‘Environment protection not a zero-sum game’

At a time when environment clearance procedures are blamed for delaying infrastructure projects, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said protection of the environment and promoting development need not be a zero sum game. He pitched for transparent regulatory regimes so that both could be pursued in tandem.

Inaugurating the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS), organised by The Energy and Resources Institute here, Singh said: "What is required is regulatory regimes that are transparent, accountable and subject to oversight and monitoring."

Singh, who also heads the Cabinet Committee on Investment, set up to fast-track clearances to mega infrastructure projects, added: "Indeed, regulatory regimes are often the basic necessary condition to ensure that environmental and economic objectives are pursued in tandem."

The debate over environment protection and development assumed center-stage earlier this year, with GMR Infrastructure pulling out of a road project, blaming the environment ministry for delays in granting clearances.