

India says will not be bulldozed at climate talks

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With air pollution reaching alarming levels in Indian cities, pressure is mounting on the government to improve air quality

India, the world's third-largest greenhouse gas emitter, said Thursday it is committed to tackling global warming but vowed to protect its interests at the latest round of UN climate talks in Lima.

"We will walk with confidence with our own aggressive actions on

[climate change](#)," India's environment minister Prakash Javadekar told Indian television network NDTV on the eve of his departure for the Peruvian capital.

United States and China, the world's top two emitters of carbon dioxide, signed a landmark deal last month to work together to cut their carbon footprint.

India's economy still is far behind that of China and government officials have argued in the past that this is why the South Asian country should not be obliged to curtail its carbon emissions.

But with air pollution reaching alarming levels in Indian cities, pressure is mounting on the new right-wing government elected in May to improve air quality.

"We are growing and walking the energy-efficiency path," said Javadekar.

The government led by Narendra Modi is a strong proponent of solar power.

The Indian minister insisted that India is "not the odd man out" in wake of the agreement between China and the United States.

But he said India would not be forced into accepting any measures that did not protect the country's interests at the 12-day conference that began Monday.



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Energy-starved India is heavily dependant on coal-fired power plants and millions suffer regular power cuts.

While climate change experts have warned the South Asian giant of dire consequences from its dependence on coal, India has said it will not compromise on its goal of eradicating poverty.

India has long maintained the burden of reducing the amount of carbon emitted lies with industrialised countries, and has opposed any move to shift the burden to developing nations.

In a statement Tuesday, the government said its negotiating position would "enhance the solidarity among the developing countries on these (climate change) issues".

The latest round of UN [climate talks](#) aims to pave the way for a deal in Paris in December 2015 to roll back greenhouse-gas emissions.

Gathering 195 states, the 12-day meeting must agree on a common format for making pledges to reduce carbon pollution—the cornerstone of a pact due to take effect from 2020.

UN member countries have promised to limit [global warming](#) to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-Industrial Revolution levels.

Scientists say the earth is on course for roughly twice this amount by the end of the century—raising the threat of more [extreme weather events](#) such as droughts, floods and storms as well as rising seas.

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