International Relations · GS - II

"Energy security constitutes the dominant kingpin of India's foreign policy, and is linked with India's overarching influence in Middle Eastern countries." How would you integrate energy security with India's foreign policy trajectories in the coming years?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2025	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Energy security, crude oil imports, LNG, Gulf countries, strategic partnerships, diversification, renewables, green hydrogen, strategic petroleum reserves, critical minerals, maritime security, diaspora

Model Answer

Introduction

Energy security is a strategic component of India's foreign policy because sustained economic growth depends on reliable and affordable supplies of oil and gas. India's engagement with West Asia therefore combines energy interests with trade, diaspora, maritime security and strategic cooperation.

1. Integrating energy with foreign policy

India should pursue a multidimensional strategy:

1. Deepen long-term crude oil and LNG partnerships with Gulf producers while encouraging diversified supply sources.
2. Expand strategic petroleum reserves and strengthen maritime security along critical sea lanes.

3. Develop investments in overseas energy assets and refining infrastructure to reduce supply vulnerability.
4. Use platforms such as I2U2, India-Middle East-Europe connectivity initiatives and bilateral strategic partnerships to integrate energy, logistics and infrastructure.
5. Expand cooperation in renewable energy, green hydrogen, solar technology and energy storage, transforming the relationship from hydrocarbon dependence to clean-energy partnership.
6. Develop partnerships for critical minerals required for batteries, electric mobility and renewable technologies.

2. Wider strategic dimension

India should maintain balanced relations across competing regional actors while protecting commercial and diaspora interests. Greater engagement with Gulf states can simultaneously support investment, food security, technology and employment opportunities for Indians.

3. Long-term trajectory

Energy diplomacy should increasingly shift from “security of supply” to “security of the entire energy transition”, including hydrogen, electricity grids, critical minerals, technology and resilient supply chains.

Conclusion

India's Middle East policy should therefore integrate hydrocarbons, renewables, connectivity and maritime security. Such diversification can strengthen strategic autonomy while making India's foreign policy more resilient to geopolitical and energy shocks.

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