

No US Sanctions on Chabahar Port

Why in News

Recently, the External Minister of India replied in the <u>Parliament</u> that the <u>US sanctions on Iran</u> have no bearing on <u>India's Chabahar port project</u> and the port is functioning well.

■ The **US** has given separate exceptions for the strategic Chabahar port project. <u>//</u>



Key Points

- About Chabahar Port:
 - It is located in the Indian Ocean in the Sistan province of Iran.
 - The Chabahar port is considered a gateway to golden opportunities for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with central Asian countries.
 - The port, which is easily accessible from India's western coast, is increasingly seen as a counter to **Pakistan's Gwadar Port** which is being developed with Chinese investment.
- Importance of Chabahar Port for India:
 - Alternate Route: Chabahar Port provides an option of alternate supply route to everyone, thus reducing the importance of Pakistan with respect to trade.
 - Strategic Requirements: It is located on the Gulf of Oman and is only 72 km away from the Gwadar port in Pakistan which has been developed by China.
 - China is aggressively pursuing its own <u>Belt and Road Initiative</u> (BRI) under the One <u>Belt One Road (OBOR) project</u>.
 - Connectivity: In future, the Chabahar project and the <u>International North South</u>
 <u>Transport Corridor</u> (INSTC) will complement each other by optimising Indian connectivity with Russia and Eurasia.
 - Also, it gives India direct access to Afghanistan and other Central Asian Republics
- Reasons for Exception in US Sanctions:
 - In Interest of Afghanistan: The US acknowledges that the Chabahar port project is not
 just only in India's or Iran's strategic interest but also in Afghanistan's strategic
 interest.
 - **Afghanistan** is a landlocked country which **depends on Pakistan for trade.** All its trade goes largely through the Pakistani ports.
 - Pakistan denies transit to India for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.

- This project **provides Afghanistan a strategic alternative** and helps it to escape being landlocked in a sense.
- **Bypassing Pakistan:** If in future, issues between America and Iran get resolved, then Chabahar Port will enable America to bypass Pakistan.
 - Pakistan still controls all the administrative routes by which Afghanistan can be supplied.
 - US has always remained hesitant to act on terrorists, specifically Afghan Talibans, due to that. Chabahar Port gives an option to America to take action against such terrorists.

Source: IE

