

## GST Council

- The GST Council met over two days this week
- Recommendations to fix various aspects of the indirect tax regime that remains a work in progress five years on.
- A new ministerial panel is being tasked with figuring out the long-pending constitution of an appellate tribunal for GST disputes, to move ahead.
- Based on an 'interim' report of a panel to rationalize rates, exemptions have been scrapped on several items, and rates altered for others to correct inverted duty structures.
- Apart from the fine print of the Council's decisions, which include tighter norms on the horizon for registering new firms and closing of tax evasion loopholes, there is a more critical takeaway.
- Not a single member raised the recent Supreme Court order that some States believed had upheld their rights against 'arbitrary imposition' of the Centre's decisions in the Council.
- Moreover, over a dozen States brought up an 'extra agenda item' their anxieties about the sunset of assured revenue growth from July 1,

## GST COUNCIL

- As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A.
- The notification for bringing into force Article 279A with effect from 12th September 2016 was issued on 10th September 2016.
- As per Article 279A of the amended Constitution, the GST Council which will be a joint forum of the Centre and the States shall consist of the following members: -
  - (a) Union Finance Minister – Chairperson
  - b) The Union Minister of State, in charge of Revenue of finance - Member
  - c) The Minister In-charge of finance or taxation or any other Minister nominated by each State Government Members
- As per Article 279A (4), the Council will make recommendations to the Union and the States on important issues related to GST, like the goods and services that may be subjected or exempted from GST, model GST Laws, principles that govern Place of Supply, threshold limits, GST rates including the floor rates with bands, special rates for raising additional resources during natural

calamities/disasters, special provisions for certain States, etc.

## **THE HINDU**

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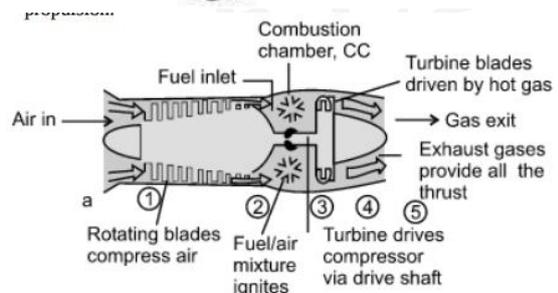
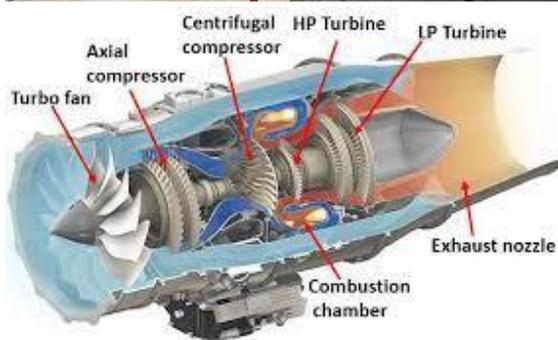
### **TURBOFAN ENGINE**

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out the maiden test flight of a new Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), an autonomous Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator, from the Aeronautical Test Range, Chitradurga, and Karnataka.
- “Operating in a fully autonomous mode, the aircraft exhibited a perfect flight, including take-off, waypoint navigation, and a smooth touchdown.
- “This flight marks a major milestone in terms of proving critical technologies towards the development of future unmanned aircraft and is a significant step towards self-reliance in strategic defense technologies.”
- It is a reduced-sized autonomous aircraft and is proving various technologies for autonomous aircraft to be built in the future.
- The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is powered by a small turbofan engine.
- The engine is a Russian TRDD-50MT originally designed for cruise missiles.
- “A small turbo fan engine is being developed indigenously for meeting the requirement.
- The UAV was designed and developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), Bengaluru, a premier research laboratory of DRDO.
- DRDO is in the process of developing UAVs of different classes to meet the requirements of the armed forces.
- Rustom-2, the indigenous Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) UAV under development, had crossed a milestone by reaching an altitude of 25,000 feet and an endurance of 10 hours in December 2021.

#### **A turbofan engine**

- A turbofan engine, sometimes referred to as a fanjet or bypass engine, is a jet engine variant that produces thrust using a combination of jet core efflux and bypass air which has been accelerated by a ducted fan that is driven by the jet core.
- The ratio of the mass of air bypassing the engine core versus the mass of the air going through the core is referred to as a bypass ratio.

