

CIVIL SERVICE DIGEST (CSD-Daily)

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Poland: Ministers work around the clock to strengthen global Climate Deal



- In Katowice, Poland, with only a day left for the climate conference to end ministers from 200 nations are now working to finalise the rules to make Paris climate deal operational.
- The Paris Agreement of 2015, which comes into force in 2020, aims to limit the global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius from the pre-industrial revolution levels.
- Signatories to the Paris Climate Agreement agreed to hold the increasing global average temperature to well below 2 degrees above pre-industrial

levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degree celcius.

- To hit the breaks at 1.5 degrees, global carbon emissions would need to immediately begin plunging. But if we fail to do this sea level would rise, inundating large low-lying areas across the world.
- Among the other effects of the temperature rise are shortage of fresh water availability around the Mediterranean and also in West Africa, South East Asia, and central and northern South America, resulting in fall in crop production.

India, China to hold high level meet on Cultural and People-to-People ties

- The first meeting of the newly constituted India-China High Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges will be held on 21st of this month.
- The meeting will be co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and State Councillor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi. Mr Yi will be on a four day visit to India from 21st.
- The decision to establish the India-China High Level Mechanism on Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges was taken during the Informal Summit between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping in Wuhan in April.
- The High Level Mechanism reflects the desire on both sides to build greater synergies in the people-to-people ties through enhanced exchanges in areas such as tourism, art, films, media, culture, sports and academic and youth exchanges.

HC interim stay on CIC orders to RBI on wilful loan defaulters list

- Bombay High Court has granted interim stay on orders passed by the Central Information Commission directing the Reserve Bank of India to submit a list of wilful loan defaulters.
- A division bench also stayed a **show-cause notice** issued to former RBI Governor Urjit Patel for non-disclosure of information.
- The court was hearing RBI's petition challenging the CIC's order directing it to disclose bad loan details of defaulters with loan value of over 1,000 crore rupees.

Ground water regulatory mechanism

- In order to comply with various directions of the Hon'ble NGT and to address various shortcomings in the existing guidelines of ground water extraction, the Central Ground Water Authority, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation notified revised guidelines for ground water extraction.
- The revised guidelines **aim to ensure a more robust ground water regulatory mechanism** in the country.

Stats

- Ground water extraction in India is **primarily for irrigation in agricultural activities**, accounting for nearly 228 BCM (Billion Cubic Meter), which amounts to **90% of the annual ground water extraction**.
- The remaining 10% of extraction (25 BCM) is for drinking & domestic as well as industrial uses.
- **Industrial use is estimated to account for only about 5% of the annual ground water extraction** in the country.

- **India is the largest user of ground water in the world**, extracting ground water to the tune of 253 **bcm** per year, which is about 25% of the global ground water extraction.

Details

- The WCF payable **varies with the category of the area, type of industry and the quantum of ground water extraction** and is designed to progressively increase from safe to over-exploited areas and from low to high water consuming industries as well as with increasing quantum of ground water extraction.
- The **high rates of WCF are expected to discourage setting up of new industries in over-exploited and critical areas** as well as act as a deterrent to large scale ground water extraction by industries, especially in over-exploited and critical areas.
- The WCF would also compel industries to adopt **measures relating to water use efficiency and discourage the growth of packaged drinking water units**, particularly in over-exploited and critical areas.

Other salient features of the revised guidelines

- They are encouraged to **use recycled and treated sewage water** by industries, provision of action against polluting industries, mandatory requirement of digital flow meters, piezometers and digital water level recorders (with or without telemetry depending upon quantum of extraction), mandatory water audit by industries abstracting ground water 500 m³/day or more in safe and semi-critical and 200 m³/day or more in critical and over-exploited assessment units, mandatory roof top rain water harvesting *except* for specified industries and measures to be adopted to ensure prevention of ground water contamination in premises of polluting industries/ projects.

- As per the revised guidelines, **exemption from requirement of NOC has been given to**
 - Agricultural users, users employing non-energised means to extract water,
 - Individual households (using less than 1 inch diameter delivery pipe) and
 - Armed Forces Establishments during operational deployment or during mobilization in forward locations.
- Other exemptions (with certain requirements) have been granted to strategic and operational infrastructure projects for Armed Forces, Defense and Paramilitary Forces Establishments and Government water supply agencies.

Who is authorized to regulate this sector?

- **Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA)**, constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act of 1986 has the mandate of regulating ground water development and management in the country.
- CGWA has been regulating ground water development for its sustainable management in the country through measures such as issue of advisories, public notices, grant of No Objection Certificates (NOC) for ground water withdrawal.

PSU banks do not have any plan to shut down ATMs: Govt



- Minister of State for Finance has clarified that Public Sector Banks (PSBs) do not have any plans to shut down their ATMs. His statement assumes significance amidst a report by the Confederation of ATM industry warning that nearly half of the 2.38 lakh machines run the risk of closing down by March next year due to regulatory compliance changes making the business unviable due to rising costs and dipping or stagnant revenues.
- There are 2.21 lakh ATMs deployed in the country as on September 30, as reported by the scheduled commercial banks, small finance banks, payment banks and white label ATM operators.

Global debt hits all-time high of USD 184 trillion: IMF



- The International Monetary Fund said that global debt has reached an all-time high of 184 trillion US dollars with the United States, China and Japan accounting for more than half of it.
- According to the IMF report, the amount in nominal terms, is the equivalent of 225 per cent of the world GDP in 2017.
- On average, the world's debt now exceeds 86,000 dollars per person, which is more than two and half times the average income per-capita. IMF said it is striking that the most indebted economies in the world are also the richer ones.
- Since the beginning of the millennium, China's share in global debt has gone up from less than three per cent to over 15 per cent.

