

Evening News Script

1920 hrs of

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:: THE HEADLINES ::

- Both Houses of Parliament adjourned sine die; Budget session concludes
- Prime Minister Modi announces several India-led initiatives at BIMSTEC Summit
- Union Cabinet approves Vibrant Villages Programme-2 for development of border villages
- And, Nagaland Health Department explores digital solutions to transform state's healthcare system

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Both the Houses of Parliament were adjourned sine die today. With this, the Budget Session of Parliament came to an end. The session had commenced on 31st of January. In his valedictory address in the Lok Sabha, Speaker Om Birla highlighted that the House registered 118 percent productivity during the Budget Session. He said the Lower House passed 16 bills during the session.

Earlier, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Rajya Sabha held over 17 hours of discussion on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 which is the highest in the history. He said Lok Sabha also held around 14 hours of discussion on the Bill. Meanwhile, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said the Upper House witnessed 119 percent productivity.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi today announced several India-led initiatives towards institution and capacity building in Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). Participating in the 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, he highlighted that BIMSTEC Centres of Excellence will be set up in India on Disaster Management, Sustainable Maritime Transport, Traditional Medicine, and Research and Training in Agriculture. He also announced a new programme - BODHI - under which training and scholarships would be provided to professionals, students, researchers, diplomats and others. He offered a pilot study by India to assess regional needs in Digital Public Infrastructure and a capacity building programme for cancer care in the region. Mr Modi also offered to establish BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce and to organize BIMSTEC Business Summit every year in India. On the sidelines of the summit, Prime Minister Modi met leaders from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar. After successfully concluding his Thailand visit, Mr Modi has left for Sri Lanka for the second leg of his two nation tour.

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The Union Cabinet today approved the second phase of Vibrant Villages Programme with 100 percent Central funding. With a total outlay of 6,839 crore rupees, the programme will be implemented in select strategic villages in various states, including Nagaland and all north-east states, among others, until 2028-29. Briefing media, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, the Programme will help in the comprehensive development of villages located in the blocks abutting international land borders. He said, the objective of the programme is to create better living conditions and adequate livelihood opportunities to ensure prosperous and safe borders.

This will boost the tourism potential and promote the local culture and heritage of these villages.

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The State Department of Health and Family Welfare is working towards transforming the healthcare ecosystem in Nagaland by adopting innovative

digital solutions. From April 2 to 4, the department organized a series of meetings with Regional Adviser for Digital Health at WHO, South-East Asia Regional Office, Dr. Karthik Adapa. The meetings focused on potential implementation of free open-source digital health solutions, such as electronic health records, telemedicine platforms, and health data management systems. Dr. Adapa emphasized the need for standards and interoperability to ensure smooth integration of digital health solutions across various systems. The meetings also discussed challenges and opportunities involved in integrating these solutions into existing healthcare systems. Further, discussions were held with key stakeholders to explore possible use of advanced technologies such as Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence. Over the three days, the officials visited Nagaland Health Authority Kohima, Seikhazou UPHC, Nagaland Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, District Hospital Dimapur and the Christian Institute of Health Sciences & Research to assess existing infrastructure and healthcare technologies.

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The 81st anniversary of the Battle of Kohima was commemorated today at the Kohima War Cemetery, with a solemn wreath-laying ceremony and a moment of silence to honour those who fought and laid down their lives in the battle. Among the attendees was Charlotte Carty, a trustee of the Kohima Educational Trust and a World War II enthusiast, whose grandfather, Lieutenant Colonel “Bruno” Brown, was the Commander of the Assam Regiment during the battles of Kohima and Jessami. Reflecting on the historical significance of the battle, Ms Carty recounted how the Battle of Kohima was a turning point as it was here that the Japanese suffered their first defeat enabling the Allied forces to advance to Imphal and then to Burma.

Ms Carty urged people to come to Nagaland to visit the actual site where the battle took place and pay their respects. As a tribute, the group undertook a 39-hour trek from Jessami to Kohima, retracing the route of the Allied forces. Ms Carty underscored the possibility of recreating other wartime routes in the future.

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Nagaland's Task Force for Music & Arts in association with the Indian Performing Rights Society (IPRS) conducted a one-day workshop for music creators at Kohima today. Addressing the event, Advisor to Chief Minister, and Chairman IDAN, Abu Metha, highlighted the significance for artists to understand their rights.

CEO, IPRS Rakesh Nigam, discussed the role of IPRS in protecting creators' rights, which in turn fosters creativity and safeguards culture and identity. During the event, a memorandum of understanding was signed between TAFMA and IPRS to boost their partnership.

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A training on value addition on horticulture crops was held today at district horticulture office in Kiphire. Speaking at the inaugural event, EAC Kiphire Nitile Tep stressed the importance of sustainability and employability in the sector. She also highlighted the various opportunities and schemes available, urging the participants to take full advantage of them. The training, attended by around 50 youth, included technical sessions on untapped horticulture crops with special emphasis of Kiphire district, their economic value, and practical training.

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