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THE GLOBAL CONCERN

India and UK agree to find effective and practical solutions for climate change and its implications

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AIMING TO bridge the gap in perceptions, approaches and needs with regard to the problem of climate change, CEOs of India and United Kingdom got together to find ways of working together.

During their meeting at the first Round Table on the theme of climate change and corporate responsibility differing stand points on the issue of sustainability versus the need for growth were expressed once again. There was, however, agreement on need to sort out the hurdles such as transfer of clean and low cost technology to developing countries, the issue of intellectual property rights, etc.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Confederation of British Industry (CBI) signed a shared Statement of Intent for Collaborating on Tackling Climate Change.

Speaking at the Round Table, science and technology minister Kapil Sibal asserted that there could be no compromise on India's fight against poverty, though it was important to protect our future generations as well. Speaking about the impacts of climate change already being felt in terms of change of rainfall patterns and loss of million of hectares to drought every year, Sibal said that India need to adopt clean technology to mitigate this situation.

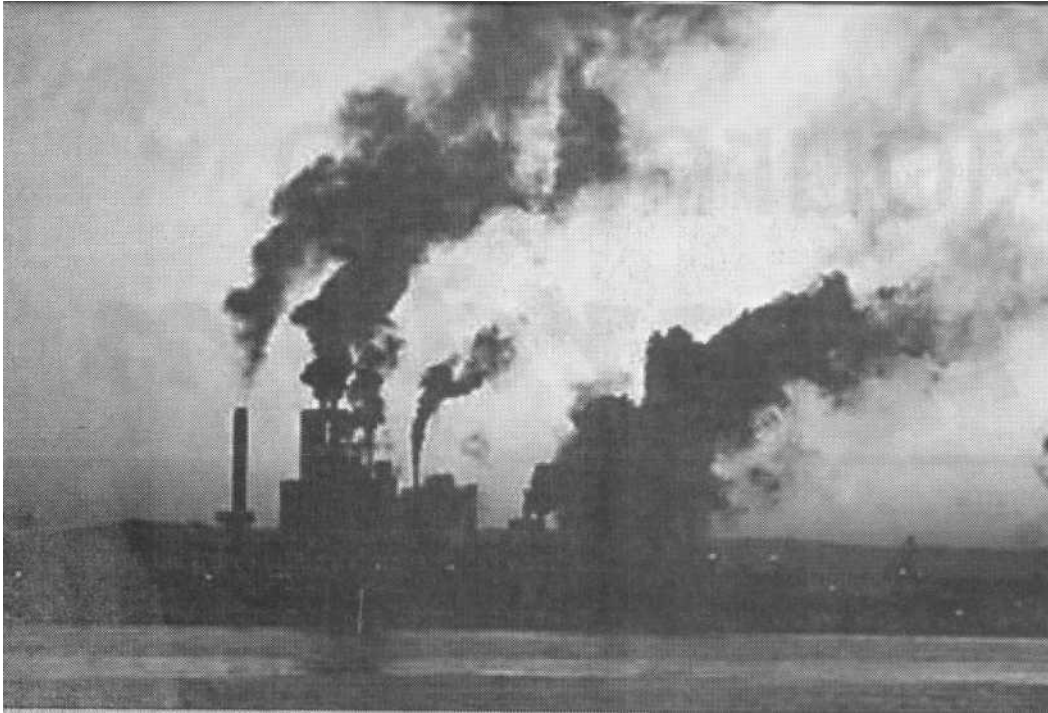
UK's minister of state for trade and investment, Lord Digby Jones, said that India should qualify its stand on eradicating poverty since if it is done at the cost of sustainability, people would not be able to enjoy the fruits of growth.

CBI director general, Richard Lambert, said that climate change was an inter-regional and inter-generational phenomenon and while the industrialised world has the resources to address it, it is the industrialising world that would be the worst affected. He stressed the need for coming together of governments and businesses to prepare a roadmap with milestones along the way to tackle the problem. He recommended a four-pronged strategy to move ahead: convergence, better technologies, overcoming barriers of intellectual property rights and making markets work better.

CII president, Sunil Bharti Mittal, said that

THE BOUND TABLE RESOLUTION

- The CM and CBI signed a shared Statement of Intent for Collaborating on Tackling Climate Change.
- An agreement was reached to sort out the hurdles such as transfer of clean and low cost technology to developing countries, the issue of intellectual property rights, etc.
- A four-pronged strategy was suggested to move ahead i.e. convergence, better technologies, overcoming barriers of intellectual property rights and making markets work better.



Indian industry was committed to the cause of development and taking care of the environment. While the Indian economy was growing at the rate of 10%, its carbon emissions grew only at 3.7%. Also, while the US had a per capita annual oil consumption of 26 barrels, China used 2 barrels and India 0.5 barrels. Indian industry wanted to grow responsibly. A CII report on the issue would be debated at the national level as well, he added.

Among the prominent business persons who attended the Round Table were Arun Sarin (Vodafone) and Richard Branson (Virgin Atlantic) amongst a delegation of 40 persons from the UK, and Arun Bharat Ram (SRF), Phiroze Vandrewala (TCS), Y C Deveshwar (ITC), Naina Lal Kidwai (HSBC), Analjit Singh (Max) and others from the Indian side.

The CEOs are expected to share experiences and best practices and identify potential collaborations between Indian and UK businesses. The Round Table was organised by the British High Commission, CBI and CII.

In a recent visit of the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to India, the two countries recognised the need to find effective and practical solutions to address concerns regarding climate change and its implications for human kind. It included mitigation and adaptation strategies in a manner that supports further

economic and social development in particular of developing countries.

They expressed satisfaction over the successful outcome at Bali that reaffirmed the relevance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They were of the view that the process established under the Bali Road Map should aim for enhanced implementation of the UNFCCC and give due weight to issues of concern to developing countries, in particular those relating to addressing adaptation, technology and financing arrangements.

In the field of bilateral cooperation on climate change, the two sides expressed satisfaction over the announcement of a UK-India agreement on the second phase of UK-India Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Study. The two nations are convinced that development of the international carbon market is important for the future and wish to explore new approaches to market related investment that offer the potential to drive technology transfer.

In the second phase, the two countries will aim at identifying the barriers to low carbon technology transfer. This year, it will jointly explore the potential of facilitating up-scaling of carbon market investment in accordance with India's future development priorities. Both countries recognised the importance of research and development collaboration on low carbon energy technologies and welcomed the broadening dialogue between the two countries on clean coal technologies and other power generation technologies. •

