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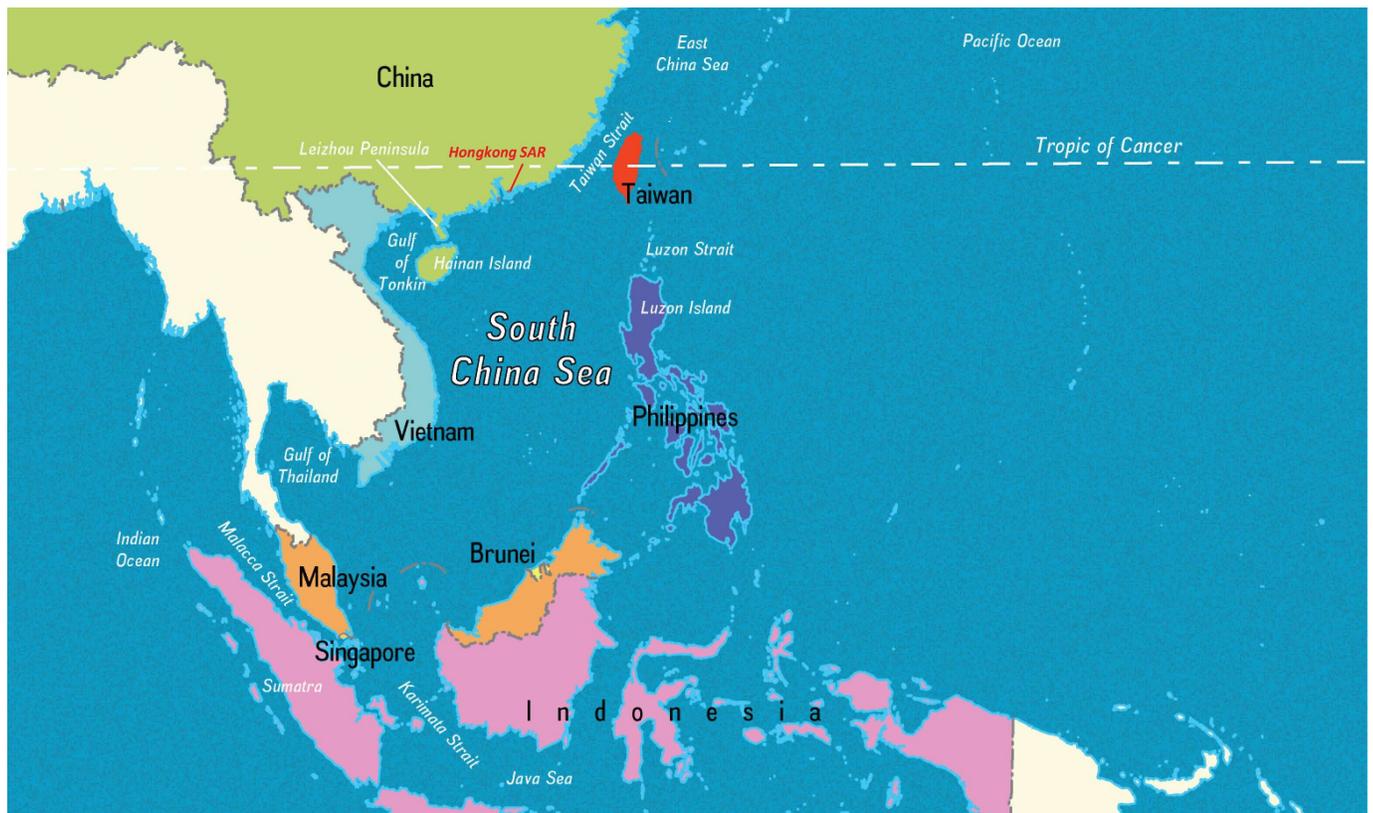
UK Suspends Extradition Treaty with Hong Kong

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Why in News

Recently, the UK government has suspended its extradition treaty arrangements with Hong Kong, in response to China's introduction of a **new security law** in the territory.

Earlier, **Australia** and Canada had suspended extradition treaties with Hong Kong.



Extradition Treaty

- Extradition 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 typically is enabled by a bilateral or multilateral treaty.
- **The Extradition Act 1962 provides India's legislative basis for extradition.**

New Security Law

- On 30th June 2020, China's top legislature unanimously passed a new national security law for Hong Kong.
- The law **criminalises four activities** - secession, subversion, organization and perpetration of terrorist activities, and collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security.
- Some specific offences include damaging government buildings and lobbying against the Chinese government.

Key Points

- **UK's Latest Moves:**
 - **Suspension of Extradition Treaty:**
 - The extradition treaty means that, if someone in Hong Kong is suspected of a crime in the UK, then the British authorities can ask Hong Kong to hand them over to face justice - and vice versa.
 - The **UK fears** the arrangement - which has been in place for more than 30 years - could see **anyone it extradites to Hong Kong being sent on to China**. Under the national security law, it is quite possible that Hong Kong residents are being sent to mainland China for trial.
 - **Arms Embargo:** The UK government has also decided to extend its arms embargo (ban) - which has been in place with China since 1989 - to Hong Kong, stopping the UK exporting equipment, such as firearms, smoke grenades and shackles, to the region.
 - **Citizenship for the Hong Kong People:** Plans for UK citizenship to around three million Hong Kong people by **early 2021**, in response to the security law.
 - **Chinese Company removed out of 5G Network:** China's Huawei Technologies will be removed completely from Britain's **5G** network by **the end of 2027**.
- **Reasons Behind the Moves:**
 - China did not tell the whole truth over the **Covid-19** outbreak.
 - The new national security law **breaches the guarantees of freedoms**, including an independent judiciary, that have helped keep Hong Kong one of the world's most important trade and financial centres since 1997.
 - The national security law breaches an agreement made with the UK before Hong Kong - a former British colony - was handed over to China in 1997.
 - Under the 50-year agreement, China enshrined civil liberties - including the right to protest, freedom of speech and the independence of the judiciary - in Hong Kong's **Basic Law**, an approach which came to be known as "**one country, two systems**".
 - Treatment of the **Uighur minority** in Xinjiang, an **autonomous territory** in China.
 - The actions of the Chinese government in the **South China Sea**.
 - The **USA sanctions against Huawei** due to **national security risk**.
- **China's Stand:**
 - China has accused **Britain of going along with the United States**.
 - Officials in Hong Kong and Beijing have said the **law is vital to plug gaps in national security exposed by recent pro-democracy and anti-China protests**.
 - China has repeatedly told Western powers to stop meddling in Hong Kong's affairs.

Source: TH