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:: THE HEADLINES ::

- Union Minister Chandrasekhar says Viksit Gaon key to Viksit Bharat 2047
- Axiom-4 Mission departs International Space Station, splashdown tomorrow
- Nagaland University Dean booked by CBI for demanding bribe from supplier
- Passport Seva Mobile Van Service launched to reach remote areas of Northeast

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Union Minister of State for Rural Development, Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar, called for a renewed push to transform villages into 'Viksit Gaon', as a necessary step towards achieving the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. Speaking at the first meeting of the performance review committee of the RD Ministry in new Delhi, Dr Sekhar urged for collaborative effort to create a new chapter for India's growth story.

The minister highlighted that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has become a powerful tool against rural unemployment and distress migration. He stressed the need to move beyond wage payments and focus on creating durable and productive assets through community-selected projects. He also noted that more than 3.22 crore pucca houses have been built under PM Awaas Yojana - Gramin. Noting that over 7.56 lakh kilometres of rural roads have been constructed under PM Gram Sadak Yojana, the Minister suggested setting up state-level road maintenance funds and implementing community-based monitoring systems.

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The return journey of Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla and three other crew members of the Axiom-4 mission began earlier this evening. SpaceX, in its post on X, confirmed that Dragon, the crew capsule, has separated from the International Space Station (ISS). It added that Dragon will reenter the Earth's atmosphere and splash down in around 22.5 hours off the coast of California tomorrow.

After landing, Group Captain Shukla and the other crew members, will undergo a 7-day rehabilitation programme to adapt back to Earth's gravity. Group Captain Shukla is on a 14-day mission to the ISS, during which he conducted seven India-specific experiments. In his farewell speech aboard ISS, Group Captain Shukla described his space journey as incredible.

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The CBI has booked a Nagaland University Dean for demanding a bribe of 2 lakh rupees from a vendor and harassing others in the supply of equipment and UPS batteries. Chitta Ranjan Deb, Senior Professor, Dean of School of Sciences, Department of Botany, was booked for indulging in various corrupt and illegal practices with a predetermined intention to cause wrongful loss to the institution and corresponding personal financial gain to himself, an official said. A source revealed to the CBI that earlier some vendors had given bribe to Deb via ATM machines and bank accounts as he had shown favour to them in supply of various items to Nagaland University.

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In a significant step toward improving passport access in remote areas of the Northeast, the Ministry of External Affairs launched the Passport Seva Mobile Van Service on Saturday at Gauhati University, Assam. The initiative is part of the Ministry's ongoing "Passport Seva Aapke Dwar" program, and will be deployed across far-flung rural locations in the region, allowing citizens to submit passport applications conveniently. Inaugurating the service, Chief Passport Officer, Dr. K.J. Srinivasa, described the van as a one-stop shop where all necessary procedures for passport application submission can be completed. One mobile van has been provided to each of the 37 Regional Passport Offices, RPO, across India. Currently, there are six Passport Seva Kendras and 19 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras operating across six Northeastern states under RPO in Guwahati.

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The Mokokchung District Level Coordination and Monitoring Committee, DISHA, held its meeting today. Chairing the meet, Lok Sabha MP and DISHA Chairperson S. Supongmeren Jamir highlighted DISHA as a vital bridge between the government and the people, promoting participative governance. He highlighted that DISHA aims to ensure coordination among elected representatives for efficient and timely implementation of development schemes at the district level. Mr Jamir emphasised the meeting's objective to raise awareness, especially at the grassroots, about key government schemes in sectors like agriculture, rural development, social welfare, and infrastructure. The meeting was attended by Head of Offices, NGOs, Municipal Council and village councils.

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External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar has underlined the importance of open exchange of views and perspectives between India and China amid the complex international situation. Dr Jaishankar held a meeting with Vice President of China, Han Zheng, in Beijing today. He highlighted that continued normalisation of ties between the two countries can produce mutually beneficial outcomes. The

Minister also expressed confidence that his discussions in this visit will maintain that positive trajectory.

Dr Jaishankar is on a two-day visit to China to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Foreign Ministers' meeting in Tianjin city tomorrow.

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India's Wholesale Price Index, WPI inflation dropped to minus 0.13 percent in June 2025, over the same period last year. The dip is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, mineral oils, manufacture of basic metals, crude petroleum and natural gas. According to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, WPI-based inflation has been steadily easing since March this year and has hit a 14-month low of 0.39 percent in the month of May. Food inflation declined to minus 0.26 percent year-on-year, while fuel and power segment registered a deflation of minus 2.65 percent.

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A one-day sensitization programme celebrating the girl child was recently held at Jakhama in Kohima. Organized by the Kohima District Administration in collaboration with SANKALP - District Hub for Empowerment of Women, Naga Hospital Authority Kohima, and the Department of Post, the event aimed to promote awareness on valuing and nurturing the girl child. Highlights included free health check-ups, Aadhaar enrollment for girls under 5 years, and financial literacy sessions on schemes like Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana and PM Matru Vandana Yojana. On the occasion, officials also planted trees named after girl children to symbolize their growth and significance in society.

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And in local sports, Nagaland hosted its first-ever Pickleball tournament yesterday. The event, held at Aiko Greens in Dimapur, featured 32 teams from Nagaland and Assam, competing in Men's Doubles Open and Mixed Doubles categories. In the Men's Doubles, Megotsolie Khate and Vilasier Khate clinched the title, while Dilip Mohanty and Abyan Zaffar were the runners-up. The pair of Dilip Mohanty and Nazneen Rahman won in Mixed Doubles. The event was organized by the Nagaland Pickleball Association in collaboration with Indian Pickleball Association.

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