Importance of U.S. in Paris Agreement

What is the importance of NDCs?

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- For about 3/4th of the 165 listed Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), implementation of pledges is conditional upon assistance on the finance and technology fronts.
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- These countries depend on help from industrialised economies to build capacity for implementation.
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- Even if all the NDCs were implemented, estimates show that the planet would warm up by about 3°C from pre-industrial temperatures i.e well above the goal of staying below a 1.5°C or a 2°C rise.
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- Therefore all the NDCs should to be implemented, and the support required should be provided.
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- Upfront capital investments are crucial for sustainable futures, and without them poorer countries have few options.
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What is GCF?

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- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is an international mechanism set up at the Conference of the Parties-16 (COP-16) in Cancun in 2010.
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- As per the international agreement, advanced economies should provide an annual assistance of $100 billion, through public and private sources, by 2020 — the deadline is now extended to 2025.
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- The fund currently has pledges worth $10 billion from various developed countries.
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- Least developed countries, small island states and African countries, which are all very vulnerable to the effects of warming and have contributed little to the GHGs, ought to receive the first priority.
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- The GCF has the ability to bear risks, support innovation and leverage its own funds for further support, therefore making it a vital agency for poor countries.
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What is U.S.' recent move?

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- U.S. pledge is only $9.41 in per capita terms — many times lower than that of several European countries.
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- In January, former U.S. President Barack Obama transferred $500 million to the GCF.
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- This was the second payment towards the fulfilment of a $3 billion pledge made in 2014.
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- Recent policy actions by U.S. President Donald Trump indicate that the U.S. may not be able meet its own NDC targets.
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- This by itself is a threat to keeping global warming within safe levels.
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- These recent transfers neither fulfil the U.S. pledge nor its obligations as the largest cumulative emitter of GHGs.
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- U.S. is also not likely to fulfil its obligation to provide support for the implementation of NDCs by other countries.
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- Therefore, not just the U.S., but other countries too may fail without the means to implement their proposals.
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What should be done?

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- When the world calls for funding for the GCF, it only asks these nations to

deal with problems they have caused.
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- It is not the responsibility of a poor fisherman in Bangladesh or a woman in Sub-Saharan Africa or an islander who loses her house to storms in the Pacific to bear the burden of emissions from rich countries.
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- The fact that all countries have responsibilities has been recognised in the Paris Agreement.
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- But the rich countries, especially the U.S. and European nations, have to do their fair greater share for the world to set along a new path towards zero emissions.
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Source: The Hindu

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