



**SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES,  
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY**

*in collaboration with*



**THE JADAVPUR ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

*is organizing a seminar on*

**Security: Conventional and Non-Conventional Issues**

**April 2, 2016 at Vivekananda Hall**

**Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India**

The immediate problem with the idea of security is how to define it. The different ideas of security that we come across in everyday discourse present a prosaic understanding of the term and can well be counted as a scratch on the surface. What merits the label of security concern is a matter of high politics that unavoidably plays a vital role in deciding who gets what, when, and how in the international arena. The early understanding of the term security accorded the state a universal and undisputed centrality, with sole emphasis on its survival and maintenance of political independence. The natural connotation that followed extended primacy to the strengthening of the military of the state; security thus became a derivative of power, in the sense that an actor who is able to amass great power achieves a dominant position and will also acquire security as a result, thus, securing lasting peace for all. However, the state centric approach failed to produce that ideal condition of security and variables of great power status failed to cope with the emerging challenges that could not be confined within state boundaries. The academic pursuit which understood the urgency of achieving security for 'real people in real places', called for the broadening and deepening of the concept of security. This broadening and deepening demanded alterations to the existing boundaries. The analysts argued that security was not just about states but affected all human collectivities and therefore could not be confined to an 'adequately inadequate' focus on military force. Therefore, moving beyond state, strategy, and status quo, issues of political, societal, cultural and environmental concern were also pushed into the realm of security discourse and a conceptual breakthrough was achieved in the process. The 2004 UN Report legitimized this academic concern, the decision makers realized that individuals were as deserving as the state to be objects of security and thus shifted their focus to what came to be known as non-conventional issues in security. Securing the environment topped the agenda, for human security was invariably linked to

securing the environment in which we are embedded, and also due to the realization that effects of climate change or environmental degradation would not be contained within respective boundaries and the impact on life and livelihood would have a domino effect that would ultimately lead to the opening of Pandora's box. The non-conventional issues in security have gained immense prominence in recent years because epidemics, natural disasters, resource wars and ethnic conflicts have caused more deaths and destruction than the two World Wars combined. What remains at stake is not only securing the existence of people but also assuring a certain quality of life led with dignity and basic amenities, but the international community has been unable to act as a determined body and too little has been achieved to be marked as a major success.

The strength of this “essentially contested” concept of security rests on its flexibility, in the sense that categorization of above priorities does not exhaust the list but makes room for inclusion of further issues rendering it responsive to the changes in its external environment. The elasticity of the concept of security makes any attempt to attain consensus as to its meaning a futile endeavor, because security holds different meanings to different actors and changes with different contexts. The academic resources therefore must be directed towards the enrichment of the conceptual framework of security to retain a multidimensional approach, and to prevent any tilt in favour of hegemonic standards. This proposal thus seeks to envision a seminar on the said theme. The broad theme of security can be further categorized into the following sub-themes:

1. Theoretical Aspects of Security
2. State Security
3. Cyber Security
4. Human Security
5. Energy and Environmental Security
6. Cultural Security
7. Approaches to Peace and Conflict Resolution

The seminar will consist of an opening session and five technical sessions of one hour each. Thus, the parts of the seminar will be arranged as following:

9:30am – 10:00am: Registration.

10:00am – 10:45am: Opening Session.

10:45am – 11:45am: Technical Session 1.

11:45am – 12:00 noon: Coffee/Tea break.

12:00 noon – 1:00pm: Technical Session 2.

1:00pm – 2:00pm: Technical Session 3.

2:00pm – 2:30pm: Lunch.

2:30pm – 3:30pm: Technical Session 4.

3:30pm – 4:30pm: Technical Session 5.

4:30pm – 5:00pm: Valedictory Session; Distribution of certificates.

**Deadline for abstract submission: March 4, 2016**

*Abstracts must include the topic of the paper (tentative topic), a short biography of the speaker/s, the organization/s being represented (maximum word limit: 150-200).*

*Participants can only be undergraduate and/or postgraduate students.*

Send the abstract to the following email address: **students@jair.net.in, info@jair.net.in**

**Announcement of selected abstracts: March 7, 2016**

**Submission of full length papers (2500-5000 words): March 31, 2016**

**Presentation time: 6 minutes for each speaker**

**Please confirm your presence by sending an email to the following address: students@jair.net.in, info@jair.net.in**