

# **With 3 Per Cent Emissions, India Ready for Climate Change**

Although India is responsible for only three per cent of the global carbon emissions, it is ready to combat climate change and the government's commitment to sustainable development is full and final, said union environment minister Prakash Javadekar on Saturday.

Stating that climate change was "a reality", he noted that the global temperature has risen by one degree owing to 150 years of uncontrolled carbon emission by the developed world without bothering about environmental impact.

"While the cumulative contribution of the US, Europe, Canada is 30 per cent, other developed world accounted for 50 per cent, China 10 per cent where India is responsible for only three percent of carbon emissions.

"Though India is not part of the problem, it wants to be part of the solution as it well aware of its responsibilities, committed to United Nations Goals on sustainable development," said Javadekar, addressing the 11th National Convention on Sustainable Development Goals, organized by UN Global Compact Network here.

Elaborating on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision on climate change, he said the government's commitment is reflected in every programme being pursued by the country in this regard.

Javadekar listed out the ambitious 175 GW renewable energy programme covering solar, wind, hydro-power and nuclear energy and other proactive measures to discourage use of fossil fuels to reduce carbon footprint, as a major step in promoting environment-friendly development.

"The Union Budget 2016-17 has levied a green cess of \$6 (Rs.400) per tonne of coal. This is perhaps the highest levy in the world, as even the US taxes coal at around \$1. If the developed world followed India's example and levied higher taxes on coal, billions of dollars would accrue to pursue clean energy programmes," he said.

Referring to the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana under which five crore rural poor households will be given free cooking connections, he said as the programme rolls out, daily 5,000 new homes will not be cutting down trees for firewood and provide health benefits to the women who cook.

He said the country will move to Bharat VI emission norms to control vehicular pollution, listed policies on waste management, and massive tree plantation drive through Compensation Afforestation Fund Bill 2015 as measures to attain sustainable development.

Emphasizing that environmental clearance would not be a roadblock for development, Javadekar said in the last 20 months, his ministry has given eco-clearance for 900 projects worth around Rs.600,000 crore investments, and a 10 year average time for eco-clearance of 600 days has now been brought down to 190 days and is further planned to be reduced to 100 days.

Dwelling on the controversy over Mumbai Metro Car Shed at Aarey colony, he suggested sustainable solutions to address the issue.

"The technology is now available to replant grown up trees through mechanized uprooting and replanting them at an alternative site. Delhi Metro is a standing example in this regards, where for every one tree cut, five more trees were planted," said Javadekar.

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