

India's Energy Diplomacy: Securing Resources in the Middle East and Beyond

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Abstract

India's energy diplomacy has become a cornerstone of its foreign policy, driven by the need to secure reliable and affordable energy supplies amid rapid economic growth and geopolitical uncertainties. With over 85% of its crude oil needs met through imports, India has historically relied on the Middle East, sourcing from countries like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. However, recent efforts have diversified its energy partnerships to include Russia, Africa, Central Asia, and the United States, balancing traditional hydrocarbon dependencies with emerging renewable energy collaborations. This article examines the historical context, key regional engagements, challenges posed by geopolitics and climate change, and future prospects for India's energy security. Drawing on recent data and analyses, it highlights India's strategic autonomy in navigating a multipolar energy landscape.

Introduction

India ranks as the world's third-largest energy consumer and crude oil importer, with its demand projected to grow significantly in the coming decades. As of 2025, the country imports nearly 90% of its oil requirements, approximately 4.7 to 5 million barrels per day (bpd). This dependency underscores the critical role of energy diplomacy in India's foreign policy, aimed at securing resources while mitigating risks from volatile global markets and geopolitical tensions.

Since the economic liberalization of the 1990s, India's GDP growth has averaged 6-7% annually, fueling a surge in energy consumption. The International Energy Agency (IEA) forecasts that India's oil demand could double by 2040, driven by industrialization, urbanization, and a growing middle class.

To meet this demand, India has pursued a multifaceted energy diplomacy, encapsulated in policies like "Neighborhood First" and "Act East," with a strong focus on energy security. The Middle East remains the cornerstone of India's energy imports, supplying over 60% of its crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG).

Including Iraq (24% of imports in 2021), Saudi Arabia (16%), and the UAE (10%) are the key suppliers.

However, events like the Russia-Ukraine war and escalating Middle East conflicts have prompted diversification. In 2024-2025, Russia emerged as a major supplier, accounting for up to 40% of India's oil imports, often at discounted rates. This shift saved India an estimated \$2.7 billion annually through arbitrage, highlighting its strategic maneuvering amid U.S. pressures and sanctions.

Beyond hydrocarbons, India is integrating renewable energy into its diplomacy, aligning with global climate goals. Initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and partnerships with the U.S. for clean energy underscore this transition. Yet, challenges remain, including geopolitical risks, supply chain vulnerabilities, and the trilemma of availability, affordability, and sustainability. This article explores these dynamics, arguing that India's energy diplomacy blends pragmatism and ambition, securing resources while positioning the nation as a leader in the global energy transition. Historical Context.

India's energy diplomacy traces its roots to the post-independence era, marked by non-alignment and a focus on self-reliance. In the 1950s and 1960s, India relied on domestic coal and limited oil imports, but the 1973 oil crisis exposed vulnerabilities, prompting diversification efforts. By the 1980s, the Middle East became dominant, with India forging ties with Iraq and Iran amid the Iran-Iraq War. The 1991

economic reforms accelerated energy imports, aligning with globalization. India's "Look West" policy in the 2000s strengthened Gulf relations, leading to agreements like the 2005 India-Saudi Arabia Delhi Declaration for energy cooperation. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014, energy diplomacy has intensified. The "Link West" policy elevated ties with the UAE and Saudi Arabia, resulting in investments like the \$20 billion joint ventures in refining.

Post-2014, India navigated US-Iran sanctions by shifting imports to Iraq and Saudi Arabia while maintaining strategic autonomy. The 2022 Russia-Ukraine conflict marked a turning point, India ramped up Russian oil purchases, defying Western sanctions and stabilizing global prices by preventing a supply crunch. This move, described as "responsible global leadership," averted oil prices spiking to \$120-130 per barrel. Diversification extended to Africa and Central Asia. In Africa, partnerships with Nigeria and Angola grew, with Nigeria becoming a key supplier in 2025 amid reduced Russian reliance. In Central Asia, initiatives like the TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) aimed at gas imports, though geopolitical hurdles persist. The Modi era's 10-year review highlights achievements: hydroelectric imports from Bhutan and Nepal, reduced Middle East dependency from 85% to around 60%, and enhanced renewable collaborations. This evolution reflects India's shift from reactive to proactive diplomacy, balancing energy security with sustainability.

Energy Diplomacy in the Middle East -

The Middle East is indispensable to India's energy security, providing the bulk of its imports despite diversification. In 2023, the region supplied 66.3% of India's LNG and over half its crude oil. Key partners include Saudi Arabia, Iraq, UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait. Saudi Arabia, India's second-largest supplier, has deepened ties through high-level visits and investments. The 2019 strategic partnership saw Saudi Aramco invest in India's refining sector, including the Ratnagiri mega-refinery project. In 2024-2025, amid Middle East tensions, India assured fuel supply stability, with Saudi cargoes arriving on schedule.

Iraq leads as India's top supplier, with imports rising post-2014 due to stable contracts with Indian Oil Corporation. The UAE, under the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), has facilitated \$20 billion in energy investments, including green hydrogen projects.

