



## Restoration of JCPOA

**For Prelims:** Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

**For Mains:** Timeline & Background of JCPOA, Impacts on India of Restoration of JCPOA.

### Why in News?

Recently, the **US has restored sanctions waivers to Iran** to allow international nuclear cooperation projects, **as indirect American-Iranian talks on reviving the 2015 international nuclear deal** with Iran enter the final stretch.

- The waiver **allows other countries and companies to participate in Iran's civilian nuclear programme** without triggering US sanctions on them, in the name of promoting safety and non-proliferation.
- The **waivers were revoked by the United States in 2019 and 2020** under former President Donald Trump, who **pulled out of the nuclear agreement**. The agreement is formally called the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\)](#).

### What is the Timeline & Background of JCPOA?

- The JCPOA was the **result of prolonged negotiations from 2013 and 2015 between Iran and P5+1** (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States).
- It happened **due to the backchannel talks between the US** (President Barack Obama) **and Iran, quietly brokered by Oman**, in an attempt to repair the accumulated mistrust since the 1979 Islamic revolution.
  - Islamic Revolution, also called Iranian Revolution, popular uprising in Iran in 1978-79 that resulted in the toppling of the monarchy on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1979, and led to the establishment of an Islamic republic.
- The JCPOA **obliged Iran to accept constraints on its uranium enrichment program** verified by an intrusive inspection regime in return for a partial lifting of economic sanctions.
  - However, faced with a **hostile Republican Senate, President Obama was unable to get the nuclear deal ratified** but implemented it on the basis of periodic Executive Orders to keep sanction waivers going.
- When **Donald Trump** became president, he **withdrew from the deal** and called it a **“horrible, one-sided deal that should have never, ever been made”**.
- The US decision was **criticized by all other parties to the JCPOA** (including the European allies) because Iran was in compliance with its obligations, as certified by the [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#).
- Tensions rose as the US pushed ahead with its unilateral sanctions, widening its scope to cover nearly all Iranian banks connected to the global financial system, industries related to **metallurgy, energy, and shipping, individuals related to the defence, intelligence, and nuclear establishments**.
- For the first year after the US withdrawal, Iran's response was muted as the **E-3 (France, Germany, the U.K.)** and the [European Union](#) (EU) promised to find ways to mitigate the US

decision.

- The E-3's promised relief Instrument in [Support of Trade Exchanges \(INSTEX\)](#), created in 2019 to facilitate limited trade with Iran.
- However, by May 2019, **Iran's strategic patience** ran out as the anticipated economic relief from the E-3/EU failed to materialize.
  - As the sanctions began to hurt, Iran shifted to a strategy of 'maximum resistance'.

## Changes agreed under Iran deal to limit nuclear programme



## What will be the Impacts on India of Restoration of JCPOA?

- Restoration of JCPOA **may ease many restrictions over the Iranian regime**, which may directly or indirectly help India. This can be reflected in the following examples:
- **Boost to Regional Connectivity:** Removing sanctions may revive India's interest in the [Chabahar Project](#), Bandar Abbas port, and other plans for regional connectivity.
  - This would further help India to neutralize the Chinese presence in Gwadar port, Pakistan.
  - Apart from Chabahar, India's interest in the [International North-South Transit Corridor \(INSTC\)](#), which runs through Iran, which will improve connectivity with five Central Asian republics, may also get a boost.
- **Energy Security:** Due to the pressure linked to the US' [Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act \(CAATSA\)](#), India has to bring down oil imports to zero.
  - Restoration of ties between the US and Iran will help India to procure cheap Iranian oil and aid in energy security.

[Source: IE](#)

