillover effects.

The Neo-liberal Institutional perspective of International Relations provides another framework for studying the institutional structure of energy security. Since energy security is a complex issue to address, often states (both energy-producing as well as importing states) resort to the policy of cooperating with each other, which in turn contributes to the growing regionalization of global politics. Increasing focus on energy issues in the bilateral and multilateral forums and their institutionalization process resulted in the emergence of institutional regimes which are playing an equally important role in formulating policies.

Over the years, India has been playing a pivotal role in the global energy security dynamics as well as protecting the interest of the Global South and promoting the development of new institutional norms both in the arena of energy security discourses as well as in climate negotiation. Similarly, it is pertinent to highlight the contribution of India to the formation of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), which in turn provided an institutional framework for harnessing solar energy. This process helped to smoothen the global energy transition process and facilitated evolution of an alternative normative geopolitical framework for studying energy transition.

Course Objectives

- Highlights the nature of the interaction between energy security and its impact on international relations.
- Explains how energy is acting as a structural factor in shaping the discourses of International Relations.
- Examines the nature of both global and regional conflicts in the context of the energy securitization process.
- Highlights how energy security shapes the dynamics of global geopolitics.

- Underlines the evolving nature of global and regional regimes in addressing the question of energy governance.
- Explains India's role in the global energy structure, especially in providing an alternative voice to the energy discourses.

Learning Outcomes

- To provide a comprehensive understanding of the disciplinary framework of IR and its significance in studying the geopolitical contours of energy security.
- To understand the dynamics of international relations being shaped by energy security structure.
- To provide a framework to understand the geopolitics of energy security and its impact on global conflicts.
- Provides a comprehensive analysis of the geopolitics of maritime chokepoints and pipeline diplomacy in shaping global and regional energy security dynamics.
- Highlights the dynamic nature of energy regimes and international institutions in shaping the norms of energy governance.
- Provides an Indian perspective on the global energy structure and discourses.

Course Content

Keeping the theoretical framework in mind, the present course will examine the following themes systematically:

Unit 1: Energy Security and International Relations: Historical Perspectives

Unit 2: Energy Security: Realist and Neo-Realist Perspectives

Unit 3: Energy Diplomacy: Pipeline Politics and Role of State and Non-State Actors

Unit 4: 'Societal Conflict' and Energy Resources Distribution: A Social Constructivist Approach

Unit 5: Regional Cooperation and Energy: A Neo-Liberal Institutional Perspective

Unit-6: India's Approach to Global Energy Structure and Processes

Readings

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