Green concerns, development need to move in tandem: PM

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Environment protection and development need not amount to a “zero sum game”, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Thursday, calling for transparent regulatory regimes that ensure development along with equitable distribution of natural resources.

The Prime Minister’s statement is significant at a time when industry, particularly roads, mining etc., has been citing hurdles created by green clearance as a reason for project delays.

Addressing the three-day Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) here, Singh said, “Indeed, regulatory regimes are often the basic necessary condition to ensure that environmental and economic objectives are pursued in tandem.”

Singh also called for re-engineering economies in ways that are both “frugal and innovative” in their use of scarce resources.

He said countries such as India needed to look at innovative solutions, as the population was growing and consumption patterns were changing, creating pressure on natural resources.

Stressing that resource efficiency was a necessary condition for sustainable development, he cautioned that care must be taken to ensure that resources were accessible to the poor too.

On India’s contribution to lowering emissions, he said the country was committed to meeting its domestic mitigation goal of reducing emissions intensity of GDP by 20-25 per cent by 2020 compared with the 2005 levels.

However, it was now time for industrialised countries to show that they too were willing to move decisively along this path, he said.

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