

Trump's foreign policy

Why in news?

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Donald Trump has issued a series of executive orders consistent with his inaugural speech in which he stressed upon "America First" and elimination of "radical Islamic terrorism".

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What is an executive order (EO)?

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- The U.S President can issue rules, regulations, and instructions called executive orders.

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- They have the binding force of law upon federal agencies and they do not require approval of the United States Congress.

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- But the executive orders are subject to judicial review and interpretation.

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How international agreements are ratified by the U.S?

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- The executive signs the agreement.

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- This has to be ratified by the U.S Senate to come into force.

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- But the trade agreements, like the TPP, are approved using Trade Promotion Authority authorization, in which the US Congress is required to hold a yes/no vote on any agreements without modification.

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What are the recent EOs regarding Foreign Policy?

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- The US president has signed an executive order formally withdrawing the country from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal.

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- He signed an EO to pose a three-month ban on immigrants from seven Muslim majority countries - Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen.

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- He also suspended the refugee programme for four-months to provide time to review how refugees are vetted i.e examined before they are allowed in the U.S.

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- He is also preparing to issue EOs that will bring restrictions on H1-B and other visas.

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What are the consequences?

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- **TPP** - To come into force, the TPP needed to be ratified by at least six signatories that accounts for 85% of the total GDP of the bloc.

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- US is the largest economy in the bloc. Unless it ratifies the TPP cannot come into force. Therefore the agreement is no longer a possibility.

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- This withdrawal greatly reduces the possibility of a US-led regional order in the Asia Pacific which was the central theme of the US' Pivot to Asia Policy.

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- **Visa Ban** - In theory, the policy is meant to ban terrorists until better vetting methods are formulated.

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- But this move sends back people to a war zone or places that they fled due to political persecution.

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- The ban on refugees is against the principle of freedom, at time where the refugee population around the world is highest since WWII.

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- However, in 1965, Congress curtailed presidential power by stating that no one could be discriminated against in the issuance of an immigrant visa because of the person's race, sex, nationality, place of birth.

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- A US District Judge in New York issued an emergency order staying deportations of people who have arrived in America with valid visas from the seven Muslim-majority nations but were detained on entry due to the ban.

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- These things questions the constitutionality of the ban.

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- **H1B restrictions** - Indians hold the majority of H1B visas and L-1 visas. The current move is aimed at bringing back the original intent of H1B visas i.e to hire additional talent to support US not but not to hire cheap labor that replaces American workforce.

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- But the Indians also contribute USD 1 billion annually to the US.

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- Indian IT industry contributes to about 4 lakh direct and indirect jobs in the US and additional USD 5 billion in taxes annually.

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- The move also increases inspector raj and ends employment authorisation cards to spouses on such work visas.

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- His domestic actions regarding the reduction of environment clearance rules reflect his non serious attitude towards climate change. "We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it." Therefore it is of major concern.

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Source: The Indian Express

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