Qatar dominates LNG supplies, with imports increasing 10% in 2023. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), announced in 2023, enhances connectivity, positioning India as a transit hub for energy flows. Beyond economics, diplomacy addresses security. India engages in maritime security in the Persian Gulf, collaborating with the US and regional navies to protect sea lanes amid Houthi threats. Cultural and diaspora ties over 9 million Indians in the Gulf bolster soft power.

However, dependencies pose risks. The Israel-Iran conflict in 2025 raised concerns over import costs, with India spending \$137 billion on crude in FY2024-25. India's policy emphasizes de-hyphenation, maintaining balanced relations with Israel, Iran, and Arab states. Recent discussions on X highlight strategic leverage, with Russia offering discounts to counter Middle East volatility. Overall, Middle East diplomacy secures immediate needs while fostering long-term partnerships.

Diversification Beyond the Middle East -

To mitigate over-reliance on the Middle East, India has expanded its energy partnerships globally. Russia has become a cornerstone, with imports hitting 40% in June 2025 via the Eastern Maritime Corridor. Despite U.S. tariffs threatened by President Trump, India-Russia talks in 2025 reaffirmed their "strategic partnership. This includes nuclear energy cooperation and rupee-based trade, enhancing autonomy.

In Africa, Nigeria-Africa's largest oil producer has surged as a supplier, with Indian refineries like Reliance shifting from Russia in 2025. Partnerships extend to Angola and Sudan, supported by India's Africa outreach via the India-Africa Forum Summit. Central Asia offers gas potential. The TAPI pipeline, though delayed, symbolizes connectivity, with India recognizing energy as a diplomacy tool. Russia-India collaboration in the region counters China's influence. The U.S. partnership focuses on clean energy. The U.S-

India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) promotes renewables, with India importing U.S. LNG and collaborating on hydrogen. In 2025, amid tariff disputes, India emphasized diversified sources.

South Asia features hydroelectric imports from Bhutan and Nepal, aiding carbon reduction. X posts note India's arbitrage savings and multi-regional connectivity. This diversification reduces vulnerabilities, saving costs and enhancing resilience

Challenges and Geopolitical Risks-

India's energy diplomacy faces multifaceted challenges Geopolitically, Middle East instability exemplified by the Israel-Iran war-threatens supply chains, potentially inflating costs. US-Russia tensions add pressure, with Trump's 2025 tariff threats on Russian oil buyers challenging India's autonomy. Climate change exacerbates risks. Rising sea levels and extreme weather disrupt infrastructure, while India's carbon-intensive imports heighten energy security vulnerabilities. Geopolitical risks hinder transitions, creating uncertainty. In the Indian Ocean, climate geopolitics intertwines with pollution and ecological threats Supply chain issues, like July 2025's import drop to 18.56 million tons, reflect demand fluctuations and sanctions. Balancing fossil fuels with renewables amid growing demand is critical. X analyses stress diplomacy's role in navigating these challenges.

Future Prospects and Renewable Energy-

Looking ahead, India's energy diplomacy will pivot toward renewables and strategic partnerships. By 2030, renewables could meet 50% of needs, supported by the ISA and green diplomacy. Partnerships with Germany and the U.S. for green hydrogen and solar technology enhance autonomy. The IMEC and Quad alliances strengthen infrastructure. In Africa and the Pacific, diplomacy counters China's influence. Amid potential U.S. policy shifts, India seeks resilient alliances. This ensures security in a low-carbon era.

Conclusion-

India's energy diplomacy exemplifies strategic pragmatism, securing Middle East resources while diversifying globally Amid challenges, its focus on renewables positions it as a key player in sustainable energy. Future success hinges on balanced partnerships and innovation.

भाई और बहन

- उजाला यादव

बी.ए. तृतीय सेमेस्टर

भाई बहन का रिश्ता,
कितना अच्छा होता है।
प्यार भी और झगड़ा भी।
और फिर एक दिन उन दोनों के बीच
सिर्फ प्यार रह जाता है।
क्योंकि फिर झगड़े के लिए,
बहन को एक पति मिल जाता है।
और भाई को एक पत्नी।
बहन का प्यार किसी दुआ से कम नहीं होता
वो चाहे दूर भी हो तो कोई गम नहीं होता,
अक्सर रिश्ते दूरियों से फिके पड़ जाते हैं,
पर भाई-बहन का प्यार कभी कम नहीं होता।
बहन कभी कहती नहीं लेकिन
बहन के लिए भाई हमेशा
महत्वपूर्ण होता है

प्रकृति की सुन्दरता

- सोनम कुमारी

बी.ए. प्रथम वर्ष

प्रकृति सुंदरी, हृदयं मे मोहयति,
संध्या समये सूर्यो अस्तं गच्छति।
आकाशे रंगानि विविधानि दर्शयति,
ताराणां चन्द्रस्य च प्रकाशः।
रात्रि समये ताराणां जलबिंदवः
चन्द्रस्य प्रकाशेन दीप्तिमन्तः।
प्रकृति सुंदरी, हृदयं मे मोहयति
नित्यम् सुंदरं, नित्यम् मोहकं।
प्रकृतेः सुंदरता नित्यम्
सूर्योदयात् सूर्योस्तं पर्यन्तम्।
ताराणां चन्द्रस्य च प्रकाशः
प्रकृतेः सुंदरता हृदयं मोहयति।
