



Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*Transformations in
the Global Energy
System and their
impact on China and
India*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker:

Niharika Tagotra

26 November 2025

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Speaker: Dr. Niharika Tagotra, Senior Research Specialist, India Energy Programme, World Resources Institute, New Delhi.

Chair: Dr. Rajiv Ranjan, Associate Professor, Department of East Asian Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Delhi; and, Adjunct Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar analysed major shifts that have redefined global energy markets. The speaker assessed their implications for the strategic trajectories of India and China, and situated contemporary energy transitions within broader questions of national security, geopolitical competition and supply-chain resilience in Asia.
- Dr. Tagotra identified three structural transformations shaping the global energy ecosystem: the rise of India and China as the world's primary energy demand centres; the emergence of the United States as a major crude-oil exporter driven by the shale revolution and the accelerating expansion of renewable energy anchored in China's dominance over critical mineral refining.
- Drawing on recent assessments from the International Energy Agency, the speaker highlighted how electricity demand growth, mineral vulnerabilities, climate-related disruptions and grid-infrastructure stresses increasingly define the global debate on energy security.
- The speaker noted that China treats energy security as a core pillar of its foreign policy. India, on the other hand, employs energy largely as an instrument within its broader diplomatic and strategic objectives. This divergence, combined with China's early-mover advantage in renewable energy value chains, has intensified competition over resources, technology and influence across the Indo-Pacific.
- The seminar also examined emerging dynamics such as India's recent assertion of strategic autonomy through sustained imports of discounted Russian crude despite

external pressure. The speaker also explored China's simultaneous projection as both a developed state and a leader of the Global South and initiatives such as the SCO "10+10 GW" renewable energy proposal. These trends collectively point to China's endeavour to position itself as a potential system integrator in global energy transition.

- Dr. Tagotra concluded that although faster energy transitions or climate-related shocks may open limited avenues for cooperation, major constraints remain. Furthermore, persistent structural asymmetries, legacy disputes, and competing strategic priorities continue to restrict sustained India–China collaboration in the energy domain.

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