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Analysis

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By Prashant
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








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Ans

1. A unity transition government between the warring parties
 2. A UN-led multilateral conference of envoys from India, China, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and the U.S.
- Tajikistan

MCQ

- A person, who is a Overseas Citizen of India cardholder, does not enjoy which of the below given privilege?
- A. Right to vote
 - B. Exemption from reporting to police for any lenght of stay in India
 - C. Both A & B are correct
 - D. Neither A, nor B is correct

MCQ

- The coastal town of Palma was in news regarding Islamic State groups brutally killing civilians. Palma is a city of which nation?

A. Mozambique

B. Madagascar

C. Somalia

D. South Sudan

MCQ

- The Drug Controller General of India has said that the AztraZeneca can be used for up to _____ months from its manufacture date?
- A. 3 months
- B. 6 months
- C. 9 months
- D. 12 months

Stop the Ambassadorships for sale



- The Presidents of the United States **appoint ambassadors** out of those who have **paid big financial contributions** to the Democratic party.
- The qualification is **not knowledge** of history or geography, but the **weight of the money bags** deposited
- U.S. President **Richard M. Nixon** had once even suggested that a floor price of **\$250,000** should be suggested for ambassadorships.





- Making the right appointments is crucial for Mr. Biden to **clean up the mess** created by his predecessor, Donald Trump.
- This is not the first time that a torch is being shone on this unfair practice.
- **Article II** provides that the President “**shall nominate**, and by and with the **Advice and Consent** of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors.”



- **India** has a **more sophisticated system** of appointing “political” ambassadors, not for donation to political parties, but as an avenue to **recognise and reward talent**.
- India has had **some very distinguished and successful political ambassadors**, who had access to the Prime Minister back home and to high levels in the host countries.

- The most celebrated political ambassador was **Kushok Bakula Rinpoche**, a Buddhist monk from Ladakh, who was appointed to Mongolia.
- He is credited with **reviving Buddhism** in Mongolia.
- The Head of State himself used to pay obeisance to him as the Mongolians followed the same **Mahayana Buddhism** practised in Ladakh.
- Even after he completed his diplomatic assignment (January 1990 to October 2000) Kushok Bakula Rinpoche retained strong ties with Mongolia till he died in his eighties.

- In recent years, **career ambassadors** are occupying those posts which were considered **political** in nature.
- But the practice continues in many countries because of the **general feeling** that long careers in the Foreign Service are **not necessary** to be **effective ambassadors**.

Special no longer

- Hong Kong, China's **Special Administrative Region (SAR)**
- Since its handover from **British rule in 1997**, the SAR has defied expectations that it would lose its unique identity.
- The unique “***one country, two systems***” model guaranteed a **high degree of autonomy** and **freedoms**, including a **free press**, the **right to protest**

Hong Kong and Vicinity



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- Perhaps, most importantly, for the **hundreds of multinationals**, it also **enjoyed an independent judiciary**, a stark contrast from the Communist Party-controlled courts across the border.
- On **March 30**, the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress (NPC), approved **sweeping changes** to Hong Kong's electoral system that will **reduce significantly the share of directly elected representatives** in the SAR's **Legislative Council (LegCo)**.

- President **Xi Jinping** signed orders to promulgate amended annexes to **Hong Kong's Basic Law**, the constitution that has governed the SAR and ensured its autonomy, **marking the biggest change since 1997**.
- While previously **35** of LegCo's **70** members were directly elected, that number has now been reduced to **20**, even as the size of the legislature has been expanded to **90**.

- The most controversial change is the establishment of a **Candidate Eligibility Review Committee** to decide the eligibility of candidates and deem whether they are “**patriotic**” enough.
- The amendments no longer give district councillors a place either in LegCo or in the Election Committee.
- With the new change and the **national security law** in place, Beijing’s grip on Hong Kong is tighter than ever.

- By reducing the space for **democratic representation**, Beijing appears to have given up efforts to do so, at least for now.
- That the changes are **being framed by China** as a historic political victory does little to change the perception.

The electric challenge | Pioneer

- The Centre and State Governments have raised **incredible sums of money** from excise duties, surcharges and cess on petrol and diesel.
- The **recent price surges**
 - Rs 100 a litre petrol in some States
 - Suez Canal blockage
 - Oil producers' cartel OPEC talking of production cuts

- With the **Reserve Bank of India** keeping the **rupee's exchange rate against the dollar steady**, prices at the pump might not come down soon.
- Petrol at **Rs 100 a litre** will be a reality nationwide sooner rather than later, and at the current rate of increase, **Rs 120 a litre** for ordinary petrol will be a reality by the next general elections.

- The opportunity is simple, because whether we like it or not, **a cogent argument** can be made that higher taxes on petrol and diesel are like a **carbon consumption tax**.



- If you do not want to pay this tax, **go electric**.
- Running costs in a **real-world situation** and on something like the **Hyundai Kona** and **Tata Nexon** EV, this came to **a rupee a kilometre** even at the peak unit rate of power in Delhi. A similar vehicle with a petrol or diesel engine would have running fuel costs between **Rs 6-10 per km** at the current rates.

- India is aggressively changing its **energy mix** with more **solar** and **wind** energy sources coming onstream.
- Electric vehicles are **much more expensive** than **internal combustion engine vehicles**
- India has been **very slow compared to China**

- The automotive industry in India directly employs close to **15 million people**, indirectly employing **five-six times** as many in varied other sectors, **from components to logistics to sales** and even **the vibrant automotive media**.
- But to truly drive electrification, the products have to be **desirable**, and **affordable**.
- The perfect electric motorcycle considered by a large industry player has what that company calls the '**70 Trifecta**', a range of 70 km, a top speed of 70 km per hour and costs Rs 70,000.

