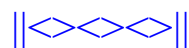


Evening News Script
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:: THE HEADLINES :

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah underscores Centre's focus on north east region
- Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio calls for enhanced budget allocation, delegation of powers for North Eastern Council
- Environment Ministry releases India State of Forest Report 2023; Nagaland records more than 75 percent forest cover
- And, YouthNet, MeitY sign MoU to boost entrepreneurship, economic growth, and employment generation



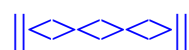
Union Home Minister Amit Shah today said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought north east at the focal point of the world. Addressing the 72nd plenary of North Eastern Council in Agartala, the Home Minister said that last 10 years have been very important for north east. He said, the Union Government is inspiring investors to make investment in the north east. He said establishment of peace is the most important thing that has happened in the region, wherein about 10,500 rebels have shun violence and surrendered themselves. Noting that Ashtalaxmi concept is being embraced by the country and world, the Union Home Minister said, Act East, Act Fast And Act First mantra

are being implemented by North East Council in letter and spirit. Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Development of North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya Scindia noted that there has been a 71 percent drop in extremist activities and 60 percent drop to the loss of human life in the region.



Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has called for enhancing the budget allocation for the North Eastern Council (NEC) besides increased delegation of powers for sanctioning projects. He was speaking at the 72nd NEC Plenary at Agartala today. While appreciating initiatives taken for the North Eastern states under the schemes of PM DevINE and NESIDS (ROADS), Mr. Rio, however, noted that the financial outlay for Nagaland under the schemes between the period 2022-23 to 2025-26 were insufficient for undertaking major projects. He therefore, urged the ministry to consider increasing the budgetary allocation for the schemes to sustain impactful projects that address the regional aspirations and foster inclusive development.

Further, Mr. Rio highlighted the issue of delays in approval and clearance of projects by NITI Aayog and Line Ministries. To this, he suggested formulating a time schedule for timely submission, approval and implementation of projects. For Nagaland, Mr. Rio requested support from the DoNER Ministry and NEC for approval of projects including Construction of Airport at Ciethu, Foot Hill Road, Multi-Disciplinary Sports Complex at Dimapur, and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research. He also appealed the Centre to review the inclusion of Nagaland under Protected Area Permit, saying it would affect tourists and investors to the State. Mr. Rio mentioned that the state is peaceful, and had successfully conducted the 25th edition of Hornbill Festival.



As Christmas approaches, the scenic hills and vibrant towns of Nagaland are quickly transforming into festive havens, with communities and families gearing up to celebrate the joyous occasion. From traditional feasts to vibrant decorations, the preparations are in full swing, reflecting the region's unique blend of Christian traditions and indigenous Naga culture. While some are preparing to head to their own villages to spend the holidays with families and friends, In towns like Kohima, Dimapur, and Mokokchung, residents have decked their homes, churches, and public spaces with colorful lights, star-shaped ornaments, and nativity scenes.

Today, we take you to Dimapur, the bustling commercial heart of Nagaland, where Christmas preparations are in full swing. Our Correspondent Aren is on the ground to capture the festive mood and give us an insider's look at how the city is gearing up for one of the most anticipated celebrations of the year.

Aren, What is the atmosphere like in Dimapur as Christmas draws near?

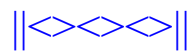
The streets of Dimapur are buzzing with festive activity as locals eagerly embrace the holiday spirit. People are indulging in festive shopping, buying Christmas trees, handcrafted decorations, and an assortment of traditional Naga delicacies to share with family and friends. Let's hear from a local resident about how she is preparing for the festival.)

The warmth and togetherness of the season are really alive in Dimapur. Thank you Aren for the report.



Union Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav, today released the India State of Forest Report 2023 in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Published biennially by the Forest Survey of India, the report offers a comprehensive assessment of the nation's forest and tree resources. It covers critical topics such as forest cover, tree cover, carbon stock, forest fire incidents, and agroforestry.

According to the report, India's total forest and tree cover spans 827,357 square kilometres, accounting for 25.17 percent of the country's geographical area. Additionally, the total forest cover has increased by 1,445 square kilometres compared to the 2021 assessment. As per the report, Nagaland is among the eight states and Union Territories to have a forest cover of above 75 percent.



YouthNet has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). The five-year partnership aims to empower technology-driven startups, fostering a more inclusive and robust entrepreneurial environment in the country. The MoU was signed yesterday in Dimapur, by Director of YouthNet, Nuneseno Chase, and Neikepekho Shosahie, Centre Manager of Incubation representing the organization with the MeitY Startup Hub. YouthNet is said to be the sole organization from Nagaland and one of the select few from across India eligible to implement MeitY's ambitious startup initiatives under the Gen-Next Support for Innovative Startups.

As part of the partnership, YouthNet will operate under the aegis of MeitY Startup Hub and the Digital India Corporation by focusing on boosting entrepreneurship, economic growth, and employment generation. The program, supported by a significant budget of 490 crores, aims to nurture startups in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. The initiative emphasizes inclusivity, accessibility, and affordability, aligning with MeitY's vision of promoting digital transformation and economic advancement.



10 young minds from different educational institutions of Kohima, Dimapur and Peren participated in the third round of the selection process for the reimagined National Youth Festival 2025, now called the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue. Having cleared the first two rounds – Viksit Bharat Quiz and Essay/Blog Writing – these young minds aged 15 to 29 years took part in the round 3 of Viksit Bharat

Vision Pitch Deck-State-level presentations, conducted yesterday at the Directorate of Youth Resources and Sports, Kohima. Speaking at the event, Director, Youth Resources & Sports Kethosituo Sekhose, expressed optimism that the youths selected from the state would also be selected at the national level. The selected students will represent the state at the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue during the National Youth Festival 2025 scheduled on 11th and 12th of January. Selected students will also have an opportunity to directly interact with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

