



India's current Environment Minister, Jairam Ramesh, is not a man to hold his tongue, and has become the most powerful minister in that post since it was founded. Recently, he's [been in a lot of hot water](#) for a speech he gave in China, where he castigated other government ministries for being "alarmist" and "paranoid" about "Chinese businessmen entering the industrial sector in India."

Already, the Indian press is talking about Ramesh being taken down a peg. But wait — haven't I heard this somewhere before?

Yes, of course: seven months ago, when Ramesh wrote a supposedly confidential memo to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh about the need for India to take a more realistic and productive attitude toward climate policy. [Singh supposedly slapped Ramesh hard for that](#), but quietly, India has signed onto its Copenhagen goals, [instituted a bevy of new climate proposals](#), and Singh's previous climate negotiator, Shyam Saran, abruptly resigned, [leaving Ramesh in control](#) of the portfolio.

Perhaps Singh is using Ramesh as the unofficial floater of trial balloons, leaving Ramesh to take the flak, and then empowering his environment minister on the back end. Let's hope so: Singh and Ramesh have already made the current Union government the most environmentally-conscious in the country's history. that's not saying much, but it's far better than anything previous.