- If mass electric vehicle adoption takes place in the **next five-six years**, have the Governments thought about just how they will make up for the **lakhs of crores of lost petroleum taxation**?
- Of course, even if there is **rapid adoption of electric vehicles in India**, it will not replace internal combustion engines totally.

FINANCIAL NEWS

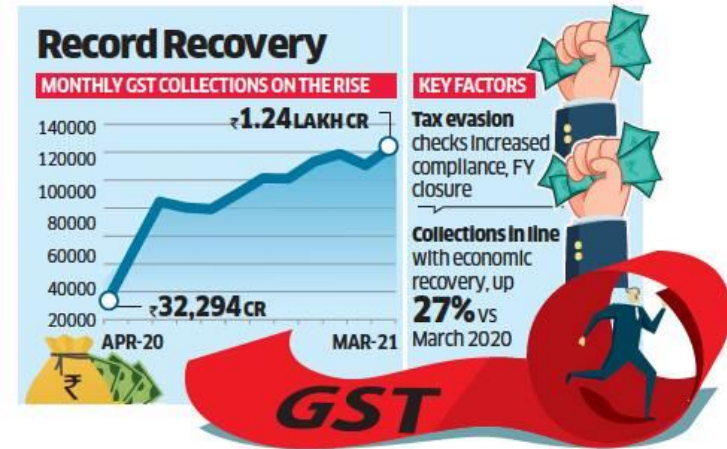
- **Finmin Rolls Back Rate Cut in Small Savings Schemes**
 - The finance ministry rolled back sharp reductions in the rate of interest on small savings schemes within hours of announcing it, saying the cuts of more than a percentage point in some of them announced late Wednesday were an “oversight.”
 - “Interest rates of small savings schemes of GoI shall continue to be at the rates which existed in the last quarter of 2020-2021, ie, rates that prevailed as of March 2021,”

- The finance minister's office had sought more data on women depositors and a report on the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana as part of the overall volume of savers under all schemes as it asked for the file on small savings cuts to be held back.
- This intervention followed what was described as “sensitive” media reports on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report — India slipped 28 places to 140 among 156 countries.

- **West Bengal has the highest share in gross small savings collections, according to the data for FY18, the latest available.**
- **The state accounted for 15.1% of gross collections, well ahead of second-placed Uttar Pradesh that had an 11.7% share.**
- **The four states that have elections — West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Kerala — together had nearly 25% share in small savings at both gross and net level in FY18.**

• GST Mop-up Crosses ₹1L Cr Mark for 6th Straight Month

- India's goods and service tax revenue touched a record in March, with the government collecting almost ₹1.24 lakh crore on a sustained economic recovery and improved compliance with anti-evasion measures.
- Issuance of e-way bills also touched 71.2 million in March, the highest in three years.
- GST revenue crossed the ₹1 lakh crore mark for the sixth straight month and with a steep increasing trend over this period indicate rapid economic recovery post-pandemic



• Exports in March Rise Highest Ever

- India's March exports grew 58.23% on year to \$34 billion, taking full-year exports to \$290.18 billion, 7.67% lower than \$314.3 billion in FY20, sources said.
- Led by engineering goods, gems and jewellery, and drugs and pharmaceuticals, and aided by a base effect, March exports were the highest ever, they said.
- Imports in March grew 52.89% on-year to \$48.12 billion, led by gold, electronic goods and machinery.
- March trade deficit at \$14.12 billion, widened from \$12.62 billion in February.
- "March had the highest ever exports ever in value and growth," said an official.

- Export excluding petroleum, oil and lubricants also increased 62.3%.
- Exports in March 2020 shrank 34.57% at \$21.49 due to a steep decline in shipments of leather, gems and jewellery and petroleum products.
- Imports, excluding petroleum rose 77.12% in March. Gold imports rose a whopping 584%, at \$7.1 billion in March.
- During March 22-31, India's outbound shipments were \$10.70 billion, 250.47% on-year from \$3.05 billion. Exports, excluding petroleum, oil and lubricants also rose 280.01% on year, the official said. Imports at \$14.21 billion, were up 146.78%.

NEWS

- **Campaigning gains momentum for next phase of assembly elections in poll bound states, UT**
- **EC seeks report from its observers on allegation of irregularities in polling process in Nandigram assembly constituency**
- **CWC advises political parties not to utilize service of children for election campaign**
- **CWC advises political parties not to utilize service of children for election campaign**

- **RT-PCR negative report mandatory for all passengers travelling to Gujarat from other states**
- **India constructs highways more than any other country in last financial year says, Nitin Gadkari**
- **India vows to make regional cooperation stronger & vibrant under BIMSTEC framework says External Affairs Minister**
- **Good Friday being observed across the country**

- **President Kovind recovering well after bypass surgery; says touched by messages, from citizens & leaders**
- **Centre reviews COVID-19 vaccination drive and preparations with states, UTs**
- **Relief to Indian IT Professionals as US allows H-1B visa ban to expire**
- **US President outlines 2.3 trillion dollars plan to reengineer nation's infrastructure**

- **Bangladesh bans arrival from Europe except UK and 12 other countries**
- **US Attorney General launches review on hate crimes prosecutions, data collection**
- **2000 Bangladeshi students to get Muktijoddha Scholarships**

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Do you know?

Nalanda = Na+alam+Daa, meaning “*no stopping of the gift of knowledge*”

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