

"Be brave to stand for what you believe in even if you stand alone." Roy T. Bennett

INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL

UNITED STATES WITHDREW FROM UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The United States has announced that it was leaving the United Nations Human Rights Council.

It was the latest withdrawal by the Trump administration from an international institution.

The move extends a broader Trump administration pattern of stepping back from international agreements and forums under the president's "America First" policy.

Reason:

There has been longstanding U.S. complaint that the 47-member council is biased against Israel.

The U.S. is Israel's biggest defender at other U.N. organizations.

Israel is the only country in the world whose rights record comes up for discussion at every council session, under "Item 7" on the agenda.

Since January 2017, U.S. has announced its withdrawal from the Paris climate accord, left the U.N. educational and cultural organization and pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal

United Nations Human Rights Council:

UNHRC is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.

The UNHRC has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis.

The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly on March 15, 2006.

The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland.

The members of the General Assembly elect the members who occupy the UNHRC's 47 seats. The term of each seat is three years,

and no member may occupy a seat for more than two consecutive terms.

The General Assembly can suspend the rights and privileges of any Council member that it decides has persistently committed gross and systematic violations of human rights during its term of membership.

The UNHRC investigates allegations of breaches of human rights in UN member states, and addresses important thematic human rights issues such as freedom of association and assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion, women's rights, LGBT rights, and the rights of racial and ethnic minorities.

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION: WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2018-2028

Republic of Tajikistan and United Nations are jointly organizing a high-level Conference on "International Decade for Action: Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028". The Conference will discuss key water related issues of sustainable development goals adopted by UN member countries.

International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028:

In order to accelerate efforts towards meeting water-related challenges, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2018-2028 as the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development".

The Water Action Decade commenced on World Water Day, 22 March 2018, and will end on World Water Day, 22 March 2028.

The objectives of the Decade focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives and on the implementation and promotion of related programmes and projects.

It will also focus on the furtherance of cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including

those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Decade also highlights the importance of promoting efficient water usage at all levels, taking into account the water, food, energy, environment nexus; and stresses the importance of the participation and full involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including women, children, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities.

NATIONAL

IMPOSITION OF GOVERNOR'S RULE IN J&K

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is all set to see a governor's rule.

The imposition of governor's rule in J&K is slightly different than that in other states. In other states, the president's rule is imposed under the Article 356 of Constitution of India. In J&K, governor's rule is mentioned under **Article 370 section 92 – 'Provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery in the State.'**

Article 370 section 92: Provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery in the State.

If at any time, the Governor is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, the Governor may by Proclamation-

Assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State and all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by anybody or authority in the State.

Make such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the Governor to be necessary or desirable for giving effect to the objects of the Proclamation, including provisions for suspending in whole or in part the operation of any provision of this Constitution relating to anybody or authority in the State.

Any such Proclamation may be revoked or varied by a subsequent Proclamation.

Any such Proclamation whether varied under subsection (2) or not, shall except where it is a Proclamation revoking a previous Proclamation, cease to operate on the expiration of six months from the date on which it was first issued.

If the Government or by a Proclamation under his section assumes, to himself any, of the powers of the Legislature to make his laws, any law made by him in the exercise of that power shall, subject to, the terms there of continue to have effect until two years have elapsed from the date on which the proclamation ceases to have effect, unless sooner.

No Proclamation under this section shall, except where it is a Proclamation revoking a previous Proclamation, be laid before each House of the Legislature as soon as it is convened.

President's Rule:

The imposition of Article 356 of the Constitution on a State following the failure of constitutional machinery is called President's Rule in India. Once the President's Rule has been imposed on a state, the elected state government will be temporarily dissolved, and the Governor, who is appointed by the government at the Centre, will replace the Chief Minister as the chief executive of the State.

The state will fall under the direct control of the Union government, and the Governor will continue to be head the proceedings, representing the President of India – who is the Head of the State.

The imposition of the President's rule requires the sanction of both the houses of Parliament. If approved, it can go on for a period of six months. However, the imposition cannot be extended for more than three years, and needs to be brought before the two houses every six months for approval.

NATIONAL OFF-SHORE WIND POLICY

To give confidence to wind industry, Government has declared national targets for off-shore wind power.

Medium target of 5 GW by 2022 and Long term target of 30 GW by 2030 was set.

Offshore wind power would add a new element to the already existing basket of renewable energy for the country.

The offshore wind farming is attractive because of several reasons such as stronger winds for efficient generation of power; no impact on real estate value of land as in case of onshore wind farming; its ability to fulfil the demand of the heavily populated coastal regions and no significant environment costs.

It is difficult to install large wind power turbines in open seas. Offshore wind turbines are of much larger dimensions and capacities than onshore turbines.

The PLF (plant load factor) of off-shore wind turbines will be higher than the on-shore projects.

The cost per MW of off-shore wind power project will be higher by 50-100% as compared to on-shore projects depending on the water depth.

Further deep sea wind farms come with the challenges of assigning no-go areas for commercial shipping. There would be a need to devise new lanes, proper lightning for ships to pass on.

National Off-Shore Wind Policy:

The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy had notified National Off-Shore Wind Policy in October 2015 to realize the offshore wind power potential in the country.

With this, the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) has been authorized as the Nodal Ministry for use of offshore areas within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the country and the National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) has been authorized as the Nodal Agency for development of offshore wind energy.

Government has paved way for development of the offshore wind farms up to the seaward

distance of 200 Nautical Miles (within its Exclusive Economic Zone) from the base line.

India is making significant progress in the development of the onshore wind power plants. However, so far progress in the offshore wind power generation has been almost nil. Since India has more than 7600 Kilometres of coast, the prospects of development of offshore wind power are very bright. At global level, it has been observed that, offshore wind energy while being better than onshore wind in terms of efficiency is also becoming competitive and comparable in terms of tariffs.

With the introduction of the National Offshore Wind Energy Policy, India is trying to replicate the success of the onshore wind power development in the offshore wind power development.

NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY OF INDIA (NDLI)

National Digital Library of India (NDLI) is a project of the Ministry of Human Resource Development under the aegis of National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT). It is developed by IIT Kharagpur.

The objective of NDL is to make digital educational resources available to all citizens of the country to empower, inspire and encourage learning.

NDL is the Single Window Platform that collects and collates metadata from premier learning institutions in India and abroad, as well as other relevant sources.

It is a digital repository containing textbooks, articles, videos, audio books, lectures, simulations, fiction and all other kinds of learning media.

It makes quality learning resources available to all learners and has 1.7 Crore content from more than 160 sources, in over 200 languages.

NMEICT:

The National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been envisaged as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to leverage the potential

of ICT, in teaching and learning process for the benefit of all the learners in Higher Education Institutions in any time anywhere mode.

The Mission has two major components – providing connectivity, along with provision for access devices, to institutions and learners; and content generation.

The Mission aims to extend computer infrastructure and connectivity to over 25000 colleges and 2000 polytechnics in the country including each of the departments of 419 universities/deemed universities and institutions of national importance as a part of its motto to provide connectivity up to last mile.

LAN of up to 400 nodes on average has also been envisaged to be provided to the universities under the NMEICT scheme. The Mission, in addition to utilize the connectivity network of service providers, shall explore the possibility to provide connectivity utilizing Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT), Virtual Private Network (VPN) and EduSat channels.
