

**Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi**

Course Content for M. Phil Optional

Title: Geopolitics, Security and Democratisation in the Caspian Region

Course Teacher: Dr. Nalin Kumar Mohapatra

Credit: Three

Evaluation: Class Presentation/ Term Paper/ End Semester Exam

Semester: Winter

Course No: SE 633

Contact Hours:3

Introduction

Caspian Region of CIS comprising Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan[•] has gained geo-strategic and political prominence in recent years. Huge hydrocarbon resources, strategic location of this region and changing geo-political landscapes have increased the significance of Caspian region. Apart from these above- mentioned factors, external state actors and internal political processes are in their own way shaping the identity of this emerging region. As there is growing demand of oil and gas in recent years, the emergence of this region is particularly significant, for meeting the energy needs of the world. These elements act as catalyst for external powers to meddle in the internal affairs of the countries in this part of world. It is not just the external state and non-state actors that are shaping the internal political dynamics of this region, socio-political systems within the regional states are also equally important for getting a broader picture about this region.

[•] Though Iran is a Caspian littoral state for the present syllabus I have not included in it due to the nature of course content.

The present course will look at geopolitics, regional security as well as democratisation process from different theoretical perspectives. The transitional political process of these states is also shaped by the existence of informal political structures like clan and regional groupings. Through this course students will be exposed to different facets of Caspian political and social systems like, growth of authoritarian political culture, role of ethno-nationalistic and radical fundamentalist forces.

Course Content

1. **Theorising Geopolitics , Regional Security and Democratisation**
 - Significance of the Study of Geopolitics
 - Major Theories of Geopolitics
 - Correlating Geopolitics with Regional Security
 - Approaches to Regional Security
 - Regional Security, Democratic Process and Identity Formation.
 - Post- Soviet States and Nature of Democratisation.
2. **Caspian Region : An Introduction**
 - Situating Caspian Region
 - Tsarist Russia and its Policy
 - Caspian Region during the Soviet Period
3. **Emerging Socio-Political System**
 - Emergence of New Independent States
 - Problems of Transition
 - Major Determinants of Democratisation: Geographic; Institutional; Socio-Cultural; Resource Factor; Privatisation
4. **Geopolitical Dynamics, Energy Security and External Actors**
 - Nature of Energy Politics
 - Pipeline Routes

- Role of India, Turkey, Iran, China, European Union and United States
- 9/11 Incident and Changing Geo-Politics of the Region

5. Conflicts and Resolution

- Inter- State Conflicts
- Intra-State Conflicts:
- Emergence of Radical Religious Groups
- Ethno-National and Regional Conflicts
- Regional Cooperation Mechanisms

6. An Alternative Paradigm of Security for the Region: Human Security and Sustainable Democracy.

Suggested Readings

Adler, Emanuel & Michael Barnett eds. (1998) *Security Communities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Agnew, John(1994) “The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory”, *Review of International Political Economy*,vol. 1(1):53-80.

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