- A turbofan engine that derives most of its thrust from the jet engine core efflux is referred to as a low bypass engine whereas an engine that derives most of its thrust from the fan is referred to as a high bypass engine.



## THE HINDU

### WE ARE EARTHQUAKES IN THE HIMALAYAN REGION?

- Landslides are generally mass movement of soil or rocks along the

slopes of mountains. They are quite common in hilly regions due to less stability of rocks, solid, debris, etc.

- Since, the Himalayas are the young fold mountains or V-shaped valley, caused by the collision of the Indo-Australian plate with the Eurasian plate, also are highly prone to landslides which leads to heavy loss of both life & property.
- India's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) – an autonomous federal institution responsible for disaster management and preparedness in the country lists the Himalayan states, the Arakan-Yoma belt in the northeast, the Meghalaya plateau, Western Ghats, and Nilgiri hills as most landslide-prone areas.
- The Himalayan landscape, say, geologists are especially susceptible to landslides. The mountain range was formed due to the collision of the Indian and Eurasian plates. The northward movement of the Indian plate causes continuous stress on the rocks, rendering them friable, weak, and prone to landslides and earthquakes.
- Mountainous slopes combined with rugged topography as well as high seismic vulnerability and rainfall create a toxic cocktail in the

Himalayan region augmenting the susceptibility to landslides.

- Road construction has been found to be especially toxic to the environment of these fragile areas as it involves rock blasting which throws the rock-soil balance off-kilter.

### **Natural Causes**

- Earthquakes: Earthquakes are often in the Himalayas region which causes loosening of soils that further leads to landslides.
- Rainfall: Heavy rainfall also leads to soil erosion and landslides in the Himalayas.
- Slope: The steep and sharp slopes of the Himalayan Mountain are one of the major reasons for frequent landslides compared to other regions in India.

### **Anthropogenic Causes**

- The Jhum Cultivation, also known as the slice and burn type of cultivation is frequently practiced in the Himalayan region and causes landslides.
- Cutting of trees- Himalayan region reserves a wide diversity of trees and this availability of trees led to indiscriminate chopping of trees.

- Illegal mining and industrial activities also are the major causes of landslides in this region.
- What worsens India's situation is that the country lacks a sophisticated warning system for predicting landslides.
- Preparedness for the hazard and a suitable warning system are vital to preventing loss of human lives and property.
- Sensitive terrains across the country are also often found to be deficient in a good drainage system, thus heightening the risk to human life and property, say experts.
- "Monsoonal rains," "which are critical for crops, are both a boon and a bane for many South Asian countries. Heavy downpours create floods and landslides and the problem gets aggravated with man-made constructions.
- The Indian government has identified the areas where landslides occur repeatedly through Landslide Hazard Zonation maps
- The NDMA guidelines include regulatory and non-regulatory frameworks with defined timelines for all activities.
- These also include everyday measures like keeping direct storm water away from slopes and regular

cleaning and inspection of drains for litter, leaves, plastic bags or rubble.

- There are tips for citizens as well: not to keep the seep holes open and to avoid storing water on rooftops.
- Scientific and technological base, mechanisms of dissemination and transmission of information, and response capability on receipt of warning information,”

## **THE HINDU**

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### **WHAT IS WINDFALL GAIN?**

- In a bid to curb a surge in gold imports and check ‘windfall gains’ being made by producers of crude oil and petroleum products, the Centre has raised the import duty on the yellow metal to 15%, from 10.75%, and levied fresh taxes on the export of fuels, including petrol and ATF, as well as on the domestic sale of crude oil.
- The higher gold import levy is expected to help rein in India’s rising current account deficit and ease the pressure on the rupee
- Foreign trade data show India’s gold imports surged almost nine-fold in May to surpass \$6 billion, from \$677.7 million in May 2021.

### **What are 'Windfall Gains'**

- Windfall gain (or windfall profit) is an unexpected gain in income that could be due to winning a lottery, unforeseen inheritance or a shortage of supply. Windfall gains are transitory in nature.
- For instance, when real estate property prices rise dramatically, the owner can make a substantial amount of profit by selling the property.
- This sudden and unexpected rise in income is called windfall profit. Many countries define proper laws to tax windfall profits.

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