

India's Modi says energy pledge not based on foreign pressure

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Narendra Modi says India's stress on renewable energy is not aimed at impressing the world, but to meet the energy requirements of its people

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Sunday his commitment to ramping up India's renewable energy supplies is not aimed at "impressing the world" following international pressure to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Modi, who stormed to power at May elections pledging to reform the economy, said he was determined to meet the energy needs of India,

which suffers regular blackouts and is heavily reliant on polluting coal to produce electricity.

"Our stress on [renewable energy](#) is not aimed at impressing the world, but to meet the [energy requirements](#) of our people," Modi said, as he opened a conference on renewable energy aimed at attracting foreign investment.

While India has committed to hugely expanding its solar and wind sectors, it has long resisted pressure to commit to any [emissions targets](#) on the grounds that it could hamper its economy and hurt the poor.

During a visit to India last month, US President Barack Obama said the world does not "stand a chance against climate change" unless developing countries such as India reduce their dependence on fossil fuels.

But Modi has denied he is under pressure from other countries, after China and the United States announced a pact in November in the build-up to a UN [climate change](#) conference in Paris late this year.

Currently about 60 percent of India's electricity comes through coal, while some 300 million people do not have access to electricity at all.

The government says it needs to attract \$100 billion of investment to help achieve its ambitious goal of boosting solar energy capacity to 100,000 megawatts by 2020.

The conference Sunday, attended by representatives from 41 countries, saw 293 local and foreign companies commit to invest in producing 266 gigawatts of renewable energy over five years.

Modi also urged Indians themselves to help save the country's resources,

including by changing their lifestyles, in a nod to a rising middle class.

"We don't realise that we are eating into our future generations' share of resources. We don't realise that we are slowly destroying our natural assets.

"If there is any nation that can show ways of protecting humankind from global warming to world, it is India.

"Loving nature and living in harmony with nature is a part of India's DNA."

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