

Paris Climate Summit: India asks developed nations to scale up financial support

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Paris: India on Wednesday strongly asserted that the goal of capping global warming to within 1.5 degree Celsius from pre-industrial times will require developed countries to "massively" reduce their emissions and "scale up" the financial support to developing countries.

"On long term temperature goal, we are deeply sensitive to the demands for higher climate ambition. I understand fully the demand for mentioning 1.5 degrees, as we also have over 1300 islands in India," said Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar.

"However, a 1.5 degree goal would require developed countries to massively reduce their emissions and massively 'scale up' their financial support to developing countries. This is not happening," Javadekar said during a negotiating session.

The goal of capping global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius finds a mention in the draft negotiating text which was unveiled yesterday.

BASIC countries which also includes India have kept their options open for recognising the demand and had said that they were discussing the issue while "hoping" to reach an understanding soon.

"During the joint statement after our Beijing meeting, we emphasised the importance of holding the increase average global temperature rise to below 2 degree Celsius. But we would like to highlight we are mindful about the concerns (about 1.5 degree target), said Izabella Teixeira, Brazil's Environment Minister.

"This is an issue for concern. We are discussing this. This is also a concern for Brazil and BASIC countries. I can say clearly that we are discussing the matter and I can assure

That we will come with a joint position during the conference. We are working hard for this agreement. We hope come to an understanding on this," Teixeira said during the joint press briefing of BASIC countries where Javadekar was present.

In 2009, countries agreed to work towards ensuring that global temperatures do not rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century.

There has been a consistent demand from the small island states, Least Developing Countries (LDC) and vulnerable countries for a downward revision to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The demand has not had too much traction in the past but it changed in Paris and the demand has got grown here.

India has, however, made it clear that it is not hostile to the demands for a downward revision of the global temperature goal.

Experts from India however today said the world must agree to a fair allocation of carbon space and massive enhancement of financial and technological support from the developed countries to developing ones to achieve this target.

Noting that developed countries will have to significantly increase the level of their own efforts and reach net zero emissions in the next 5-10 years, experts said that if they fail to do so, the 1.5 degree target will "remain a hollow shell - devoid of any real significance".

"While we welcome this increase in ambition, we would like to draw the attention of the climate negotiators to the need to allocate the remaining carbon budget in a fair manner to all countries so that there is a chance for meeting this temperature target," said the three experts T Jayaraman, professor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Anand Patwardhan, professor at the University of Maryland and IIT-Bombay and Chandra Bhushan, Deputy Director General, Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

"We would also like to emphasis the fact that meeting this temperature goal would require massive enhancement of financial and technological support from the developed countries to the developing countries so that they are able to move quickly onto low-carbon development pathways," they said.

"In addition, developed countries will have to significantly increase the level of their own efforts and reach net zero emissions in the next 5-10 years. In the absence of such commitments, a 1.5 degree Celsius temperature target would remain a hollow shell - devoid of any real significance," the experts said in a joint statement.

Developed countries not fulfilling their obligations: India

Paris: Terming as "game changer" the national climate action plans of every country, India today strongly voiced its concern over exclusion of these plans in the new draft negotiating text unveiled by climate change negotiators and said developed countries did not fulfil their obligations.

India also termed as "disappointing" the issue of finance, saying while developed countries failed to fulfil their obligations, they are also trying to "shift" their responsibility to developing nations.

India said that there was no indication of scaling of finance by the developed nations nor was there any roadmap.

"I must stress that the concept of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) is a great innovation and has proved a game-changer. It has enabled the participation of over 186 countries. Yet, INDCs are not even mentioned in the draft, said Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar.

"On finance, it is deeply disappointing that on the one hand developed countries are not fulfilling their obligations and on the other hand, they are trying to shift their responsibilities to developing countries themselves. There is no indication of scaling up of finance nor a clear roadmap," he said during a negotiating session.

The first draft of the Paris Outcome, prepared after two days of high-level ministerial deliberations, was released by French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius yesterday at a crucial climate change conference.

The draft negotiating text is now of 29 pages down from a 43-page version and was circulated to all the negotiating countries.

India strongly put across its point that durable agreement at Paris "cannot" be crafted by "diluting" historical responsibilities or by putting the polluters and the victims at the same level.

India also appreciated leadership and efforts of the Presidency while asserting that it associates itself with the statements made on behalf of G-77.

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Describing the latest draft as the "starting point for the final push", Javadekar said there were many "points of departure" at this stage of negotiations and much work is need to reach a point of convergence.

India also made it clear that the agreement which is being crafted "must carefully" balance climate ambition and the principle of differentiation as both are equally important and one cannot have one without the other.

"It needs to be reaffirmed upfront in the agreement that it is under the Convention (UNFCCC) and in accordance with its principles. Its objective is to enhance the implementation of the Convention across all its pillars," Javadekar said.

"This is crucial. The principles of the Convention must be stated correctly without any unnecessary additions," he added.

India also stressed that the agreement must also "meaningfully" operationalise differentiation across all its elements which is "not clear" in the current draft.

India also said that it was in favour of a robust transparency mechanism but it should apply not just to mitigation but all other elements, particularly finance.

"The transparency mechanism should cover all countries, in a differentiated manner. Implementing the current system - which has not yet been made operational - is an essential component to build capacity and experience in developing countries. A transition period is therefore needed before changes could be made," Javadekar said.

India also strongly said that several of its concerns including unilateral measures, sustainable lifestyles and climate justice did not find a mention in the draft.

"We will examine the draft carefully and engage with all our partners to reach an agreement," Javadekar said.

Elaborating on the draft text, Fabius, who is the chair of the current round of climate negotiations, had earlier said the aim of the text was to enable nations to have an overall view of the progress that has been made so far.

"It (draft text) is shorter than the previous version of 48 pages. It is 29 pages long now. There has been three quarter reduction in points that were there in the bracket. The aim of the text is to enable us (nations) to have an overall view of the progress made," he said.

- PTI