

DSDS 2012

“Sustainability has become an important focus of policy”

This is what **Prime Minister Manmohan Singh** said at the 12th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.

The Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh, inaugurated the 12th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) 2012 which was organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and held at the Taj Palace Hotel. Over the past decade the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) has evolved as a major global event that addresses the key challenges of sustainable development and explores the means by which this can be attained. In its 12th edition the event focussed on the theme, ‘Protecting the Global Commons: 20 Years Post Rio’.

In his inaugural address Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh congratulating TERI for organising this global forum which once again brought together eminent dignitaries, Nobel laureates, CEO’s and thought leaders from across the globe, said, “This year marks the 20th anniversary of the landmark Rio earth summit of 1992, which set out the concept of sustainability and its importance as a critical parameter of human development. The

idea of sustainability began as an ideal. Over time, it has become an important focus of policy, especially in developing countries as we struggle to reconcile our effort to develop with the compelling need to protect our environment. Air pollution, industrial pollution, increasing quantum of



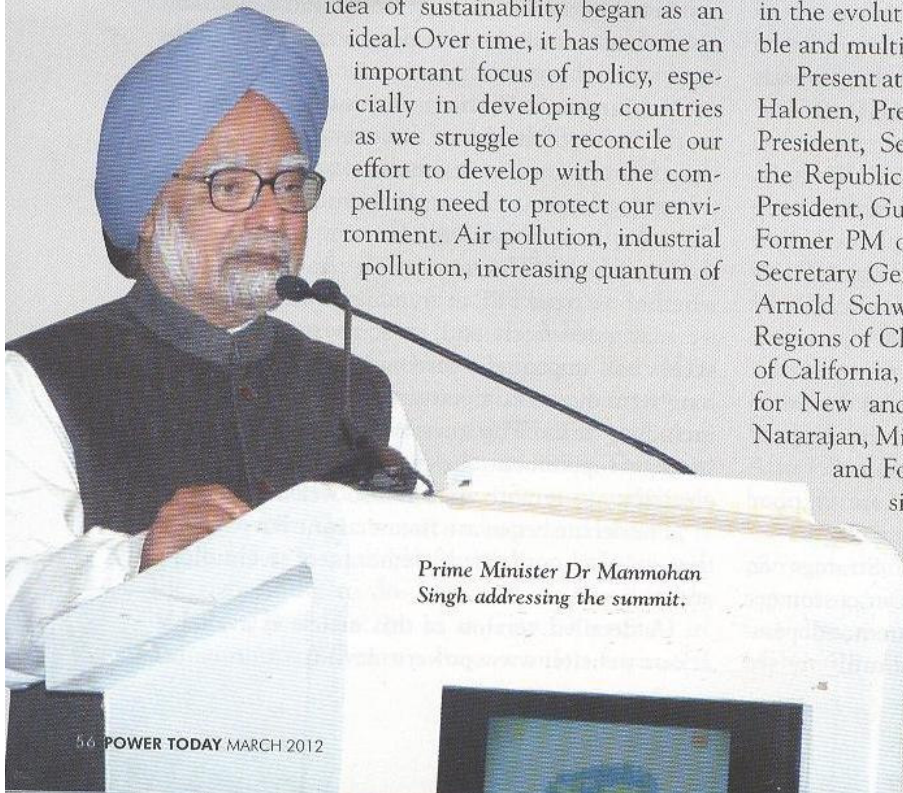
LtoR: Ms Tarja Halonen, President, Finland, accepting TERI's Sustainable Development Leadership award for 2012 from Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Dr RK Pachauri, Director General, TERI.

waste and pollution of our rivers are problems we all face.”

