

Developing nations wrongly blamed for emissions: Modi

PM says India's per capita carbon emissions are less than the global average; claims the country fulfilled all the commitments made at 2015 Paris climate summit; flags hurdles to nuclear energy

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the responsibility for carbon emissions had often been “wrongly placed” on developing countries. He also claimed that India was the only G-20 country to have fulfilled all the commitments it made at the 2015 Paris climate summit, and that it had done so ahead of schedule.

Mr. Modi was speaking at the inauguration of a two-day international conference on “The Future of Environment and Climate Dynamics”, organised by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) at Vigyan Bhavan. The conference brings together jurists, academics, policymakers, scien-



Big statement: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Justice of India Surya Kant at the NGT conference in New Delhi. PTI

tists, and experts from 17 countries, along with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Asian Development Bank. The NGT said the aim was to identify gaps in policy-making and implementation, and strengthen cooperation among institutions.

“We all know that often the responsibility for carbon emissions has been wrongly placed on developing countries. Many of my companions from the Global South are present here,” Mr. Modi said. “But the historical truth is that even today, India’s per cap-

ita carbon emissions are less than half the global average,” he added.

India's growth

The per capita emissions in developed countries were six times India's, he noted and said solar capacity had grown from about 2 GW to more than 160 GW in 12 years and that non-fossil capacity had nearly quadrupled.

“Those who give long speeches on the environment – when I advance nuclear energy work, they will stand in the courts to stop it,” he added, “A pathway has also been created to bring private players into this sector.” The SHANTI Act from December 2025 enables this.

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'Emissions blame unfair to developing nations'

Independent assessments support part of the Prime Minister's claim on Paris summit commitments. India's first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) had three quantitative targets. The emissions-intensity and non-fossil capacity goals were both met several years early, and non-fossil capacity reached 52.57% of the total by February 2026. The third target, an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2030 through afforestation, is still in progress. India's April 2026 submission to the UN puts the additional sink at 2.29 billion tonnes between 2005 and 2021, and says the country is on track.

Globally, the UNEP estimates that warming in this century would be 2.3-2.5 degrees Celsius even if all countries' NDCs are fully implemented, and 2.8 degrees Celsius under current policies. This is short of the Paris goal of keeping warming "well below" 2 degrees Celsius while pursuing 1.5 degrees Celsius. The UNEP's Limiting Overshoot report, released on September 2, found that warming is set to cross 1.5 degrees Celsius, likely within the next few years, and put the best-case peak at 1.8 degrees Celsius.

The Prime Minister's remarks follow the August 26 Nepal flash flood, caused by a glacier collapse. Nepal's Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal had told the media that major emitters, including India, had a historical responsibility to compensate vulnerable nations. He later said neither he nor Nepal's government had asked India, China, the United States or any other country for compensation.

Over 22 lakh Bengal voters filed appeals against exclusion: EC

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

A second affidavit filed by the Election Commission (EC) in the Supreme Court has revealed that over 22 lakh voters purged from the electoral roll during the special intensive revision exercise in West Bengal have filed appeals challenging their exclusion.

The number of voters challenging the deletion of their names from the electoral roll is significant as approximately 27 lakh voters were excluded on the ground of “logical discrepancies”.

This would mean that a lion’s share of the 27 lakh voters may be contesting their exclusion before 19 Appellate Tribunals constituted on the orders of the Supreme Court over six months ago.

The EC’s figure of 22,21,118 appeals by excluded voters is striking, particularly given that judicial officers, actively de-



People waiting to submit their petitions before a Special Tribunal in Bengal. FILE PHOTO

ployed during the SIR verification phase, have already adjudicated these claims and objections.

This is the first time a break-up of the number of appeals concerning both exclusions and inclusions have been given.

The EC’s affidavit said that 16.10 lakh appeals had been filed against inclusion. A total of 38.31 lakh appeals were filed in the tribunals, the poll body said.

