

## Operationalisation of Chabahar port

Click [here](#) to know more on the issue

\n\n

### Why in news?

\n\n

The first meeting of the follow-up committee for implementation of the trilateral Chabahar agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran was held recently.

\n\n

### What is the background?

\n\n

\n

- In May 2016, India, Iran and Afghanistan inked a pact which entailed establishment of Transit and Transport Corridor among the three countries.

\n

- The corridor aims at using Chabahar Port as one of the regional hubs for sea transportation in Iran, besides multi-modal transport of goods and passengers across the three nations.

\n

- Chabahar port is easily accessible from India's western coast and is increasingly seen as a counter to Pakistan's Gwadar Port.

\n

- The Port is also considered as a gateway to golden opportunities for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with central Asian countries.

\n

\n\n

### What are the outcomes of the meet?

\n\n

\n

- India Ports Global Limited company opened its office and took over operations at the Shaheed Behesti port at Chabahar.

\n

- This is seen as a concrete step towards India's role in Chabahar Port expansion.  
\n
- Positive and constructive discussions were held between the three sides on full operationalization of the Trilateral Transit Agreement for international transit & transport through the Chabahar Port.  
\n
- They agreed on the routes for the trade and transit corridors between the three countries.  
\n
- The three sides agreed to finalise at the earliest the Protocol to harmonize transit, roads, customs, and consular matters.  
\n
- It was agreed to allow cargo movement at Chabahar using TIR Convention provisions.  
\n
- The TIR Carnets is a multilateral treaty to simplify and harmonise the administrative formalities of international road transport.  
\n
- Also, a study would be initiated for determining measures to make the route attractive, decrease logistic costs and pave the way for smooth operationalization of the Chabahar Agreement.  
\n

\n\n

### **What are the advantages?**

\n\n

- The operationalisation of Chabahar port is a milestone in India's regional connectivity and trade game plan.  
\n
- Chabahar port opens up a permanent alternative route for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia, given the hurdles in the direct route through Pakistan.  
\n
- It facilitates India's role in Afghanistan's development through infrastructure and education projects.  
\n
- It gives a big boost to India's bilateral ties with Iran, which is a major oil supplier and potential trade market for India.  
\n

\n\n

## What are the concerns?

\n\n

\n

- **Sanction waiver** - The Chabahar port has received a temporary waiver from the U.S. sanctions on Iran.

\n

- But these concessions could be withdrawn any time, given the constant upheaval in the U.S. administration.

\n

- **Security** - The possibility of the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan will add to security concerns for Afghanistan and impact on the Chabahar route as well.

\n

- **Pakistan Factor** - The reconciliation process with the Afghan Taliban is likely to see the regional powers and the countries like U.S. and Russia engaging Pakistan more.

\n

- This could give Pakistan a space to play spoiler in Chabahar, which sees it a rival water port to the Gwadar port in Pakistan.

\n

- **Trade diversion** - The Afghanistan government is also hedging its bets on trade via Chabahar.

\n

- In recent months, Afghanistan has opened special cargo corridors with China, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Europe, Russia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

\n

- This shows that more trade was diverted through these countries than with its traditional partners such as Pakistan and India.

\n

- With Chabahar, India has done well to keep a place in the intricate connectivity network of the region.

\n

- However, it will require a sustained and nuanced diplomacy to stay ahead in this game.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n



**SHANKAR**  
**IAS PARLIAMENT**  
*Information is Empowering*