

Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal

Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal Background

- The Indo-US nuclear agreement was initiated in July 2005, when the then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the US.
- On 18th July 2005, Singh and the then US President George Bush, in a joint statement, announced their agreement to enter into a civil nuclear deal.
- This was about 30 years after the US had imposed sanctions on India since her first nuclear weapons testing in 1974.
- This was a landmark occasion also because this was the first time that India was being recognized as a nuclear weapons state.
- This visit by Singh also saw the completion of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnerships (NSSP), which sought to augment cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-technology trade, and missile defence. The NSSP had been announced in January 2004.
- At the core of the agreement lay the focus on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- The agreement accorded to India the same status as signatories of the [Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) (NPT), although India was not one.
- Even though the American administration had imposed sanctions on India after the 1998 nuclear tests, these tests had little or no impact on India because of its large domestic sector and the size of the Indian economy. In 2001, the Bush government decided to do away with all sanctions on India.
- The deal with the US was to end the isolation of India on the civil nuclear front.

India and the NPT

- NPT signatories have a recognised right of access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and an obligation to cooperate on civilian nuclear technology.
- Also, the [Nuclear Suppliers Group](#) (NSG) has agreed on guidelines for nuclear exports that include fuel and reactors.
- These guidelines ensure that nuclear energy usage is not diverted from peaceful to destructive uses/weapons programs.
- India has not signed the NPT arguing that the treaty creates an exclusive club of nuclear states by restricting the legal possession of nuclear weapons to those countries that tested them before 1967. And, that it does not address the problem of nuclear proliferation.
- The NSG is also a US-led consortium that controls the export of nuclear equipment, materials, and technology.
- India, having left out of the global nuclear order, was free to develop its indigenous systems and technology, and has also found success, in the form of fast breeder reactors and thorium breeder reactors.
- Thus, India has developed its nuclear weapons technology.

- However, India's uranium reserves are not enough to meet its power generation requirements. Here, the NSG's uranium import restrictions affected India's power generation capabilities.

Aspirants can go through the relevant links provided below to prepare for the upcoming Civil Services exam even better –

Sanctions on Iran	India – United States Relations	2+2 India-US Ministerial Dialogue
Military Ties Between India and USA	Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)	Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)
Quadrilateral Security Dialogue QUAD	White Shipping Agreement	Malabar Exercise 2020

Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal Features

1. The Agreement is between two States possessing advanced nuclear technology, both parties having the same benefits and advantages.
2. The Deal will enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation between both countries.
3. The Deal covers nuclear reactors and aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle like reprocessing and encroachment.
4. The Agreement provides for the development of a nuclear fuel strategic reserve to hedge against any break in the supply over the lifetime of India's reactors.
5. The Agreement provides for the transfer of nuclear material, nuclear trade, equipment, components, and related technologies and cooperation in nuclear fuel cycle activities.
6. The Agreement provides for the application of [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#) safeguards to transfer material and equipment.

Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal Timeline

1. After Manmohan Singh's visit and joint statement with Bush in 2005 regarding the civil nuclear deal, in 2006, Bush visited India and made a similar joint statement with the Indian PM.
2. In July 2006, the US House of Representatives passed the Hyde Act, which stated that Washington will cooperate with New Delhi on nuclear issues and exempt it from signing the NPT.
3. There were protests in India, particularly from the Left parties demanding threadbare discussion on the deal from the government.
4. In December 2006, Bush signed into law legislation on Indian atomic energy.
5. The negotiations between India and the US were concluded in July 2007.
6. In August 2007, both governments released the 123 Agreement.
7. In July 2008, the draft of the India-specific safeguards accord with the IAEA was circulated to the Board of Governors for their approval.
8. In August 2008, these safeguards were adopted by the IAEA unanimously.
9. On 8th October 2008, President Bush signed the legislation that made the Indo-US civil nuclear agreement into law.

10. On June 8, 2016, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCI) and Westinghouse, a private enterprise in energy-related ventures, agreed to conclude contractual arrangements for 6 reactors by June 2017.

Indo-US Nuclear Deal – How did it Benefit India?

- The shortage of Uranium for Indian Nuclear Power Plants was taken care of.
- Nuclear Power plants of India started running at greater efficiency due to imports of Uranium. India does not have high reserves of Uranium, so India had to rely on imports of Uranium. The Indo-US nuclear deal enabled India to import Uranium from different countries.
- Post Indo-US nuclear deal, India signed agreements for import of Uranium from Australia, Canada, Kazakhstan, France, Russia.
- From 2008-09 to 2017-18, India imported more than 7800 metric tons of nuclear fuel.
- After the Indo-US nuclear deal, it paved way for India's membership in other export control groupings like Australia Group, Wassenaar Agreement, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
- After the Indo-US nuclear deal, India was able to gain access to critical technologies in strategic areas.

Candidates can refer to the [Topic-Wise GS 2 Questions for UPSC Mains](#), from the linked article.

Frequently Asked Questions related to Indo-US Nuclear Deal

When was the Indo-US Nuclear Deal signed?

The Indo-US Nuclear Deal was signed on October 10, 2008. This historic deal was signed when Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister of India.

Why is the Indo-US Nuclear Deal called the 123 Agreement?

The Indo-US nuclear agreement was signed between the Governments of India and the US as per requirements of Section 123 of Atomic Energy Act, 1954 passed by the US Government. Hence Indo-US Nuclear Deal is also known as 123 Agreement.

When did India get Nuclear Power?

To generate Nuclear power for peaceful purposes, the first nuclear power plant of India was commissioned in 1969 at Tarapur, Maharashtra. It generated 210 MW of electricity which was later reduced to 160 MW. It was constructed after an agreement between India, the US, and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). India tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974.

Which Country has the Most Nuclear Weapons?

As of 2018, Russia has most Nuclear weapons at approximately 6,850 nuclear warheads. Russian and the

US have 90% of the world's nuclear warheads. However, there has been work on reducing the nuclear stockpile through the START Agreement signed between Russia and the USA. As of 2018, India has around 130 to 140 nuclear warheads.