As of September, the 19 tribunals have decided 1,26,194 appeals. Another

affidavit had pegged the disposal rate as 1,02,231. The latter would probably be the disposal statistic till the month of August.

The number of pending appeals currently before the tribunals exceeds 37.05 lakh. The affidavit filed in response to a petition filed by Rajya Sabha MP and Trinamool Congress leader Derek O’ Brien conveyed the EC’s agreeability to an increase in the number of tribunals.

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LINDSEY O GRAHAM SANCTIONING RUSSIA AND IRAN ACT 2026

Trump signs Russia sanction bill giving him power to levy 100% tariffs on India

Not feasible to replace Russian oil given West Asia chokehold due to Iran war, India expected to push for waivers, say experts

Pratyush Deep, Ravi Dutta
Mishra & Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, September 19

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump Friday signed into law the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, giving himself the authority to impose tariffs of up to 100% on countries, including India and China, that continue buying Russian oil and gas.

The law "authorizes and expands statutory sanctions, tariffs, and prohibitions on Russia and extends existing sanctions

• India's oil imports from Russia this year

Month	Oil imports from Russia (MN BPD)	Total oil imports (MN BPD)	Share of Russian oil (%)
January	1.21	5.19	23.3
February	1.08	5.25	20.6
March	2.08	4.44	46.8
April	1.72	4.56	37.7
May	2.08	4.92	42.3
June	2.71	5.06	53.6
July	2.82	5.04	56
August	2.08	4.62	45

SOURCE: KPLER

on Iran," the White House said in a statement. The Act is named to honour a veteran Re-

publican Senator and a Russia hawk who died in July.

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View in Delhi: Another tool of leverage, double standards on uranium

Pratyush Deep
& Ravi Dutta Mishra
New Delhi, September 19

THE NEW US law that empowers President Donald Trump to impose tariffs of up to 100% on buyers of Russian oil and gas is being seen in New Delhi as another instrument of leverage in Washington's arsenal even as the two countries negotiate a trade deal.

The Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 puts major buyers of Russian crude, including India and China, at risk. The timing is delicate. India-US bi-



lateral trade agreement talks are in their final leg, the ongoing war has severely disrupted energy markets, and Chinese President Xi Jinping's first White House visit

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Russia sanction bill

The United States Trade Representative, the federal agency responsible for developing and recommending United States trade policy to the President, said in a social media post that the signing of the bill “demonstrates the growing bipartisan recognition that tariffs are an effective tool to safeguard our economic and national security and establish lasting peace and prosperity.”

The agency flagged how the Congress had “granted major tariff authority to the President for the first time since 1974, delivering a critical tool to hold trading partners accountable and bring an end to the Russia-Ukraine war.”

The move came after the US House of Representatives on

Wednesday passed the sweeping sanctions legislation, aimed at cutting Russia’s revenues from oil and gas exports and increasing economic pressure on Moscow over the war in Ukraine.

The development is significant for India as it depends on imports to meet over 88% of its crude oil needs, and Russia currently accounts for nearly half of these.

According to vessel tracking data from commodity market analytics firm Kpler, India imported 2.08 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil in August, accounting for 45% of the country’s total oil imports. The share was even higher, at over 50%, in the preceding two months.

India would almost certainly

push for waivers, and it would make sense for the US to agree as a friendly concession given the current energy crisis sparked off by the Iran war, according to at least two analysts who spoke to *The Indian Express* on condition of anonymity.

Notably, Trump called on Ukraine earlier this week to halt strikes on Russian refineries, given the runaway oil and petroleum product prices amid stifled supplies in the global market.

Experts ask will he now risk taking more Russian oil off the market by imposing punitive tariffs on countries buying Russian crude in large quantities. At least till the West Asia crisis persists, Trump might want to exercise restraint and caution in implementing the proposed legislation in full force. Doing the opposite would worsen an already worrying supply situation and send oil and fuel prices soaring even higher, something the Trump administration wouldn’t want ahead of the midterm polls in the US.

