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:: THE HEADLINES ::

- Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio says government to develop astro-turf grounds in all districts.
- First edition of Banana Festival 2025 commences; Deputy Chief Minister T. R. Zeliang terms festival as platform to connect producers and consumers.
- Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton reaffirms government's commitment to support agricultural growth.
- JCC of Nagaland services associations says it opposes only inclusion of backdoor appointees in non-NCS quota.

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Chief Minister of Nagaland, Neiphiu Rio has highlighted the government's efforts to promote football in the state, citing the success of the Nagaland Super League 2024. Addressing the inaugural program of the 9th Edition of Captain N. Kenguruse Memorial Football Tournament at Indira Gandhi Stadium in Kohima today, Mr. Rio informed that the state government is planning to develop astro-turf grounds in all districts to strengthen sports infrastructure. Paying tribute to Captain Kenguruse, the Chief Minister described him as one of Nagaland's most illustrious heroes whose courage during the Kargil conflict continues to inspire generations.

Speaking on the occasion, GOC Spear Corps, Lieutenant General Abhijit S Pendharkar recalled Captain Kenguruse's extraordinary bravery during the Kargil War, where he climbed an icy cliff barefoot to lead his platoon to victory. Lieutenant General Pendharkar added that the tournament not only honors the hero's memory but also strengthens bonds between the armed forces and the people of Nagaland.

Highlights of the event included unveiling of trophies, release of a special comic book on Captain Kenguruse's life, and the tournament's theme song. The kick-off match was played between Adroit Boys Sechü Zubza (Kohima) and Tehok FC (Mon). The annual tournament, jointly organized by the Nagaland Football Association and the Assam Rifles, will run till November 6, featuring teams from across the state.

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The much-anticipated first edition of the Banana Festival 2025 commenced at the Public Ground in Wokha district today, under the theme “Banana for Food, Fibre and Future.” The three-day event, running aims to empower over 6,000 farmers across Nagaland by promoting agricultural innovation, value addition, and stronger market linkages. Addressing the inauguration program, Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Planning & Transformation and National Highway, T. R. Zeliang, termed the festival as a platform to connect producers and consumers, boost rural income, and encourage youth entrepreneurship.

Also speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Home & Border Affairs, Yanthungo Patton reaffirmed the government’s commitment to supporting livelihood initiatives and agricultural growth.

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The Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) of Nagaland State Services Associations has clarified that it is not opposed to the induction of Non-SCS (Non-State Civil Service) officers into IAS officers, but firmly objects to the inclusion of backdoor appointees under the Non-SCS quota. A press release from the JCC stated that it strongly opposes any attempt to induct officers who entered service through backdoor, illegal or irregular appointments, without undergoing open competitive recruitment. It said, such practices not only violate the principles of meritocracy and equality of opportunity enshrined in the Constitution but also erode public trust and demoralize deserving officers who entered service through legitimate means. The release added that IAS represents the highest level of administrative recognition, and its induction process must be transparent, fair, and constitutionally compliant. It further stated that any move to regularize or promote officers appointed through irregular means would set a dangerous precedent, undermine recruitment institutions like the NPSC, NSSB and dilute the integrity of the State's administrative system. The JCC reaffirms its commitment to uphold merit, transparency, and fairness in all matters of public service recruitment and career progression. It appeals to the State Government to ensure that only eligible officers recruited through open, competitive, and constitutional means are considered under the non-SCS quota.

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The recent GST reforms represent a significant move towards boosting Nagaland’s economy by streamlining tax rates across several industries. GST rates for essential items have substantially been lowered from 18 percent to 5 percent. Rajiv Verma, a prominent businessman and the proprietor of a stationery shop in Kohima, expressed his optimism

regarding these reforms, particularly in terms of savings for local citizens.

He noted that consumers will benefit greatly, with lower prices for everyday household goods such as personal hygiene products. For students, he said, the reforms offer further advantages as stationary items, previously taxed at 12 to 18 percent, are now exempt from GST.

In addition, electronic items have become more affordable, with tax rates dropping from 28 percent to 18 percent.

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The no-confidence motion moved against the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Kohima Municipal Council (KMC) has failed due to a lack of quorum during the meeting held today. According to an order issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Kohima, a written notice expressing the intention to move a no-confidence motion against KMC Chairperson, Neikhozo Suokhrie and Deputy Chairperson Khrielievi Chusi was received on October 9, in accordance with Section 15 of the Nagaland Municipal Act, 2023. Subsequently, a meeting of all elected members of the Kohima Municipal Council, excluding ex-officio and nominated members, was convened today for consideration of the motion. However, during the meeting, the required quorum, which mandates the attendance of more than half of the total number of elected members as the Nagaland Municipal Act, 2023, could not be fulfilled, with only six members present. In this regard, the motion of no confidence was declared null and void. In view of this, the order stated that Neikhozo Suokhrie shall continue to hold the office of Chairperson of the Kohima Municipal Council. Likewise, Khrielievi Chusi shall continue to hold the office of Deputy Chairperson of the KMC.

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