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## UN climate-change

# expert stands his ground over melting glaciers error

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By Ashok Sharma in New Delhi

THE head of a panel of United Nations climate scientists yesterday said he would not resign despite admitting a warning that Himalayan glaciers could melt by 2035 was hundreds of years off.

Rajendra Pachauri also said he would take no action against the scientists who made the mistake, which was seized on by global warming sceptics last week.

"I have no intention of resigning from my position," Pachauri said. "The errors were unin

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tentional and not significant in comparison to the entire report. The mistakes also do not negate the fact that worldwide, glaciers are melting faster than ever."

The claim, made in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's voluminous, Nobel-winning 2007 report, came in a paragraph with several errors.

Data indicates the ice could melt by 2350. The assertion that the glaciers would be gone by 2035 went virtually unnoticed until journalists noticed the projection seemed to be based on a news report, which was, in turn, the result of a typographical error.

Pachauri said such mistakes must be avoided because effective climate change policy depends on good, credible science. He is now working on the fifth IPCC assessment report dealing with sea level rise, ice sheets, oceans, clouds and carbon accounting.

The mistake had prompted demands for his resignation from rich groups in the US which question humans cause climate change.

Patrick Michaels, a global warming sceptic and scholar at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think-tank, was among those to call for Pachauri's head. He said: "I'd like to know how such an absurd statement made it through the review process. It is obviously wrong."

The mistakes, meanwhile, were found not by sceptics like Michaels, but by a few of the scientists themselves, including one who is an IPCC co-author.

The report itself was more than 800 pages long and full of detailed and largely uncontested evidence that the world is getting warmer because of human activity.

Today environment ministers from Brazil, South Africa, India and China are scheduled to meet in the Indian capital, New Delhi, to discuss how they will fight global warming.

The four nations, which brokered a political accord with President Barack Obama at last month's climate summit in Copenhagen, will play a key role in shaping a legally binding climate deal that the UN hopes will be completed by the end of 2010 in Mexico.

Pachauri said it was "a practical necessity" to postpone a 31 January deadline set by the Copenhagen accord for developing countries to present their nonbinding carbon-curbing actions, and for rich nations to submit economy-wide emissions targets for 2020.

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