



Withdrawal of Hong Kong's Extradition Bill

Why in news?

The [Hong Kong's extradition Bill](#) was withdrawn following the widespread protests over the controversial provisions.

What is the immediate effect?

- The extradition Bill was essentially intended to hand over suspected criminal offenders to other jurisdictions.
- The withdrawal of the Bill has raised hopes for a welcome, even if temporary, pause in tensions.
- The reversal has given Beijing time to deal with the political and economic fallout from the intensifying protests.
- Notably, China had begun mobilising paramilitary forces in neighbouring Shenzhen city.

What are the protestors' demands?

- The decision by Carrie Lam, the Hong Kong's Chief Executive, has given a boost to the pro-democracy campaign being referred to as the 'Water-Revolution'.
- Ms. Lam was uncertain and so delayed a decision for nearly 3 months.
- Meanwhile, the protesters expanded their charter of demands, in effect to question the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy of Hong Kong.
- They have called for a judicial investigation into the government's handling of the crisis and alleged police violence.
- The demand is bound to grow louder after the roll-back of the Bill.
- But the most potent of the demands is the right to universal suffrage.
- The demand was originally championed under Hong Kong's 2014 umbrella movement but effectively made ineffective by the government.
- The demand will certainly prove pivotal to the current campaign.

What could the implications be?

- China's President Xi Jinping would be aware of the implications of major

loosening of policy as the 2047 expiry of Hong Kong's special status approaches.

- The risks involved are more likely to reflect in Taiwan too, whose government is particular of independence from China.
- [Taiwan is a sovereign state but its sovereignty has highly contended, and it has a tense relationship with China).

How does the future look?

- The 'Water-Revolution' has so far managed to broaden its appeal among millions, transcending social classes and across different generations.
- As with other recent political uprisings, building a cohesive leadership and strategy might turn out to be its biggest challenge.
- In a sign of the unstable economic and business environment ahead, Hong Kong's GDP growth in the previous quarter was the slowest since the financial crisis.
- Given its position as Asia's leading financial hub, prolonged uncertainty in Hong Kong can worsen the global implications of the current U.S.-China trade tensions.
- Mr. Xi has embarked on an aggressive policy aimed at China's economic, technological and strategic dominance.
- However, given the immediate challenge posed by the current discontent, an accommodative policy by China might serve the best overall interest.

Source: The Hindu



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