

U.S. may not commit itself to emission cuts

Washington, Nov 14: U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu on Friday indicated that Washington might not commit itself to emission cuts at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meet in Copenhagen next month.

Mr. Chu said nothing could be said at present since the American Clean Energy and Security (ACES) Act of 2009 ? billed as U.S.? attempt to chart a new course towards a clean energy economy ? was yet to be cleared by the Senate.

During a Question & Answer session after delivering a lecture at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) here, he said the House of Representatives cleared the legislation but ?we cannot sign any treaty without the U.S. Congress clearing the ACES.?

?We did this in Kyoto and we have to make sure that history does not repeat itself,? he said, maintaining that the U.S. government would have to go through the political process before committing itself to emission cuts. The U.S. was a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol but could not ratify it subsequently because only one of the chambers of Congress cleared it.

Asked what the developed world expected from India at the UNFCCC meet, Mr. Chu said no one wanted India and other developing countries to drastically cut down emission standards as everyone understood their compulsions. While conceding that it was the developed world which had put most of the carbon into the atmosphere, he stressed the need for all countries to realise that ?we are all in this together.?

Besides addressing IIT students on ?Meeting the Energy and Climate Challenge,? Mr. Chu met Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia. About his meeting with Mr. Ahluwalia, the Energy Secretary said in a late night statement: ?We had productive discussions about the opportunities for partnerships between our two countries on clean energy technologies.?

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