For its part, India would most certainly move to communicate its energy concerns to Washington, something that was done last year as well when the original draft of the Bill was mooted, officials indicated.

India has been in touch with US authorities over the legislation. The statement by the MEA on Thursday said: “This issue has been discussed at high levels in recent months with various US interlocutors. Its potential implications for not just the bilateral relationship but also the international energy market have been very clearly articulated by the Indian side.”

With much of the West shunning Russian crude following the country’s February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia began offering discounts on its oil to willing buyers. Indian refiners were quick to avail the opportunity, leading to Russia — earlier a peripheral supplier of oil to India — emerging as India’s biggest source of crude, displacing the traditional West Asian suppliers.

Russian oil proved to be a strong energy security hedge amid the West Asia crisis, as oil flows from the Gulf dried up. About 40% of India’s crude imports usually came through the Strait of Hormuz before the war, and a large chunk of that supply has effectively been offline due to the highly constrained energy flow through the waterway.

Analysts say that despite the threat of sanctions, Russian crude remains the most practical and competitive source of supply for Indian refiners and is extremely difficult to replace in the current market.

In the months preceding the West Asia war, oil imports from Russia had reduced notably as the US imposed sanctions on Russian oil majors Rosneft and Lukoil, and amid trade pact negotiations between New Delhi and Washington.

The US made a meaningful reduction in Russian oil imports a prerequisite for scrapping its 25% additional penal tariff on India. In February, Indian refiners had imported just over 1 million bpd of Russian crude, al-

most half of the 2025 peak of over 2 million bpd. Even with the significant reduction in volumes, Russia was India’s largest source of crude in February, accounting for about fifth of its total oil imports.

But as supplies from West Asia dwindled due to the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Russian oil came to India’s aid and volumes surged to historic highs. The US itself issued sanctions waivers on purchase of Russian crude amid the West Asia conflict.

India’s crude import strategy has shifted sharply since March 2026 as Strait of Hormuz disruptions tightened West Asian oil flows and increased freight risks. While Russian crude remains the backbone of India’s import slate, refiners have diversified aggressively towards African, North American, and South American barrels to offset the drop in supplies from the Gulf.

Interestingly, oil imports from Venezuela — now effectively under US control — in August jumped 60.2% over July to 350,000 bpd, Kpler data shows.

UP Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd.

HARDUAGANJ THERMAL POWER STATION KASIMPUR (ALIGARH)

E-CEM Tender Notice

Trump tightens H-1B scrutiny, renews \$100,000 fee order

Reuters

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump has extended an executive order that would impose a fee of \$100,000 for H-1B non-immigrant visas by another year, the White House said on Friday.

U.S. employers seeking to hire skilled foreign workers can use the federal government's H-1B visa programme for a fee, allowing tech and other professionals from abroad to work in the United States for a few years.

Indians remain the single largest beneficiary group of the U.S. H-1B visa programme.

Mr. Trump, who has pursued an aggressive immigration crackdown, has criticised the programme



Policy impact: Indians remain the single largest beneficiary group of the U.S. H-1B visa programme. NAGARA GOPAL

and wants to permanently raise the fee from between \$2,000 and \$5,000 to at least \$100,000, though the attempt has faced legal challenges.

Mr. Trump's initial order for a fee hike, first released in September 2025, was set to expire this month. It did not apply to visas granted to foreign citizens already

in the United States on student visas, who make up a large share of new H-1B recipients, or to renewals of current visas.

The President also issued a separate proclamation, tightening the scrutiny of H-1B visa applications through better inter-agency cooperation.

