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Hong Kong's Extradition Treaties Suspended

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Why in News

Recently, China has announced the **suspension of Hong Kong's extradition treaties and criminal justice cooperation agreements** with Australia, Britain and Canada.

Australia, Britain and Canada along with **New Zealand and the USA** are part of the **Five Eyes (FVEY)**, which is an **intelligence-sharing alliance** between these five countries.

New Zealand has already suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong, and the USA is preparing to do the same.

Extradition

- It is the **formal process** of one state **surrendering an individual to another state for prosecution or punishment** for crimes committed in the requesting country's jurisdiction.
- It is generally enabled through a **bilateral or multilateral treaty**.
- The **Extradition Act of 1962** provides India's legislative basis for extradition.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - This move comes after these **three countries first suspended the treaties** after **China imposed new security law on Hong Kong**.
 - These western nations see the law imposed on Hong Kong as an **erosion of the civil liberties and human rights** it had enjoyed since its handover from Britain in 1997.

- **Other Similar Moves Against China:**
 - **London (UK) and Canberra (Australia)** offered pathways to **citizenship or residency to Hong Kong citizens** looking to leave because of the new law, which also angered China.
 - The **European Union (EU)** announced to **restrict exports of equipment that could be used for surveillance and repression** to Hong Kong.
 - However, this decision of restricting exports was not unanimous owing to the volume of trade between China and member states of the EU.
 - France and Germany **proposed the restriction on so-called ‘dual-use’ technology.**

Dual-use goods are products and technologies **normally used for civilian purposes but which may have military applications. For example,** radio navigation systems and nuclear power technologies.
 - The EU will also bring in **measures to support Hong Kong’s population** by making it easier for them to travel to Europe through the **granting of visas, scholarships and academic exchanges.**
- **China’s Stand:**
 - China has accused these countries of **interfering in its internal affairs and defended the security law** as crucial to restore order in Hong Kong.
 - It held that these three countries **chose the wrong path of politicising judicial cooperation with Hong Kong,** and it has seriously hurt the basis of judicial cooperation.
 - They used the **national security law as an excuse** to announce the suspension of extradition treaties unilaterally.

Source: TH