

## **LECTURE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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### **Introduction:**

According to Aristotle 'Man by nature and necessity is social animal'. A man who can live without other beings is either God or a beast. In modern times no nation or country can live in isolation, co-existence of the nations is order of the day.

International relations was previously known as international politics which represents the study of foreign affairs and global issues among the states, including NGOs, INGOs, MNCs. The important things relevant to international politics are, National Interest, Conflict and Power. Conflict is having greater significance than other two because if conflict is not there National Interest and Power have little function to perform. The study of International Politics is narrower in scope, dealing with conflict and cooperation among nations, essentially at political level.

International relations is more comprehensive and covers all essential elements. Prominent sector of academia consider it an interdisciplinary field of study. It involves diverse range of issues such as globalization, state sovereignty, ecological

sustainability, nuclear proliferation, nationalism, economic development, global finance, terrorism, organized crime, human security, foreign investment and human rights. So as an academic discipline International relations initially focused on the study of political and diplomatic and much latter commercial relations among sovereign states.

As distinction between the two terms, International relations and International Politics came to be made increasingly in the post second world war period. Hans Morgenthau, great realist thinker believed the core of International relations lies in the study of politics between and among the nations. International politics is a process by which power is acquired, maintained and expanded.

### **Historical Background:**

The history of International relations has its traces thousands years ago. Barry Buzan (Prof. Emeritus of International Relations at London School of Economics) and Richard Little (Prof. Emeritus at University of Bristol) consider the interaction of ancient Sumerian city states, starting in 3500 BC as full-fledged international system.

The discipline of International relations was officially established after World War Ist with a view of avoiding future mass conflicts and ensuring peaceful changes,

but today scope and complexities of world politics demand an understanding of much wider range of issues.

The history of International relations is often traced back to Peace of Westphalia of 1648, where the modern state system was developed. Prior to this the European medieval organization of political authority was based on vaguely hierarchical religious order. Within Europe Austria-Hungary and Spain were allied under control of Hapsburg family, which also owned the territory of Netherlands. The Hapsburg countries( which were catholic) were defeated by mostly Protestant countries in Northern Europe France, Britain , Sweden and newly independent Netherlands in the thirty years war of 1618-1648.

The Treaty of Westphalia instituted the legal concept of sovereignty, which essentially means the rulers or legitimate sovereign had no internal equals within a defined territory and no external superiors within the territory's sovereign borders. Westphalia encouraged the rise of independent sovereign states that continues the shape international system today.

More than the Peace of Westphalia, the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 is thought to reflect an emerging norm that sovereigns had no internal equals within a defined territory and no external superiors as the ultimate authority within the territory's sovereign borders.

The centuries of roughly 1500 to 1789 saw the rise of the independent, sovereign states, the institutionalization of diplomacy and armies. The French Revolution added to this the new idea that not princes or an oligarchy, but the citizenry of a state, defined as the nation, should be defined as sovereign. Such a state in which the nation is sovereign would thence be termed a nation-state (as opposed to a monarchy or a religious state). The term republic increasingly became its synonym. An alternative model of the nation-state was developed in reaction to the French republican concept by the Germans and others, who instead of giving the citizenry sovereignty, kept the princes and nobility, but defined nation-statehood in ethnic-linguistic terms, establishing the rarely if ever fulfilled ideal that all people speaking one language should belong to one state only. The same claim to sovereignty was made for both forms of nation-state. (It is worth noting that in Europe today, few states conform to either definition of nation-state: many continue to have royal sovereigns, and hardly any are ethnically homogeneous.)

The particular European system supposing the sovereign equality of states was exported to the Americas, Africa, and Asia via colonialism and the "standards of civilization". The contemporary international system was finally established through decolonization during the Cold War. However, this is somewhat oversimplified. While the nation-state system is considered "modern", many states have not incorporated the system and are termed "pre-modern".

Further, a handful of states have moved beyond insistence on full sovereignty, and can be considered "post-modern". The ability of contemporary IR discourse to explain the relations of these different types of states is disputed. "Levels of analysis" is a way of looking at the international system, which includes the individual level, the domestic state as a unit, the international level of transnational and intergovernmental affairs, and the global level.