(With inputs from PTI)

SIGNING EXPECTED NEXT WEEK AT UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Greenland & Denmark say Trump deal won't compromise sovereignty

Key details of the agreement have not been made public so far

Reuters

Copenhagen, September 19

DENMARK AND Greenland on Saturday said any agreement with the United States would not compromise Greenland's sovereignty, after President Donald Trump said the deal would give Washington "permanent control" over the Arctic island's security, leaving its precise scope unclear.

The United States, Denmark and Greenland said late on Friday they had entered into an agreement for the US to develop a significant military presence on Greenland, while prohibiting US adversaries from building their own bases on the island.

Key details of the agreement have not been made public, including the degree of US military presence in the self-governing Danish territory and whether any formal power over foreign



A drone view shows houses on the shore of Nuuk, Greenland. FILE/AP

policy and resources would be ceded to Washington.

Denmark and Greenland expressed hope that a deal, which is expected to be signed during the UN General Assembly next week, would end months of uncertainty triggered by Trump's threats to seize control of Greenland.

"Next week could be a good week - for Greenland, Denmark, and the United States," Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars

Lokke Rasmussen said in a statement posted on Facebook on Saturday.

"A time of uncertainty will hopefully give way to a binding agreement that strengthens security in the Arctic and the North Atlantic, and thereby our shared security within NATO and Europe - while respecting the (Danish) Kingdom's red lines," he said.

Denmark and Greenland have repeatedly insisted that

Washington respect the sovereignty of the Danish kingdom and accept that Greenland is not for sale. Trump said on Truth Social late on Friday that under a deal, "the United States will FOREVER have the complete ability to do what is necessary in Greenland in order to secure and defend the security of Greenland, and the United States of America."

The deal "gives the United States permanent control over security, and all other needs, in Greenland," Trump said, adding that no adversary would ever be permitted to have a base or military presence in Greenland, or make sensitive investments there, without Washington's express written approval.

Trump made the announcement after Reuters exclusively reported that the US and Denmark were closing in on a deal.

"This is probably not the end of President Trump's ambitions for Greenland and certainly not the end of US strategic interest in the territory and its resources," said Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, a political science professor at the University of Copenhagen.

If Copenhagen cedes any formal power to Washington, it

raises the question in Greenland of whether "this is the beginning of replacing the colonial relationship with Denmark with a colonial relationship to the United States," he said.

Greenland's Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen said on Saturday that he was pleased with the proposed deal: "The agreement recognizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our Kingdom and the right of the Greenlandic people to self-determination," he said in a post on Facebook.

Trump's threats, which peaked in January, triggered a diplomatic crisis that strained relations within NATO and pushed Denmark and Greenland into negotiations aimed at defusing the pressure.

A NATO spokesperson on Saturday said the alliance welcomed the agreement, which would "help advance security, stability and cooperation in this vital region."

Steffen Nielsen, a 49-year-old sales worker living in Copenhagen, told Reuters: "I think that the US is probably going to get what they could have had the whole time, if they just asked nicely."

Flawed AI-linked intel almost led U.S. military to board Chinese ship: report

Agence France-Presse

WASHINGTON

The U.S. military came close to boarding a Chinese vessel in West Asia earlier this year based on a flawed intelligence report prepared with the help of artificial intelligence, CNN said on Friday.

U.S. intelligence indicated the ship was carrying nuclear weapons-related components, leading American forces to prepare to intercept it, the broadcaster reported, citing four anonymous sources familiar with the incident.

But the operation was



American forces were ready to intercept the ship in West Asia after intel prepared using an AI chatbot wrongly flagged the vessel. AP

called off after officials determined that an AI chatbot used by an analyst had misidentified the material the ship was carrying.

CNN quoted one source

as saying the intelligence report was “entirely false” but “almost started a war.”

The CNN report comes after a furore erupted earlier this month when a re-

searcher publicly resigned from AI firm Anthropic over fears that the technology could escape human control.

In a separate incident involving the U.S. military and China, Politico reported on Friday that F-35 jet parts – including a sensitive stealth canopy for a cockpit – were diverted to Hong Kong and are now missing, raising fears that Beijing had obtained sensitive American military technology.

