

India raises its commitment to climate action to 5.6% of GDP: Nirmala

NEW DELHI, Feb 14 (PTI)

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said India has hiked spending on climate action in the last six years to 5.6 per cent of GDP, demonstrating the country's pursuit of meeting nationally determined goals on curbing carbon emission.



Participating in a panel discussion at the Munich Security Conference, she said India has increased its commitment to climate action. "Six years ago, we were spending approximately 3.7 per cent of our GDP on climate action. Today, that figure is close to 5.6 per cent. We have invested the funds. We are not waiting for financing and technology to come from elsewhere but they must come," she said.

She further said that India will continue to invest in renewable energy, and we have been steadily building on that commitment.

Carbon capture strategies have been funded in the Union Budget 2026-27 so that they can be implemented across the country, she said, adding that they are being incentivised. Furthermore, she said, India has achieved two-thirds of its nationally determined commitments in the renewable sector and that too four years ahead of the target date. Making a case for differentiated cost of climate action. Country which are less polluting should contribute less towards climate action. "As much attention as we give to emission control, we need to look at resilience, adaptation. Otherwise, you're going to sacrifice a lot. Technologies will have to talk to each other. No one can say they've created a perfect system to counter climate concerns," she said.

EAM meets leaders of Germany, Canada, France on sidelines of Munich Security Conference

MUNICH, Feb 14 (PTI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday held bilateral meetings with leaders of Germany, Canada, France and Czech Republic on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. Jaishankar, who is attending the Munich Security Conference from February 13 to 15, said in a social media post he held a “productive” bilateral meeting with his German counterpart Johann Wadepful and the two leaders assessed the progress of cooperation in various domains. “Also spoke about regional hotspots,” he added.

The External Affairs Minister also met Czech Republic’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Petr Macinka and discussed strengthening economic and defence cooperation. “Hope to welcome him soon to India,” he added. Jaishankar also met with his Canadian counterpart Anita Anand. “India-Canada ties continue their steady progress,” he said. The External Affairs Minister also met his French counterpart Jean-Noel Barrot and Croatian Foreign Minister Gordan Grlic-Radman.

Earlier, Jaishankar also met his

counterparts from the G7 countries as he reiterated India’s support for reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC).

The meeting comes after India concluded a free trade agreement (FTA) with the 27-nation European Union in January.

Jaishankar in a social media post said he was pleased to engage with G7 Foreign Ministers and reiterated India’s support of the UN@80 agenda, particularly meaningful reform of the UN Security Council.

INDIA WEDDED TO STRATEGIC AUTONOMY, SAYS JAISHANKAR: INDIA is very much wedded to its policy of “strategic autonomy” and the country’s energy procurement will be driven by factors like costs, risks and availability, Jaishankar said on Saturday against the backdrop of Washington’s claim that New Delhi has agreed to stop importing Russian crude oil.

In an interactive session alongside German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepful at the Munich Security Conference, Jaishankar said the global energy market is “complex” and India’s oil companies will take decisions based on what they consider to be in their best interest.

India-US trade pact 'fair and balanced': Goyal



MUMBAI, Feb 14 (PTI)

UNION Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday said the interim trade agreement reached between the Centre and the US will include India's energy requirements and would help it secure crude oil at more competitive prices.

Speaking to reporters here, the Commerce and Industry Minister said that India and the US have agreed to work towards increasing

Trade pact to cover energy needs, ensure competitive crude prices

the annual trade between the two countries to USD 500 billion by 2030, and the Government is working to

achieve this target.

He said the proposed USD 500
(Contd on page 5)

Rahul Gandhi immature, lacks understanding of economy: Goyal

MUMBAI, Feb 14 (PTI)

UNION Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday described Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as "immature" and lacking an understanding of the economy and accused the opposition party of spreading misinformation as it had no constructive agenda to criticise the Narendra Modi Government.

Speaking to reporters here on the Union Budget, Goyal said Rahul Gandhi is "thousands of miles away from the truth" and asserted that
(Contd on page 5)

Modi's historic landing at N-E's 1st emergency landing facility



Prime Minister Narendra Modi witnesses the aerial display of fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters, in Dibrugarh on Saturday. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh also present. (ANI)

GUWAHATI, Feb 14 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday made a historic landing at the first Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) of the northeast aboard the C-130J aircraft in Assam's Dibrugarh district. Modi took off from the Chabua airfield after his arrival, and landed at the ELF in Moran on a stretch of National Highway-37.

