

Press Clipping

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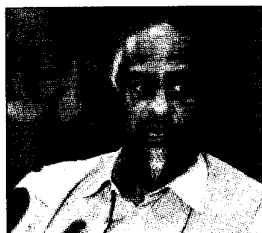
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Respite for Pachauri as PM, others back him

New Delhi: World leaders on Friday joined Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in backing the embattled UN climate change panel co-chair RK Pachauri, saying global warming has the potential to melt polar ice and lead to a rise in sea levels.

Pitching for a legally binding global treaty to curb global warming, the prime ministers of Norway, Greece, Finland, Slovenia and Bhutan defended the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report's findings.

The endorsement for Pachauri came at the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (SDS). Inaugurating the three-day conference, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh threw his weight behind the IPCC and its leaders. "Let me here assert that India has full confidence in the IPCC process and its leadership and will support it in every way that it can," Manmohan Singh said. "Some aspects of the science that is reflected in the work of the IPCC have faced criticism. But this debate does not challenge the core projections of the IPCC about the impact of greenhouse gas accumulations on temperature, rainfall and sea level rise," he added. Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg said, "The main point of climate



panel's report remains unchanged. Polar ice is melting. Sea levels are rising and the globe is warming." He also warned against using criticism of the IPCC report for gaining political ends.

In a similar vein, Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen said the world must move together to combat global warming and efforts should be made to reach a legally binding agreement on cutting greenhouse gas emissions at the next UN conference in Mexico. Quebec's Premier Jean Charest too came out strongly in defence of Pachauri. Bhutanese Prime Minister Jigme Yoser Thinley imparted an emotive touch to the contested point about the melting of the Himalayan glaciers.

Recalling his flight from Thimphu to Delhi, Thinley said he was saddened to see large brown patches and jagged outcrops of rocks in place of pristine snow-clad Himalayas a few years ago. IANS