Israel’s Fallacy in the Iranian Nuclear Deal

What is the issue?

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- Israel’s PM has made a strong pitch for scrapping the Iranian Nuclear Deal by citing documentary proof exposing Iranian nuclear ambitions.
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- But the revelations were merely a restatement of the previously known, and make no substantial case for scrapping the nuclear deal (JCPOA).
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What were Israel’s allegations?

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- Israeli dispensation recently claimed that Iran has nuclear weapon ambitions by referring to multiple documents that were accessed by Israeli spies.
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- Israel has also made a call for scrapping the “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” (JCPOA), which is also known as the Iranian nuclear deal.
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- While the allegations got wide attention, there was little beyond what was already out in the public domain.
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- It was widely know that Iran had a robust nuclear weapons programme as early as 2007-08 and sanctions were placed to avert weapons development.
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- But Iran had always maintained that its nuclear programme was for civilian purposes and held its ground for 5 years despite severe sanctions.
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What is JCPOA?

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- As there were mounting evidence that Iran was clearly proceeding towards acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities, sanctions were imposed on Iran.
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- With all major powers obliging to the sanctions, Iranian economy came under severe strain for over 5 years till 2015.
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- P5 countries (US, UK, China, France and Russia) and Germany together negotiated with Iran and arrived at a compromise for removing sanctions and also halting the nuclear program.
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- Hence, JCPOA was signed, which lifted the economic sanctions on Iran and also restricted its nuclear program to civilian use technologies only.
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- JCPOA also opened up Iranian nuclear installations to international inspections to ensure compliance.
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- Presently, U.S. President Trump has to ratify the deal in a few days if the U.S. has to retain its stake in the deal.
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- But many have the feeling that the US president won't sign as he has openly aired his dislikes for the Obama era deal (2015).
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- Notably, the Obama administration had pursued the Iranian deal despite opposition from two of the U.S.'s West Asian allies - Israel and Saudi Arabia.
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- But the new U.S. administration under Trump has been taking a increasingly hostile line towards Iran, and which is to the liking of Israel.
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What is the way ahead?

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- Even if the pre-nuclear deal documents indicate that Iran intended to acquire nuclear weapons, there is no indication that Iran has violated JCPOA.
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- Additionally, neither the US nor the Israel seems to think that JCPOA has been violated by Iran.
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- Hence, if Iran indeed had an active weapons programme as Israel claims, the nuclear deal has ended it – which only argues well for the deal.
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- In other words, the U.S. and Israel are yet to make a convincing argument on

why the Iran deal should be scrapped.
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- Also, if the US decides to pull out of the deal, then there is the possibility that Iran might just scrap the deal in its entirety.
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- This runs the risk of Iran restarting its nuclear program, which is the least desired outcome for all.
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- The U.S. should hence assess the agreement based on its merit and outcomes, and not be driven on narrow geopolitical or ideological calculations.
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Source: The Hindu

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