In a post on X after the inauguration,

the PM said "it is a matter of immense pride that the Northeast gets an Emergency Landing Facility".

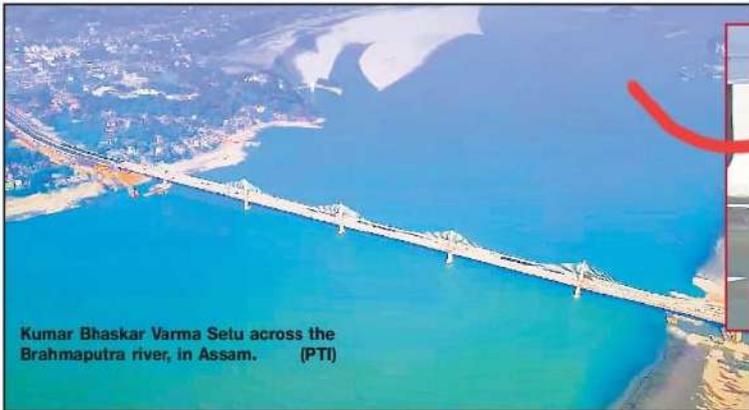
"From a strategic point of view and during times of natural disasters, this facility is of great importance," he said. The Rs 100-crore ELF, a 4.2-km reinforced stretch on the Moran Bypass, which was inaugurated by the PM, will act as a strategic and multi-functional runway for IAF fighter jets and transport aircraft, strengthening defence, logistics and disaster response, officials said.

The facility is designed for both civil and military use, serving as an alternative to the Dibrugarh airport in case of emergency, they said. The PM was received at the ELF by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Air Chief Marshal A P Singh and other Ministers of the Assam Cabinet.

After landing on the runway, Modi drove to the venue nearby from where he

(Contd on page 5)

PM inaugurates Rs 3,030 cr bridge on Brahmaputra



Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu across the Brahmaputra river, in Assam. (PTI)



GUWAHATI, Feb 14 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated several projects in Assam, including a bridge on the Brahmaputra River, an IIM and a data centre for the northeastern region.

The projects, which were rolled out months ahead of Assam Assembly elections, aim

to boost connectivity, strengthen digital infrastructure, promote higher education and enhance public transport.

Modi reached the State on a day-long visit to inaugurate an emergency landing facility (ELF) at Moran in Dibrugarh district and launch projects worth over Rs 5,500 crore.

The first project the Prime

Minister inaugurated in the State capital was a six-lane bridge over the Brahmaputra River. He launched the Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu, built at a cost of around Rs 3,030 crore. The six-lane extradosed Prestressed Concrete (PSC) bridge will connect Guwahati with North Guwahati and is the first extradosed bridge in the

North-East. After the inauguration, Modi took a walk on the bridge. Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa were present on the occasion.

The bridge will cut travel time between Guwahati and North Guwahati to just seven minutes. Presently, only the Saraighat Bridge in Jalukbari area connects the two banks of the Brahmaputra in the capital region, with travel time taking around 30 minutes.

Considering the high seismicity of the region, the bridge incorporates base isolation technology using friction pendulum bearings, according to a statement issued by the prime minister's office.

High-performance stay cables were used to ensure durability and long-term structural performance, it added.

"A Bridge Health Monitoring System (BHMS) has also been incorporated for real-time (Contd on page 5)

Cong neglected N-E, promoted insurgency: PM

GUWAHATI, Feb 14 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched an all-out attack on the Congress, accusing it of neglecting the North-East and promoting insurgency in Assam during its rule.

Addressing a public meeting here that also included BJP workers, Modi alleged that the Congress always endangered the nation's security, with fear and insecurity prevailing during its tenure in Assam.

"The Congress indulged in polarisation and vote bank politics, and took decisions that promoted these," he said. "The partition of the country took place due to the Muslim League, but now (Contd on page 5)