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TODAY'S ANALYSIS

(25 January 2025)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- **USA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM WHO**
- **USA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PARIS PACT**



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USA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM WHO

- **On his first day in office**, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order to withdraw the United States from the **World Health Organization (WHO)**.
- The reasons cited for this decision included WHO's perceived **mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic**, its **failure to adopt necessary reforms**, and its **inability to operate independently of political influences**.
- Trump also objected to the **financial contributions demanded by WHO**, claiming they were **disproportionately high for the US**, compared to other countries like China.
- **Although the withdrawal wasn't unexpected**—Trump had threatened to do so earlier during his presidency—it raised concerns about the **funding and global health expertise** that the WHO would lose as a result.

KEY POINTS IN EXECUTIVE ORDER

- **Suspension of Funding:**
 - The **US government will pause any further transfer** of funds to the WHO.
- **Recall of Personnel:**

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- US personnel working with the WHO **will be recalled, signaling** a halt in collaboration.

- **Identification of New Partners:**

- The US will seek alternative international partners to carry out WHO's necessary functions.

- **Cease Pandemic Treaty Negotiations:**

- The US will withdraw from the ongoing negotiations for a **pandemic treaty** aimed at better global preparedness and response to future pandemics, as well as fair distribution of medical resources like vaccines and treatments.

FINANCIAL IMPACT ON WHO

The US withdrawal from WHO is significant given the country's contributions:

- **Mandatory Contributions:** The US provides about **22.5%** of WHO's assessed budget, a total of **USD 138 million**.
- By comparison, China contributes **15%**, or **USD 87.6 million**.
- **Voluntary Contributions:** The US is the largest voluntary donor, contributing **13%** (USD 356.3 million) of the total.

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- China's voluntary contribution is significantly smaller at **0.14%** (USD 3.9 million).

The loss of these contributions will greatly impact WHO's ability to fund its global health programs, particularly in developing countries.

WHO's RESPONSE

- The WHO expressed **regret** over the US decision, emphasizing its crucial role in **protecting global health**, including that of Americans.
- The organization also pointed out that it had implemented significant reforms in recent years, which were achieved with the **cooperation of the United States** and other member states.

IMPACT ON INDIA

As a key partner in global health, India is likely to be affected by the US withdrawal from WHO in several ways:

- **Health Program Support:** WHO's role in India is vital, particularly in tackling diseases like **malaria, tuberculosis, HIV**, and **neglected tropical diseases**.
- It also plays a critical role in India's **immunization program**, with WHO teams monitoring vaccine coverage.

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- **Loss of Expertise and Guidance:** The expertise of US professionals, especially from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, has been integral to WHO's role in global health.
- If US personnel are recalled, **India might face challenges in adapting WHO's global health frameworks** to its local context.
- **Impact on Collaboration:** The severing of ties between the CDC and WHO could hinder international efforts in **disease surveillance** and **response to health emergencies**.
- India, as a major health player, may face disruptions in **cross-border health cooperation**.
- **Vulnerabilities in Health Programs:** WHO's guidance on **chronic diseases, vaccine development, and pandemic preparedness** has shaped health policies worldwide, including in India.
- **Without US funding and participation**, some of these initiatives might not be as effective or timely.

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GLOBAL SOUTH'S ROLE

- The vacuum left by the US is likely to be filled by **China** and countries from the **global south**, including India.
- India, with its **growing global influence** and **health expertise**, could play an increasingly important role in international health governance.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already been a strong advocate for **global health cooperation** and could further elevate India's leadership in this space.
- As the **voice of the global south**, India can leverage its position to rally other nations and organizations to step up their contributions to global health.
- There is also potential for greater collaboration between India and other rising powers, like **South Africa**, to bridge the gap left by the US.

MOVING FORWARD

- In light of the US withdrawal, WHO will need to find alternative funding sources and strengthen collaborations with other international partners.
- The **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)**, along with countries like **Australia**, **Indonesia**, and **Spain**, have already pledged more resources, and this trend could continue as global health efforts adapt to the shifting dynamics.

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- India, with its **robust public health infrastructure** and **leadership role in the global south**, stands at a crossroads.
- It has the opportunity to **expand its influence** in global health and support initiatives that aim to address **health inequities**, **pandemic preparedness**, and **universal health coverage**.

