

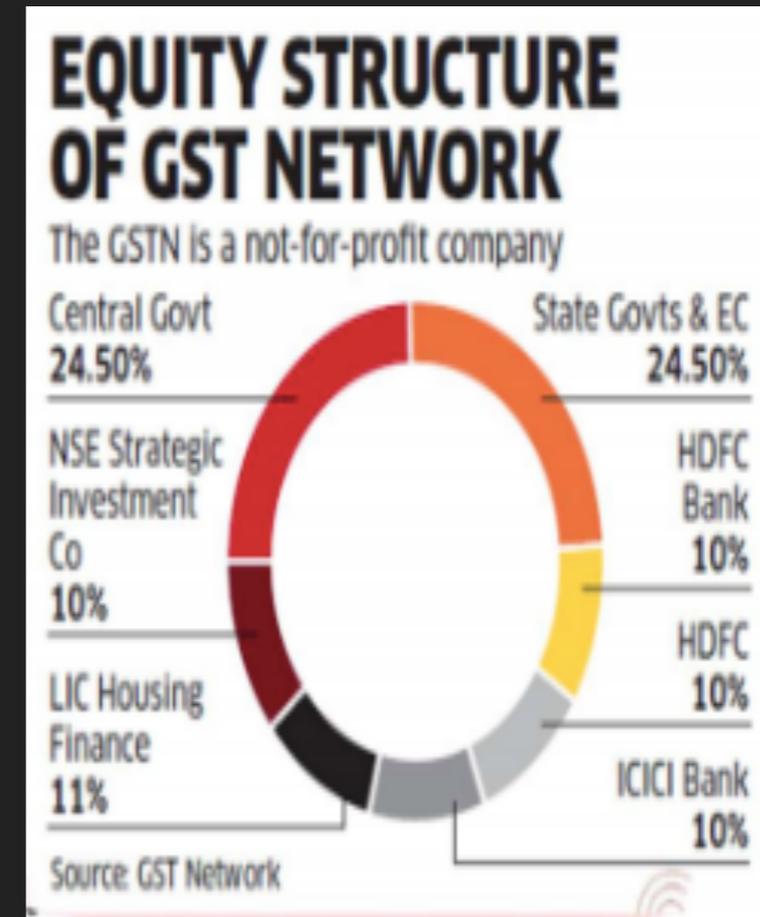
MAY 5

NEWS ANALYSIS :
THE HINDU

GST COUNCIL APPROVES SINGLE FORM FOR FILING OF RETURNS

- ▶ **CONTEXT** : The **Goods and Services Tax Council** decided to convert the **GST Network into a 100% government enterprise**, and implement a **single form for GST filing** from the current three.
- ▶ The Council also decided to create a Group of Ministers to review the plan for imposition of a **cess on sugar** to subsidise sugarcane farmers as their production cost is much higher than the selling price.
- ▶ The Council also decided to create another GoM to consider implementation of a 2% incentive for digital transactions.

- ▶ The government would buy the remaining 51% stake in the GST Network, which is currently under private sector ownership. Of this **50% will be divided** among the states according to their **GST ratios**. The Council also recommended that the GSTN continue to employ people contractually and have the flexibility to get the best talent on the best terms from the market.”



VP TO LEAVE FOR SOUTH AMERICA TOMORROW

- ▶ **CONTEXT** : Nine months after assuming office, Vice-President is going on his maiden foreign tour to the South American countries of Guatemala, Panama and Peru.
- ▶ The tour is significant because **China** has been **aggressively expanding its presence in Panama and Peru** and **India** has very **limited influence** over these two countries.
- ▶ The tour to **Guatemala** is to reassert Indian influence. Guatemala has supported **India's permanent membership** in the **United Nation's Security Council**. It also has strained relations with both China and Pakistan.

-
- ▶ The tour to **Panama** is significant because of **growing engagement between China and Panama**. The country also has the highest presence of **Indian diaspora of 15,000**.
 - ▶ In Peru, Mr. Naidu will participate in the celebration of **55 years of diplomatic ties** between the two countries.
 - ▶ *(Map work is important in this article).*

A POST COLONIAL RECKONING

- ▶ **CONTEXT** : Indians are among those caught up in the **Windrush controversy** rocking the British government, as the scandal over the impact of Britain's '**hostile immigration**' regime on Britons of Commonwealth origin refuses to die down.
- ▶ **HMT Empire Windrush** was a passenger liner that brought hundreds of passengers largely from the **Caribbean to Britain** in 1948, as Britain sought labour from its (then) current and former colonies to fill **acute labour shortages**. The liner has given its name to the whole generation of Caribbean citizens who arrived in Britain between 1948 and 1971, encouraged by this policy drive.
- ▶ Under a **toughening immigration regime**, and **bureaucratic mess-ups** that resulted in **documentation being lost**, many of these men and women have begun to be penalised for failing to have the right documentation and are being treated as **illegal immigrants**.

-
- ▶ Some have been unable to work, others have been denied health care, while still others have been unable to return to Britain following trips overseas. While most of the cases that have come to light apply to Caribbean citizens, there have been warnings that citizens from across the Commonwealth were likely to be impacted
 - ▶ In April 2018, it emerged that hundreds of non-EU doctors, including from India, had been denied visas even after being recruited by NHS trusts, in efforts to fill acute skill shortage.
 - ▶ A separate scandal is brewing over the treatment of foreign students. The Financial Times estimated that up to 7,000 foreign students may have been deported from the U.K. after being wrongly accused of faking English-language tests.
 - ▶ Post Brexit when Britain is trying to build its relationship with the Commonwealth for trade and other reasons, it is extremely damaging what has been revealed about the way the Windrush generation have been treated.

COLLEGIUM GIVES TOO FEW NAMES

- ▶ **CONTEXT** : The government said the Supreme Court collegium recommends too few names to fill the vacancies in the High Courts, only to later blame the Centre for delaying judicial appointments.
- ▶ In a tense exchange between a Bench, led by Justice Madan B. Lokur, and Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal, Justice Lokur, who is a member of the Supreme Court collegium, demanded the number of names pending with the government for clearance.
- ▶ Mr. Venugopal said in some High Courts, the vacancies are as high as 40, but the collegium recommends only three names.

MINISTRY FAST TRACKS SECURITY CLEARANCE

- ▶ **CONTEXT** : Earlier the time taken for security clearance for a project was eight-nine months on an average. This has been brought down to 40 days since 2017.
- ▶ Among foreign countries, the maximum investment proposals in critical sectors like telecom and defence that was cleared by the Home Ministry in 2017, were from China, United Kingdom, U.S. and Mauritius.
- ▶ The Ministry had formulated a new national security clearance policy in 2015 after the government decided to speed up projects, which were stuck for lack of approval by Intelligence Bureau (IB) or other agencies including the State police.

-
- ▶ The policy has 15 parameters on which inputs from security agencies are sought.

Evaluating threats

The objective of the national security clearance is to evaluate potential threats in proposals received by the home ministry and to provide a national risk assessment

- 1071 proposals in critical sectors like telecom and defence were given security clearance by Ministry of Home Affairs in 2017

- Of these, proposals related to I&B was 390 (community radio station, uplinking and downlinking)

- Civil aviation -235

- Commerce and industry-146

- Miscellaneous- 152 (defence and telecom have been put in this category)

- FDI proposals cleared-46