Initially, international relations as a distinct field of study was almost entirely started in British-centered. IR only emerged as a formal academic "discipline" in 1919 with the founding of the first "chair" (professorship) in IR – the Woodrow Wilson Chair at Aberystwyth, University of Wales (now Aberystwyth University), from an endowment given by David Davies, became the first academic position dedicated to IR. In the early 1920s, the London School of Economics department of international relations was founded at the behest of Nobel Peace Prize winner Philip Noel-Baker, and was the first institute to offer a wide range of degrees in the field. This was rapidly followed by establishment of IR at U.S. universities and Geneva, Switzerland. The creation of the posts of Montague Burton Professor of International Relations at LSE and at Oxford gave impetus to the academic study of international relations. Furthermore, the International History department at LSE, developed as primarily focused on the history of IR in the early modern, colonial and Cold War periods.

The first university entirely dedicated to the study of IR was the Graduate Institute of International Studies (now the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), which was founded in 1927 to form diplomats associated to the League of Nations, established in Geneva some years before. The Graduate Institute of International Studies offered one of the first Ph.D. degrees in international relations. Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service is the oldest international relations faculty in the United States, founded in 1919. The Committee on International Relations at the University of Chicago was the first to offer a graduate degree, in 1928. In 1965, Glendon College and the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs were the first institutions in Canada to offer an undergraduate and a graduate program in international studies and affairs, respectively.

### **Nature of International Relations:**

- i.** International relations is a broad term, it is not confined to only political factor, but also to non-political factors like economic, cultural, geographic etc. It includes official as well as non-official relations between states
- ii.** It involves not only state-state relation but also people to people relations
- iii.** Its subject matter is not only to end conflicts, but also to promote peace among nations

## **Scope of International Relations:**

The scope of International relations has increased over the years. Scholars have adopted different approaches for defining its scope. Morgenthau holds that the struggle for power among nations forms the scope of international politics. Feliks Gross and Russel advocated that in reality it is the study of foreign policies.

The scope on International Relations can be divided into following categories:

- i. Nation-State system:** International relations not only involves the study of actors i.e nations, but also factors affecting them like geography, resources, population, level of industrial and technological development, diplomacy, national interest etc.
- ii. National Power:** Nations are always actors in international politics, but they always act on the basis of their national power. National power determines the role and ability of the nations to carry out its foreign policy objectives.
- iii. International Political Economy:** International political economy is the study of international relations with the help of economic activities and analysis. With the onset of globalization from the mid 1980's a renewed interest in international political economy has developed among scholars.

- iv. International Security:** International security has always remained a primary concern of nation-states. The concern of security had led to war and peace in the past and world continue to promote these in future. A peaceful international order is always linked to notion of international security that includes among other factors non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and reduction of tension among states. Studies in war and peace and strategic studies in International relations are also related to international security.
- v. Globalisation:** This primarily refers to economic activities which have serious impact on political and social spheres. With economic liberalization from 1980s, the term globalization has assumed increasing popularity and usage and become significant in the study of international relations. Although international political economy and globalization are closely related but they are not identical. Globalisation involves changing flow of people among nations, free flow of communication. It involves cosmopolitan culture. Peoples think globally and act locally. States are non-longer closed units, they cannot control their economies as world economy is more interdependent.
- vi. International Environment:** Environmental issues have now assumed greater significance in the study of International relations than ever

before because of increased industrialization and technological progress. These activities have raised environmental safety concerns all over the world. Environmental issues have made states across the world interdependent today because carbon emissions from industrial plants in one part of the world may affect other parts. On shortage of river water in state may lead to war with neighbouring state.

- vii. International terrorism:** International peace and security are closely related with this issue.
- viii. International Law:** It is very important aspect of the study of International relations. It contains a set of rules which determine and regulate the inter-state behaviour both in times of peace and war. Sometimes treaties codify and formalize international law, but just as often, international law arises from custom and habit. The International Court of Justice in the Netherlands is the judicial body of the United Nations and is responsible for resolving disputes among states.
- ix. International Organization:** The international organization such as UNO, NATO, SAARC, ASSEAN, OAS, EU etc. play a great role at international level. They provide a forum for cooperation and conflict resolution.

- x. Foreign Policy:** The foreign policy of a country is greatly responsible for maintaining the level of International relations. Foreign policy is a throughout course of action for securing the objectives of national interest of a nation. It is difficult to understand the nature of present day international relations without s study of the foreign policies of major powers.
- xi. Nationalism:** It has not only changed classical nature of international relations but is also responsible for decolonization.
- xii. Economic factors:** Economic relations among nations form an important part of international relations. Today trade, loan, foreign aid are most important means of influencing the course of relations. Hence the study of economic factors/instruments forms an integral part of the study of international relations.