CONCLUSION

The US decision to withdraw from WHO poses significant challenges for global health governance, including in India. The loss of funding and expertise may affect WHO's operations and its support for health programs in India. However, this shift also opens doors for **India** and other countries to step into leadership roles, ensuring the continuity.

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USA's WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PARIS PACT

- In January 2025, **Donald Trump**, the President of the United States, signed an order to pull the US out of the **Paris Climate Agreement** for the **second time**.
- He **had made a similar move in 2017**, and now, after coming back to office, he is repeating this action.
- This **will take about a year to fully complete**.
- The **Paris Climate Agreement**, signed in **2015**, is an international agreement **aimed at limiting global warming and reducing the effects of climate change**.
- Trump's reasons for leaving include his belief that the **agreement unfairly takes money from the US and sends it to other countries**.

PARIS AGREEMENT GOALS

The main goal of the Paris Agreement is to:

- Keep global warming well below **1.5°C** compared to pre-industrial levels.
- Try to limit the temperature rise to **2°C** at most.
- The US is the **second-largest producer of carbon dioxide (CO₂)** in the world, and historically, it has been the largest polluter.

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- Trump's decision to leave the agreement is seen as harmful, as it means the **US will not contribute to the global efforts** to fight climate change.

IMPACT OF THE US WITHDRAWAL

- **Global Climate Efforts:**

- The US is responsible for around **20% of all global CO2 emissions**.
- Its decision to leave the agreement weakens global climate efforts, especially as **2024** was the **hottest year ever recorded**, with temperatures rising above **1.5°C** above pre-industrial levels for the first time.

- **Setting a Bad Example:**

- Trump's decision sends a bad signal to other countries, especially **developing nations** like India.
- It could encourage other developed countries to **also back out** of their climate promises.

- **Climate Funding and Support:**

- The US decision could also hurt **climate funding** for developing countries like India.

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- Wealthier nations are supposed to help poorer nations with money to fight climate change, but the US has **pledged less money than other countries**, like **Germany and the UK**, which offer more support for climate projects.
- Trump's action could make it harder for countries like India to get the money they need to deal with the effects of climate change and to make their energy systems cleaner.

IMPACT ON INDIA

- **Moral Leadership:**

- India has been a **leader in fighting climate change**, setting goals to reduce its carbon emissions and use more clean energy.
- Despite challenges, **India is committed to climate action**, and now it might need to step up more as the US pulls back.

- **Climate Finance and Support:**

- India, like many developing countries, needs **financial support** to deal with the impacts of climate change.
- Trump's move to withdraw from the agreement makes this harder, as it takes away a key source of funding.

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- India's energy transition and **climate resilience projects will need more support**, which **might be harder to come by** if the US is no longer involved in the Paris Agreement.

- **Green Technology Opportunities:**

- On the positive side, the **clean energy market** has grown a lot since 2017.
- India can use this opportunity to invest more in **renewable energy** and **green technologies** like **solar and wind power**, and **create jobs in these sectors**.

- **Global Role:**

- India's role in global climate talks is now more important than ever.
- India can push for stronger commitments from other countries and take a leadership role in ensuring that global goals are still met, even without the US.

- **New Technologies and Jobs:**

- India can also focus on developing **green technologies** and making its industries cleaner.
- By doing this, **India can create new jobs and help reduce the country's carbon emissions** while also boosting its economy.

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WHAT CAN INDIA DO?

India should stay committed to its **climate goals**, even if the US pulls out. There are several things India can focus on:

- Building better systems to protect itself from climate change, like stronger infrastructure.
- Continuing to grow its **clean energy** sector, which includes solar and wind power.
- Finding ways to make more money available for climate projects, like **green finance**.
- India has a big chance to lead the world in **climate action** by pushing for **international cooperation**, investing in **clean technologies**, and supporting the growth of green industries.

CONCLUSION

Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement is a setback for global efforts to fight climate change, especially since the US is a big polluter. However, it also gives India a chance to step up as a leader. India should continue pushing for stronger action on climate change and take advantage of opportunities to grow its economy with **green technology** and **renewable energy**. By doing so, India can help ensure a better future for itself and for the world.

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