

Indian agriculture unsustainable due to water crisis: Sachs

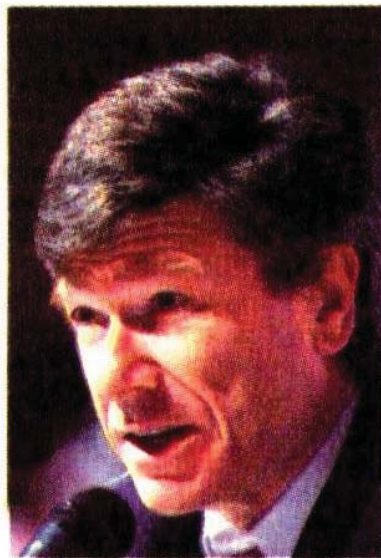
Our Bureau

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India and China will be at the centre of the global sustainable development agenda, Prof Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University and Special Advisor to the Secretary-General, United Nations, said here on Saturday. He was interacting with the media along with Dr R.K Pachauri, Director-General, TERI, at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.

Prof Sachs said: "I don't think the agenda on development should be pushed any more to the side. Asia, meaning India and China will be at the centre of this drama, given the rapid growth in the economy, the central role that India and China play in technological growth and the sheer size of the population, almost 40 per cent of world population."

Prof Sachs said Indian agriculture was not sustain-



Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs (file photo)

able because of the water crisis. "Farming methods need to be changed, particularly in Green revolution areas such as Haryana and Punjab, where the water tables have fallen", he said, and added that attention should now move to the North-East,

where water tables are high.

On the high cost clean technology, Prof Sachs said not all technology was expensive. He said regulatory and market concerns were impeding the growth of cheaper technology. He added that markets were too short-term and did not reflect the concerns of future generations, but there were 'powerful vested interests' in markets.

Earlier, Prof Sachs said while information technology would play a big role in sustainable development, "one must be mindful of its application for purposes such as manipulation of public opinion".

He said the key for achieving sustainable development objectives would lie in strengthening public institutions, attracting private-led technology and provision of public financing for underlying science.

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