UNFCCC – COP23 at Bonn

What is the issue?

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- The 23rd conference of the UNFCCC (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) is under way in Bonn.
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- This faces the challenge of giving practical form to the provisions of the Paris Agreement of 2015.
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What is the status of the agreement?

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- 169 countries have ratified the Paris accord and there is tremendous support for greener developmental initiatives.
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- A steady progress in the growth of renewable energy sources has already set it.
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- This is being aided by the increasing economical viability of renewable & improvements in energy storage technologies.
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- The Agreement has also envisioned raising a $100 billion corpus form 1st world countries for funding green projects by 2020.
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- The highly industrialised 1st world countries have pledged stronger caps under the Paris Agreement.
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- Also, China, which currently leads in GHG emissions, and firmly endorses the pact to reduce the risk of climate change.
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What has been USA’s position?

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- Trump administration in the US has announced that it will withdraw from the pact.
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- While the actual withdrawal can happen only by 2020, the U.S. action has already reversed the overall momentum.
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- It also negates President Obama’s legacy of regulations designed to reduce America’s GHG emissions, especially from the use of coal.
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What are the dangers?

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- Extreme weather phenomena, loss of agriculture, water stress and harm to human health, pose a threat to millions around the world.
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- For some countries and other small island-states, the future is deeply worrying because of the fear of expected rise in sea levels.
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- Also, the recent ‘Emissions Gap Report’ from the UN underscores the mismatch between what is promised and what is needed.
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- Voluntary pledges made by countries fall short of the amount of cuts that needed to reign in temperature rise below 2 degrees.
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- Considering all these, the Bonn meet must heed the 2015 targets, despite reversals form the US.
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What is India’s status?

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- Commitments have been made to lowering the emission intensity of GDP by 33-35% by 2030 from the 2005 level.
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- Notably, India has been awarded among the highest levels of multilateral climate funding at $745 million since 2013.

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- While securing funds is essential, ensuring that States acquire the capacity to absorb such assistance efficiently is also needed.
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- India’s emphasis on a giant renewable energy programmes like National Solar Mission - NSM has won global acclaim.
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- More focus is needed for embracing green technologies across the spectrum of activity, including buildings and transport.
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Source: The Hindu

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