

## Morning News Script

0730 hrs

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024

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Union minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari yesterday reviewed national highways projects of North Eastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland in Delhi. Mr Gadkari reviewed the progress of 15 national highway projects spanning over 423 Km in Arunachal Pradesh, 29 projects covering 545 km in Nagaland, 38 projects covering 808 kilometers in Manipur and 16 in Tripura spanning 324 km. Taking to X, Mr Gadkari said during the meeting held alongside Union Minister of States Ajay Tamta , Harsh Malhotra, Nagaland Deputy Chief Minister TR Zeliang and senior officials, they stressed the need to accelerate mobility infrastructure development in Nagaland, prioritizing sustainability and cost-efficiency. He said these initiatives would greatly enhance connectivity, drive local economic growth, and contribute to the region's deeper integration into India's overall development. Mr Gadkari further emphasised that Nagaland's highways are transforming into lifelines of growth, driven by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. He noted that each new road paves the way for enhanced connectivity, prosperity, and progress in the region.

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Director General of Police Rupin Sharma said Nagaland Police has made significant strides in combating drug trafficking while drug flow through the state has decreased. Speaking to the media persons yesterday Mr Sharma admitted that fully addressing the issue will take time, adding that only about 10 percent of the drugs are currently being intercepted. He underscored the difficulty of inspecting every vehicle, particularly with traffickers using various methods, including trucks traveling between Manipur and Assam. The DGP informed that state Police have identified around a thousand individuals involved in trafficking in Manipur, however the ongoing law and order issues have made the arrests challenging. Despite this, he said the progress within Nagaland has been promising and acknowledged the cooperation from various agencies and valuable tips from the public. Mr Sharma also noted a surprising trend of drugs being transported from Myanmar through Dimapur and Kohima back to the Eastern districts of Nagaland. The State DGP also commended the village

councils in Mon and Tuensang for their crucial assistance in identifying suspects. Mr Sharma also urged citizens to continue sharing information, assuring that their identities would remain confidential.

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Following the expiry of a 48-hour ultimatum served by the Chakhesang Students' Union (CSU), the office of the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL), Project Management Unit (PMU) Pfutsero, in Phek district has been sealed indefinitely with immediate effect . The matter pertains to the CSU's ultimatum issued on October 16 regarding the Kohima-Jessami Road Package-II on National Highway-29, with demands that remain unfulfilled within the stipulated time. During the period of agitation, by indefinitely sealing the PMU office of NHIDCL at Pfutsero with immediate effect, the CSU has demanded that all landslides and obstacles hindering vehicular movement on the affected stretch of road be cleared, all potholes should be filled and repaired, and an adequate drainage system be provided. Furthermore, the union has demanded that the contract agreement with the concerned company be terminated, as recommended by the Phek district PMU. The union also warned that if the demands are not addressed, it would initiate further action against both the implementing agency and the contractor.

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Fifth Note, an experimental progressive rock band from Nagaland, won India's Biggest Band Battle, "Ticket to Hornbill," taking home a cash prize of 20 lakh rupees. The spectacular finale, held at RCEMPA Jotsoma last evening, featured 10 competing bands- Salt Rock, Yugen, Project Anonymous, the Prophets, Kapow, Fifth Note, Paper Sky, and wildcard entries FeatherHeads, One Girl Shy, and Hidden Identity. The Prophets secured the second prize with 10 lakh rupees, while Project Anonymous took third place with 5 lakh rupees. In addition to the cash prizes, musical equipment valued at 5 lakh rupees were also awarded to individual winners. Minister for Tourism Temjen Imna Along, who was the special guest , expressed his vision for Nagaland to become the Music Capital of the world, suggesting that world-class concerts should be held monthly, particularly in Kohima. On the upcoming 25th edition of the Hornbill Festival, he urged all Nagas to be a good stewards towards the guests arriving from around the globe.

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