

## Zaporizhzhia

- A team from the UN nuclear watchdog headed on Monday to Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, troops in March but run by Ukrainian staff, Zaporizhzhia has been a hotspot in a conflict.
- Zaporizhzhia is a city in south-eastern Ukraine, situated on the banks of the Dnieper River.

### THE HINDU

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#### Politics vs Trade (Pakistan)

- On March 31, 2021 Pakistan's new Finance Minister Hammad Azhar, announced Pakistan's Economic Coordination Committee (ECC)'s decision to import cotton, yarn, and 5,00,000 metric tons of sugar from India.
- For the textile and sugar industries in Pakistan, importing from India is imperative, practical and is the most economic.
- According to the latest Pakistan Economic Survey, 2019-20, cotton and sugarcane production declined by 6.9% and 0.4%, respectively.
- The sugar industry in Pakistan is also in crisis.
- When compared to cotton, the sugar industry's problem stem from different issues the availability for

local consumption and the steep price increase

- As a result, importing sugar from India would be cheaper for the consumer market in Pakistan.
- However, Pakistan keeps emphasising on the Jammu and Kashmir issue to make any meaningful start in bilateral relations.
- This shows the supremacy of politics over trade and economy, even if the latter is beneficial to the importing country.
- For the Pakistan cabinet, the interests of its own business community and its export potential have become secondary.

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#### Bail Jurisprudence

- The jurisprudence of bail in post-independent India, is anchored on the bedrock of Article 21 of the Constitution which safeguards not only life but also liberty by commanding that liberty can be deprived only through the procedure established by law, which must be "just, fair and reasonable".
- The same procedural law which provides for arrest and incarceration, ensures that bail can be sought by an accused through a broad spectrum of provisions

ranging from pre-arrest bail to statutory bail.

- While the former envisaged under Section 438 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) enables the accused to approach a Sessions court or High Court seeking a direction to release him on bail in case he is arrested on a non-bailable offence,
- The latter, as conceived under Section 167 of the CrPC, vests with the accused the right to be released if the investigation is not completed within ninety days or sixty days, as the case may be, depending on the severity of the alleged offence.
- Unless bail is granted to an accused who is presumed to be innocent in the eyes of the law until guilt is proven, he may not be able to take the necessary steps lawfully permissible to defend himself.
- A conjoint reading of Section 436 (bailable offences) and 437 (non-bailable offences) of the CrPC makes it clear that the wisdom of the legislature is to secure bail as the rule and jail as the exception.
- As declared by the Supreme Court, “the grant or denial is regulated, to a large extent, by the facts and circumstances of each particular case.
- But at the same time, right to bail is not to be denied merely because of

the sentiments of the community against the accused.

- The primary purposes of bail in a criminal case are to relieve the accused of imprisonment, to relieve the State of the burden of keeping him, pending the trial, and at the same time, to keep the accused constructively in the custody of the Court, whether before or after conviction, to assure that he will submit to the jurisdiction of the Court and be in attendance thereon whenever his presence is required.” (Sanjay Chandra vs CBI (2011)).
- The grant of regular bail is usually guided by what is referred to as the triple test the ascertainment of whether the accused is at flight risk; the possibility of tampering with the evidence and influencing witnesses.

## **THE HINDU**

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### **Fiscal federalism**

- In recent times, three issues have emerged as major discussion points in India’s fiscal federalism, leading to back-and-forth exchanges between the Centre and States.
- First are a set of issues related to Goods and Services Tax (GST) such as the rate structure, inclusion, and exclusion of commodities, revenue sharing from GST, and associated compensation.

- Second, State-level expenditure patterns especially related to the welfare schemes of States.
- Third, the conception and the implementation of central schemes. Issues related to GST have a forum for discussions as they are usually the agenda for GST council meetings.
- However, other two matters are generally flagged by the Finance Ministry based upon reports and studies done by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- A key issue of recent debates between the States and the Centre is the quantity and quality of public expenditure by the States.
- In this context, it is important to distinguish between two kinds of public expenditure.
- Mandatory spending is expenditure that is governed by formulas or criteria set forth, rather than by periodic appropriations.
- By contrast, discretionary spending is expenditure that is governed by annual or other periodic appropriations.
- While States demand more fiscal space for increasing discretionary spending, the Centre is pushing for more fiscal discipline by reducing the scope for discretionary spending and limiting States to focus on mandatory expenditure.
- In a federal system, States' fiscal stress gets spilled over to the Centre, leading to a situation of overall magnified fiscal slippages.
- As the economy is recovering from crisis, there exists a need to adhere to the path of fiscal correction both by the Centre and by the States, as a crisis demands more discretionary spending than normal times.
- Such additional expenditures need not be and cannot be sustained over longer periods.

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### **Fiscal consolidation**

- Sustained increase in welfare expenditure by the States leads to fiscal expansion, which necessitates additional resource mobilisation.
- When efforts towards additional resource mobilisation yield limited success, as in the case of many States in India, the States resort to borrowings.
- Fiscal expansion financed through debt and the resultant debt accumulation have important impacts on the economy both in the short run as well as in the long run.
- While debt per se might not be bad, the utilization funds raised through borrowings is important, that is, if it is used for capital formation, it could contribute to the real income of

future generations and add to repayment capacity of the government as well.

- On the contrary, if use of borrowings is to finance only the current expenditure, it poses the risk of debt rising to unsustainable levels
- Given the prevailing macroeconomic environment, the debt-GSDP ratio is expected to increase further.
- This rising trend in debt-GSDP ratio needs to be seen in the context of revenue mobilisation efforts of the States.
- Overall, there is a decline in revenue receipts due to a fall in the State's' own tax revenue.
- With dwindling revenue receipts, many States had to opt for expenditure compression to adhere to the fiscal responsibility legislation target.

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### **Terrorism**

- Two recent acts of terror in Russia and the U.S. carry ominous signs for India.
- The first one was the attempt to murder Salman Rushdie, the famous author of the controversial 'The Satanic Verses', at an event in Upstate New York
- A second incident took place in Moscow on August 20 when the 29-year-old Darya Dugina, a nationalist and outspoken daughter of a conservative ideologue of Russia, Alexander Dugin who is a supporter of Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine died in a car bomb explosion.
- The question is whether the American security establishment has slipped into complacency or whether it is simply impossible to protect a target because terrorists can melt away and integrate in the maze of ethnicities of the United States and emerge only to kill.
- The U.S. has seen erosion of several human rights and privacy in an attempt to identify fanatic "needles in a haystack" that pose a terror threat.
- The U.S. agencies sift through volumes of personal data of citizens and people around the world and deploy tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify terrorists for their sympathisers.
- Infiltration of security agencies by terror groups has always been a nightmare for governments across the globe.
- In the last decade, technology, software, and tools for eavesdropping on all kinds of communication are deployed to tackle infiltration.

- But it is obvious they offer no guarantee of pre-emption and early detection.
- Only alert vigilance in physically defending critical infrastructure, buttressed by international collaboration can keep the determined terrorist at bay.

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