Syllabus subtopic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests

Prelims and Mains focus: About the 19th India-Iran joint commission meeting; Chabahar port and its significance for India’s diplomacy

News: The External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar met with Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif for a meeting of the 19th India-Iran joint commission, including talks on the Chabahar port, during a visit that could see him dealing with concerns of Indian expatriates over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as well.

Background

- The meeting of the two ministers was the first since last month, when Mr. Zarif had told a group of visiting Indian journalists that he was `disappointed` that India had allowed itself to be `bullied` by the United States and stopped all oil imports from Iran. Speaking in Delhi, Iran’s Ambassador Ali Chegeni had earlier suggested that India’s adherence to U.S. sanctions was also affecting Chabahar port development plans.
- In Washington last week, however, a senior U.S. official made it clear that it would continue its “narrow exemption” to India to develop the Chabahar port, recognising its role as `as a lifeline to Afghanistan` in terms for India to be able to export humanitarian supplies and potentially helping Afghanistan diversify its export opportunities.
- Subsequently, diplomats from India, Iran and Afghanistan met in Delhi on Friday and discussed several new initiatives for the trilateral project at Chabahar.

About Chabahar Port

The Chabahar Agreement was signed in June 2015 and approved by Iran’s Guardian Council in November 2016. Chabahar is being seen as a gateway for trade by India, Iran and Afghanistan with Central Asian countries.

Location: Iran’s Chabahar port is located on the Gulf of Oman and is the only
The port gives access to the energy-rich Persian Gulf nations’ southern coast.