The parts were headed from Australia to the U.S. for repairs when the diversion occurred, the outlet reported.

U.S., Denmark and Greenland reach agreement 'to strengthen security'

Deal aims to bar U.S. adversaries from building bases on Greenland; U.S. has 'permanent control' over the island's security, says Trump; Denmark insists on sovereignty and territorial integrity; signing expected next week at UN General Assembly

Reuters

COPENHAGEN

The U.S., Denmark and Greenland said late on Friday they had reached an agreement for Washington to develop a significant military presence on Greenland, while prohibiting U.S. adversaries from building their own bases on the island.

U.S. President Donald Trump said the deal would give Washington "permanent control" over the Arctic island's security, leaving its precise scope unclear.

On Saturday, Denmark and Greenland said any agreement with the U.S. would not compromise



Deal follows months of tension over Donald Trump's threats to seize Greenland. A protest against the U.S. leader in capital Nuuk. AP

Greenland's sovereignty. Key details of the agreement have not been made public.

Denmark and Greenland expressed hope that a

deal, which is expected to be signed during the UN General Assembly next week, would end months of uncertainty triggered by Mr. Trump's threats to

seize control of Greenland. "Next week could be a good week - for Greenland, Denmark, and the U.S.," Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said on Saturday.

"A time of uncertainty will hopefully give way to a binding agreement that strengthens security in the Arctic and the North Atlantic, and thereby our shared security within NATO and Europe - while respecting the (Danish) Kingdom's red lines," he said.

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Kingdom and the right of the Greenlandic people to self-determination."

'Permanent control'

Mr. Trump said on Truth Social that under a deal, "the U.S. will FOREVER have the complete ability to do what is necessary in Greenland in order to secure and defend the security of Greenland, and the United States of America."

The deal "gives the U.S. permanent control over security, and all other needs, in Greenland," Mr. Trump said, adding that no adversary would ever be permitted to have a base or military presence in Greenland without U.S. approval.

Flames, smoke seen near Riyadh airport after Saudi warning of aerial attack threat

Reuters

Riyadh, September 19

A LARGE plume of smoke was visible near Riyadh's main airport on Saturday after booms were heard and Saudi Arabia sent alerts overnight warning of potential danger around the capital, amid an escalation in attacks by Yemen's Houthi group.

Reuters video and photographs showed a huge pillar of black smoke rising in the area, with the airport highway, main terminal building and other facilities in the foreground. At one point in the video, flames were visible rising from behind what appeared to be fuel tanks.

There was no immediate comment from the Saudi government's media office in response to Reuters questions about the smoke and the overnight alerts.

Saudi civil defence sent the alerts by phone overnight for potential danger of aerial attacks in Riyadh and the city of Al-Kharj east of the capital, before issuing an all-clear on Saturday morning. A Reuters journalist in Riyadh's Olaya area heard booms before the all-clear was sent.

Although some alerts had been issued in Riyadh this year after the start of the US-Iran war, these were the first since the escalation began with the Houthis in July.

The Houthis, who control the most populous parts

of Yemen and much of the north, have been launching attacks against Saudi Arabia since declaring a naval blockade against Riyadh in July, with strikes targeting Saudi vessels in the Red Sea.

The attacks have targeted Saudi cities, energy infrastructure and shipping, creating new threats to global oil supplies and putting at risk the main alternative Red Sea route for Gulf exports while traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remains blockaded.

On Friday Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said the group had foiled unspecified "criminal attempts" in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, blaming Saudi Arabia and vowing a response.

The Iran-aligned group, which seized Yemen's entire Red Sea coast in a lightning advance this month, says the Saudi Air Force has conducted hundreds of airstrikes against it in recent days.