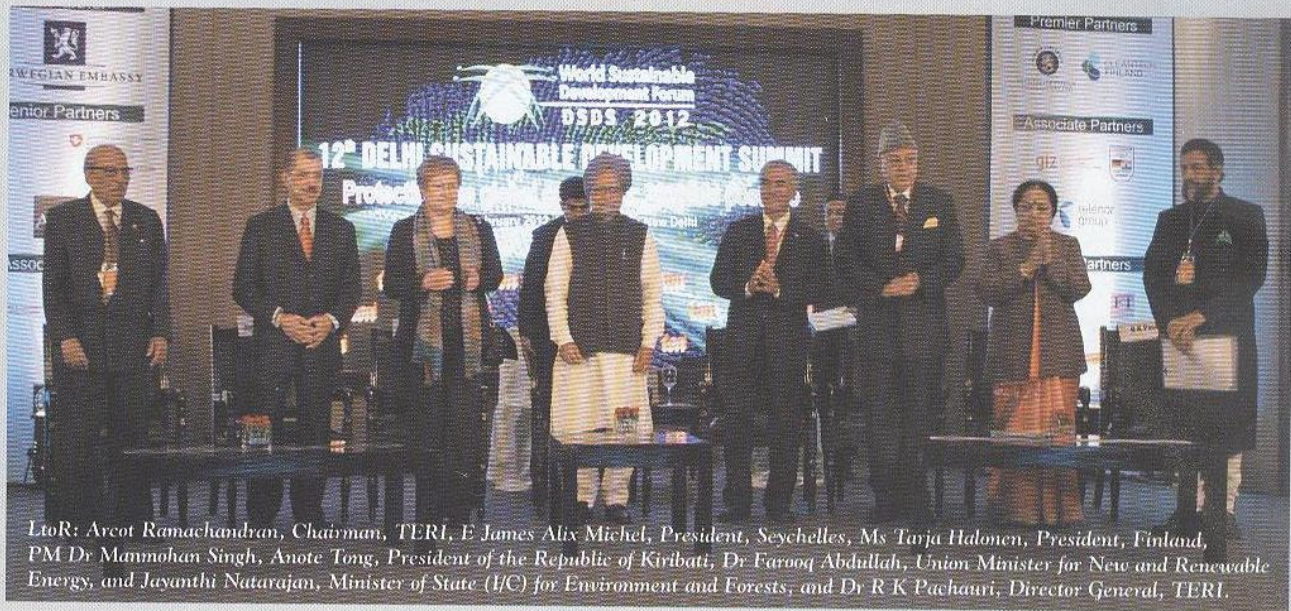
He said, “As a developing country in the frontlines of climate vulnerability, India has a vital stake in the evolution of a successful, rule-based, equitable and multi-lateral response to climate change.”

Present at the inaugural ceremony were Ms Tarja Halonen, President, Finland, James Alix Michel, President, Seychelles, Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati, Bharrat Jagdeo, Former President, Guyana and Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Former PM of Norway and Member of the UN Secretary General's Sustainability Panel, Norway. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Founding Chair, R20 - Regions of Climate Change and Former Governor of California, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, and Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of State (I/C) for Environment and Forests, were also present at the occasion.

Ms Tarja Halonen, President, Finland, was awarded the TERI's Sustainable Development Leadership award for 2012 for her leadership in confronting climate



Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh addressing the summit.



LtoR: Arcot Ramachandran, Chairman, TERI, E James Alix Michel, President, Seychelles, Ms Tarja Halonen, President, Finland, PM Dr Manmohan Singh, Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati, Dr Farooq Abdullah, Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, and Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of State (I/C) for Environment and Forests, and Dr R K Pachauri, Director General, TERI.

change and leading her government to take the issue as a primary focus. Receiving the honour, she said, "It is a honour to receive this award on behalf of my country. We need a modern trinity to preserve the Global Commons. We have a duty and right to preserve the Global Commons. India and Finland have always collaborated for sustainable development. Sustainable development is an opportunity to counter the climate change and human resource plays a very important role in the effort."

The Sustainable Development Leadership Award is TERI's tribute to a distinguished individual's exemplary efforts. The award celebrates individuals who have contributed substantially in combating challenges threatening sustainable development and encouraging initiatives which lead the planet towards a sustainable future. Some past winners of the Sustainable Development Leadership Awards are Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, and former Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Dr RK Pachauri, Director-General, TERI, in his address said, "The issue of the global commons has been part of global consciousness for half a century now. The global commons can be protected only if there is a commitment on the part of nation states to realise the tragedy inherent for all of us if we do not carry out proper protection of these. We hope this summit and the official Rio+20 event in June of this year will mark a watershed in perceptions and priorities by which we work collectively towards a more environmentally and ecologically secure future for coming generations."

Dr Pachauri said, "One of our biggest challenges

in future would be to ensure security of energy supply. This can only be achieved through improvements in energy efficiency as well as a move to sustainable sources of energy supply."

He added, "We believe India can and should develop as a model of sustainable development and become a beacon light for the rest of the world. Gandhiji's belief 'Be the change you want to see in the world', is perhaps more relevant today than it has been at any time in the past. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) works towards fulfilling its vision of 'working towards global sustainable development, creating innovative solutions for a better tomorrow', through its flagship event the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit."

Held annually, Delhi Sustainable Development Summit has been the flagship conference of TERI since 2001. It is a global forum that seeks to provide long-term solutions to protect this planet and is an event with participation by global stakeholders—multilateral and bilateral development organisations, governments, the corporate sector, non-governmental organisations, and academic and research institutions. Now globally esteemed as a credible summit on global issues related to sustainable development, it continues to provide hope to communities lagging behind on development indicators. The event was the first important meeting of global leaders preceding the June 2012 Rio+20 Summit. Two decades after the Rio 1992 Summit it examined what has been achieved and how awareness had been created. It attempted to define new directions to be followed and set an agenda for further action.

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- R Srinivasan