

Two More Steps to Boost Economy Soon: Sitharaman

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Guwahati: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman Thursday said the Centre will announce two more big steps in the coming days to give momentum to industry.

The government has decided to increase spending and has announced a slew of measures to arrest the sluggishness in the automobile market, she added.

She also informed that authorities have been instructed to clear all pending GST refunds within the next 30 days, while asking to release all such refunds within 60 days in future.

The minister, however, did not elaborate on the two steps to be taken by the government.

"Globally if we compare economy and growth, we still are the fastest growing economy ... We recognise that consumption has to be given a push," she said.

With the Congress launching the 'Unfit government, unfit economy' campaign to counter NDA government's 'Fit India' campaign, Sitharaman said that the Congress party led the most unfit government in a decade with double-digit inflation and widespread corruption.

"There was corruption in 2G and in coal. They (Congress) were the most unfit government and people of the country had given them a befitting reply in the general elections of 2014 and 2019. They must learn the lesson," Sitharaman said.

When asked if the government has decided on how to use the Rs 1.76 lakh-crore surplus transfer by the Reserve Bank of India, she said that the govern-



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ment will take a call soon.

Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal requested Union Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur to increase the presence of banks in rural areas especially in tea garden areas to push financial inclusion in the state. Sonowal pointed out that setting up of bank branches in remote areas will also empower the rural population.

Thakur assured Sonowal that besides bank branches, he would take personal interest in deploying bank correspondents and dak sevak in the far-flung areas of the state to bring the uncovered section of the people within the ambit of formal banking services.