



Reject this inequitable climate proposal



Context:

- The UN Secretary General António Guterres has called on India to make no new investment in coal after 2020, and to reduce emissions by 45% by 2030.

India's track record:

- India is one of the few countries which is currently on track to fulfilling their Paris Agreement commitments.
- Despite the accelerated economic growth of recent decades India's annual emissions, at 0.5 tonnes per capita, are well below the global average of 1.3 tonnes.

In absolute terms it is below that of China, the United States and the European Union (EU), the three leading emitters in absolute term



- In terms of cumulative emissions, India's contribution by 2017 was only 4% for a population of 1.3 billion, whereas the European Union, with a population of only 448 million, was responsible for 20%.

Where do developed countries stand?

- The UNFCCC itself has reported that between 1990 and 2017, the developed nations (excluding Russia and east Europe) have reduced their annual emissions by only 1.3%.
- The global North continues its dependence on oil and natural gas, both equally fossil fuels, with no timeline for their phase-out.
- Large sections of First World environmentalist opinion have been unable to summon up the domestic political support required for climate action.
- They have turned to pressure the developing countries to bear the brunt of climate mitigation.

What are the issues?

- Any discussion on climate action should have reference to the core principles of climate convention (The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC))- global and international equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities
- Unlike the developed nations, India cannot substitute coal substantially by oil and gas. A huge part of this growth needs to come from solar for which sustainable technology is not yet developed.
- Renewables, in the current scenario, at best can meet residential consumption and some part of the demand from the service sector.
- **Lack of technology:** Whether providing 70% to 80% of all generation capacity is possible through renewables depends critically on technology development, including improvements in:
 1. The efficiency of conversion of energy from its source into electricity.
 2. Management of the corresponding electricity grids.
 3. Improvement in storage technologies.
- Technology development in climate change mitigation technologies has registered a significant fall since 2009-10 to 2017, across all subsectors and across all developed countries.

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- Lacking production capacity in renewable energy technologies and their large-scale operation, deployment on this scale will expose India to increasing and severe dependence on external sources and supply chains.
- Renewables alongside coal will generate, directly and indirectly, far more employment than renewables alone.

Conclusion:

- The UN's General's call seems to be a call to de-industrialise the country and abandon the population to a permanent low-development trap.