

Climate change burden needs to be shared: PM



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Finland's President Tarja Halonen attend the 12th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) in New Delhi

AP

Ecological goals not to be met at the cost of development

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The Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called for collective will for a common global front to fight the threat of climate change. He said climate conservation along with sustainable growth will be the focus of the country's 12th Five Year Plans.

He was addressing the Sustainable Development Summit in New Delhi on Thursday. Singh said the country was committed to tackling greenhouse gas emissions, but rejected any framework that

deprived the country of its right to develop.

"It is necessary to recognise that currently, there appears to be a lack of collective global will to address this problem with the seriousness it deserves," the Prime Minister said.

The threat of climate change has brought the world to a point where "the actions of each and every country" affect the whole planet, Singh said, adding that cooperation between industrialised and developing nations was crucial.

But any cooperation must be based on "the right to development and the need for an equitable distribution of the burden (of climate change)," he said, arguing that per capita greenhouse emissions in industrialised nations were 10 times higher

than developing countries.

He added, India, which is in the frontline of climate vulnerability, has a vital stake in the evolution of a successful response to climate change.

Singh pointed out that India's forest cover had increased by nearly 5 per cent between 1997 and 2007. He further pointed out that the Green India Mission aims to increase the forest and tree cover by five million hectares and improve forest cover on another 5 million hectares.

The star attraction of the summit was Hollywood star and former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. He exhorted those present saying "we have to embrace green energy without "waiting for anybody or any international agreement."