

## Evening News Script

1920 hrs of

19<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

### THE HEADLINES :-

- Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar calls for national policy on freebies
- Union Cabinet approves schemes to boost dairy sector, small digital payments, others
- Nagaland's Ex-Parliamentarians ask Centre to come out with common draft on Naga solution
- President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulate NASA team on safe return of Sunita Williams and others

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Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman and Jagdeep Dhankhar today asked Parliamentarians to ponder over freebies, underlining the need to utilize all investments of the government in a structured manner. He stressed upon the need for a national policy on the matter. He said, the electoral process has become electoral inducements in the country, and it puts the new government formed after the election in an uncomfortable situation. During the Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha today, Mr Dhankhar also highlighted the need to bring uniformity in the salaries and pensions of the lawmakers of the different states.

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The government today approved an incentive scheme for the promotion of low-value BHIM-UPI transactions, with at an estimated outlay of one thousand 500 crore rupees. Briefing media in New Delhi today on the Cabinet decisions, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, the scheme will enable small merchants to avail of UPI services at no additional cost, and receive

incentive of 0.15 percent per transaction value for transactions up to two thousand rupees. The government also approved the implementation of revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission with enhanced allocation for the years 2024-25 and 2025-26. The scheme is set to significantly boost milk production and productivity, thereby increasing farmers' incomes.

Mr. Vaishnaw said, the government also decided to set up a new Brownfield Ammonia-Urea Complex Namrup IV Fertilizer Plant within the existing premises of Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited at Namrup in Assam.

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The Union Cabinet has approved the Revised National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD). The Central Sector Scheme has been enhanced with an additional 1000 crore rupees. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, this initiative focuses on modernizing and expanding dairy infrastructure, ensuring the sector's sustained growth and productivity. The Revised NPDD is expected to set up 10,000 new Dairy Cooperative Societies, processing in the North Eastern Region, as well as formation of two Milk Producer Companies with dedicated grant support in addition to the ongoing projects of NPDD, to generate additional 3.2 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities, particularly benefiting women.

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The Ex-Parliamentarians Association of Nagaland (Ex-PAN) has urged the Centre to come out with a common draft of the two documents signed with Naga political groups. This are the Framework Agreement with NSCN-IM on August 3, 2015 and the Agreed Position with the Working Committee of Naga National Political Groups on November 17, 2017. The appeal was among the three resolutions adopted during its general body meeting on March 14 in Dimapur, according to a release issued yesterday. Highlighting the more-than seven decades of struggle and decade-long peace negotiations, the Ex-PAN said people of Nagaland now want to develop and progress like any other state without hindrances. It also asserted that the Centre's Act East Policy can fructify if there is permanent peace. The Ex-PAN also objected to the Centre's decision on fencing along the Indo-Myanmar border in the state and scrapping of Free Movement Regime. Dwelling on the Foothill Road construction, the Ex-PAN

stressed on the urgency and importance for a road that connects the foothills of Nagaland from Tizit in Mon district to Khelma in Peren district, which would enable free movement without having to cross the neighbouring Assam state.

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NASA Astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore have returned on earth early this morning aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon Spacecraft after spending 286 days in space. Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the Gulf of Mexico. Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore are now embarking on a 45-day rehabilitation program to help them adapt to Earth's gravity after spending nine months in space.

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President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have congratulated the NASA team behind the safe return of the Crew 9 mission on Earth. In a social media post, President Murmu said that India's daughter Sunita Williams and her fellow astronauts have inspired everyone with their perseverance, dedication, and never-say-die spirit. She added that their historic journey is a tale of determination, teamwork, and extraordinary courage. Prime Minister Modi, in a post on X, said the unwavering determination of Ms Williams and the Crew 9 astronauts in the face of the vast unknown will forever inspire millions. Underlining the spirit and efforts of Ms Williams, the Prime Minister said that she has exemplified this spirit throughout her career.

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India has planned to have its own space station namely Bharat Antariksh Station in 2035 and if all plan goes well an Indian astronaut will be on the Moon by 2040. Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office Dr Jitendra Singh said this while replying to supplementaries in the Lok Sabha today.

Mr Singh said, Chandrayaan-4 will be launched through two launch vehicles and it will have five components. The Minister added that Gaganyaan's test flight with a female robot will be launched by the end of this year.

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Nodal Officer for the District Disaster Management Authority of Wokha, L. Jonjibemo Odyuo, said that the wildfire in Wokha, which started on Monday, is currently under control. Detailing the firefighting operations over the last two days, Mr Odyuo thanked the collective efforts of various personnel, departments, and volunteers from Wokha village. While the blaze has not been fully extinguished, it is manageable at the moment.

Mr Odyuo urged people to exercise caution when practicing slash-and-burn farming and to follow proper safety measures. He also reassured that the department will continue to monitor the situation for any further outbreaks. Meanwhile, Sub-Inspector M. Pentick Konyak from Wokha Fire Station, who had gone missing yesterday while battling the raging wildfire near the Vankhosung Helipad in Wokha, was found this morning at a farm, a few kilometers away from Yikhum Village.

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The Department of Fire and Emergency Services has recorded 114 cases of forest fire over the last two and a half months, with Kohima district alone accounting for 67 of these cases. The department warned that, despite efforts of firefighters, district authorities, police, and village volunteers, indiscriminate forest burning continues during the current dry, windy season, often caused by hunters, campers, or miscreants. Reemphasizing the total ban on forest fires and their impact on ecological balance, the department urged the public and village councils to take proactive measures to identify culprits and taking action as per law.

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