The UN Security Council in a statement on Friday "condemned in the strongest terms continued Houthi attacks against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including attacks impacting civilian and energy infrastructure, which have resulted in the injury of civilians, including women and children."

In the statement, the Security Council also condemned "Houthi military escalation in Yemen".

Over 50% of youth in two Odisha districts not in jobs, education, training

Siddharth Upasani
New Delhi, September 19

MORE THAN half the youth — those between the ages 15 and 29 years — in two districts of Odisha were neither employed nor getting trained or educated in 2025, according to new district-level data released by the statistics ministry on Friday.

As per the figures, based on the Periodic Labour Force Survey for 2025, the district of Anugul had the highest share of youth in the country at 56.1% who were not in employment, education, or training — referred to as 'NEET'. However, 81% of districts in Bihar had a youth NEET share of more than 25% — the highest in the country. For Odisha, it was 52%.

The all-India NEET rate among youngsters in 2025 was 25%. According to a NITI Aayog report released last month, around 8.7 crore Indians aged 15 to 29 were not studying, working or undergoing training in 2021.

NEET is a way of measuring progress in effectively integrating the youth in work and is often seen as a better indicator than the youth unemployment rate. This is because the number of young NEETs is far higher than the number of unemployed youth. As such, a youngster's NEET status, according to the International Labour Organization, is a more reliable indicator of vulnerability than unemployment. Kendrapara, also in Odisha, was second at 51.4%. Another Odisha district, Dhenkanal, was third with 45.3%. Rounding off the top-five were Tenkasi in Tamil Nadu (44.9%) and North Delhi (44.3%).

• LABOUR MARKET

ANUGUL DISTRICT of Odisha had the highest share of youth in the country at 56.1% who were not in employment, education, or training — referred to as 'NEET'

INTERESTINGLY, THE district in India with the lowest share of youth not in employment, education, or training was also from Odisha: Nabarangapur with 4.1%

OF THE 566 districts for which the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation released data, 251 districts had at least 25% of youngsters in the 15-29 age bracket not in jobs, education, or training

Interestingly, the district in India with the lowest share of youth not in employment, education, or training was also from Odisha: Nabarangapur with 4.1%. Nabarangapur was also the district with the second-highest Labour Force Participation Rate in the country, at 85.4%, behind only 'Dohad, Narmada, Dang, Tapi, Chhota Udepur, Mahisagar' of Gujarat. These were all clubbed together by MoSPI and had a Labour Force Participation Rate of 86%. Labour Force Participation Rate refers to that percentage of people either employed or looking for work.

Among the most populous 100 districts of the country, Ernakulam in Kerala had the lowest NEET rate of 9.6%.

Of the 566 districts for which the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released data on Friday,

251 districts had at least 25% of youngsters in the 15-29 age bracket not in jobs, education, or training. Only 18 had a youth NEET rate of less than 10%. Data for another 18 districts had very high statistical errors, with MoSPI asking those numbers to be interpreted with caution.

This is the second set of district-level data from a large-scale national survey released by MoSPI. Last week, it had released district-level estimates based on the data collected from the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) of 2025. That had shown that 78% of informal sector workers in Nirmal district, in northern Telangana, were women — the highest of any district in the country. Nanded, immediately across the state border in Maharashtra, was ranked 288th in the country, with women making up only 31% of its informal workers.

The data released Friday showed that while 81% of districts in Bihar had a youth NEET rate of more than 25%, West Bengal was second at 75%, and Haryana and Andhra Pradesh tied at third with 70%. Uttar Pradesh was next at 69%.

At 17% each, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra were the major states with the smallest percentage of districts with a youth NEET rate of more than 25%. Jammu and Kashmir was at 13%. In terms of the other key labour market indicators, 18 districts had an unemployment rate of less than 1%, with Madhya Pradesh's Raisen and Bihar's Saharsa on top with 0.3%. The highest was 16.1% in Arunachal Pradesh's Papum Pare district.