Syllabus subtopic: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the move by European countries to restrict Iran and its likely implications; about JCPOA

News: Britain, France and Germany ratcheted up pressure on Iran on Tuesday to cease its violations of a landmark nuclear deal, stressing that they want to resolve differences through talks while starting the clock on a process that could result in a so-called “snapback” of United Nations sanctions.

Context:
The 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, seeks to prevent Iran from producing a nuclear weapon — something Iran insists it does not want to do — by putting curbs on its atomic programme in exchange for economic incentives.

About the move and its significance

• The three countries, which signed the international agreement in 2015 along with the U.S., Russia and China, said in a letter to the European Union’s foreign policy chief that they had no choice but to trigger the deal’s “dispute mechanism,” given Iran’s ongoing transgressions.

• The three said they rejected Tehran’s argument that Iran was justified in violating the deal because the U.S. broke the agreement by pulling out unilaterally in 2018.

• The Europeans stressed that they want to “resolve the impasse through constructive diplomatic dialogue” and made no threat of sanctions in their statement.

• They also specifically distanced themselves from sanctions imposed by the U.S., which Washington has said is part of a “maximum pressure”
campaign against Tehran.

- The pressure on Iran from Europe does not mean sanctions will automatically be slapped on the Islamic Republic.

Way ahead

Under its dispute resolution mechanism, countries have 30 days to resolve their problem, though that can be extended. If it cannot be solved, the matter could be brought before the UN Security Council and could then result in the snapback of sanctions that had been lifted under the deal.