

## Morning News Script

0730 hrs

11<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said the enthusiasm shown by senior citizens for the Ayushman Vay Vandana Card is very satisfying. In a social media post, Mr. Modi said the government will not leave any stone unturned for their better health and long life. The Prime Minister encouraged more senior citizens to take advantage of the facility. In October, the Centre expanded Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY to include all senior citizens aged 70 years and above to help them avail healthcare benefits.

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Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio said the Hornbill Festival is a vibrant celebration of Nagaland's culture. As the 10-day long festivity concluded yesterday, Mr. Rio extended gratitude to all partners, guests, and participants, who helped make the 25th Edition truly special. He expressed hope that the visitors would take a piece of Nagaland's culture and be its ambassadors.

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Students will be allowed to appear for any subject in Common University Entrance Test-UG from 2025 irrespective of the subjects studied in class 12. UGC Chairperson M Jagadesh Kumar told media that this will allow candidates to cross over the rigid disciplinary boundaries in higher education. CUET-UG will only be conducted in Computer Based Test mode from next year. It will be conducted in 63 subjects instead of 37 from 2025 session. The UGC Chairman said an expert panel set up by the Commission conducted a review of the exam and proposed several changes. All CUET-UG exams will have uniform duration of 60 minutes. The concept of optional questions in the exam has been done away with and all questions will be compulsory now. Students will be able to appear for maximum of five subjects from 2025, as against six previously.

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India has witnessed a substantial rise in female labour force participation rate, particularly in rural areas, from 2017-18 to 2022-23. A research paper on Female

Labour Force Participation Rate stated that rural female LFPR surged from 24.6 percent to 41.5 percent while in urban, it rose modestly from 20.4 percent to 25.4 percent, from 2017-18 to 2022-23. In rural areas, significant increases are seen in states like Jharkhand with 233 percent growth and Bihar with six-fold growth. Northeastern states have also showed remarkable growth. Among the Northeastern states, there have been remarkable growth in rural areas, with Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh leading.

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Urban and Housing Affairs Minister Manohar Lal said that urbanization has been increasing significantly and has reached 35 percent in the country. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi yesterday, he said the government is expecting it to reach 40-50 percent in the coming years. Mr Manohar Lal said that PM-Awas Yojana 2.0 is a five-year program and the goal is to build one crore houses in urban areas. He added that a small portion of 6-7 percent is allocated for the first phase, which amounts to around seven lakh houses. The Minister said, the Government will now sanction the first phase of houses without waiting for the demands since it takes time to approve them. Minister said that seven lakh houses are guaranteed for this year, and the work will begin once the formalities are completed. He added that the Government will transfer the first installment of the funds when states will share the data with the centre.

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The Ministry of Rural Development has informed that a sum of over 1,869 crore rupees was released up to November this year as Centre's share under Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen to sustain the open defecation free status of villages across the country. It said soak pits, waste stabilisation ponds and decentralised wastewater treatment system are built for the purpose. The ministry said over 56 lakh individual toilets, around 1.4 lakh schools and Anganwadi toilets and 64,000 community sanitary complexes have been built till now under MGNREGS.

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The One Nation One Subscription scheme for providing equitable access to all scholarly research articles and journal publications, will likely roll out at the start of next year. The Government will pay a unified subscription charge to international publishers for access to their articles and journals, replacing the earlier set-up where each institute individually paid for different subscriptions.

The six thousand crore rupee scheme will grant unrestricted access to research journals and articles to students, faculty, and researchers at government academic institutions.

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