

## Evening New Script

1920 hrs

4<sup>th</sup> January 2026

:::THE HEADLINES:::

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi says India's performance in various sports has consistently improved since 2014.
2. Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan says MGNREGA had become synonym for corruption.
3. Centre removes conditions for startup to avail Research, Development and Innovation Fund.
4. And, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio hails Chekrovolu Swuro on being election as Vice President of Archery Association of India.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India's performance in various sports has consistently improved since 2014. Inaugurating the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi today via video conferencing, Mr. Modi said that India is strongly bidding to host the 2036 Olympics. He said that his government has brought many changes and reforms in the field of sports like National Sports Governance Act and Khelo Bharat Niti 2025.

Drawing the similarities between volleyball and development, the Prime Minister said that volleyball is a game which connects us to the team spirit.

The 8-day tournament, being held from today to 11th January, is witnessing participation from across India, with over 1,000 players competing as part of 58 teams representing various states and institutions.

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Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan today said that MGNREGA had become a synonym for corruption, where workers were often sidelined and routinely exploited. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Mr Chouhan called out Congress for allegedly misleading the public over the newly enacted Viksit Bharat Rozgar aur Aajeevika Guarantee Mission – Gramin (G-RAM-G) Act. He said that despite having an enormous budget, MGNREGA did not lead to any permanent asset creation or long-term development of the villages. While highlighting the shortcomings of the previous Act, the Union Minister said that Viksit Bharat G-RAM-G safeguards workers' interests. He highlighted the vision of Viksit Bharat through Viksit Gaon and said funding for rural employment has been significantly increased to support sustainable outcomes.

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The government has removed the condition of a three-year existence of a startup to avail the Research, Development and Innovation Fund (RDI). Addressing the 41st Foundation Day event of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in New Delhi, Dr Jitendra Singh announced that any new startup group that floats itself can come and avail this fund through DSIR. Dr Singh said that the government has taken several path-breaking decisions under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, including the opening up of the nuclear sector and space sector to private players. He said that to gear up for these new domains, the government would accelerate their initiative.

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Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has congratulated Chekrovolu Swuro on her election as Vice President of the Archery Association of India. In a post, the Chief Minister extended his best wishes to Ms. Swuro for a successful tenure, expressing confidence that her experience and dedication will contribute to further strengthening Indian archery.



Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, today said that India's rice production exceeded 150 million tons in 2025. Inaugurating 184 new varieties of 25 crops with improved traits developed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Mr. Chouhan said that India has surpassed China in rice production. He added that India has become a leading rice-exporting nation to the world. Mr. Chouhan added that more than 3200 new varieties of seeds have been developed in the past 10 years. The Union Minister said that the government is working to ensure that various schemes launched should reach farmers across the entire country within three years.



Centre has dismissed a video as false which claims that Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced freebies like gold, mobile phones, two and four wheelers. The Fact Check Unit of the Press Information Bureau said that the Prime Minister has not made any such announcement. The unit termed the video as AI generated and fake. The government has urged citizens to be cautious of such misinformation and to verify facts before trusting them.



Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh today asserted that the Viksit Bharat G RAM G Bill is rooted in Gandhian principles and is focused on the welfare of the poor. Countering the Congress-led opposition's

claims that the bill undermines rural employment guarantees, he said, guided by the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, the government have continued his work for the poor, implementing it for 125 days. Meanwhile, Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the Centre would launch a broad outreach effort to communicate the intent of the legislation to the public. His remarks come amid sharp criticism from the Congress, which announced a 45-day nationwide agitation against the G RAM G Act starting January 10. The party has alleged that the law silently kills MGNREGA and dilutes the legal right to work guaranteed to rural citizens.

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India has expressed deep concern over the recent developments in Venezuela. External Affairs Ministry said in a statement that the evolving situation is being closely monitored. New Delhi has called upon all concerned to address issues peacefully through dialogue, ensuring peace and stability of the region. The External Affairs Ministry has also issued an advisory urging Indian nationals to avoid all non-essential travel to Venezuela in view of recent developments. All Indians who are in Venezuela for any reason have been advised to exercise extreme caution, restrict their movements, and remain in contact with the Embassy of India in Caracas.

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Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has extended warm greetings to all celebrating Thuni from the Chakhesang community. He expressed hope that the festival, marking the new crop, will be an occasion to thank the Almighty for good health, a bountiful harvest, and continued blessings. Chief Minister Rio also prayed that the year ahead brings peace and prosperity to all.

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The North East Integration Rally kicked off today from Kolkata, setting the tone for a month-long initiative aimed at strengthening regional integration and people-to-people ties across the North Eastern states. The inaugural session was attended by a wide range of public representatives, professionals, cultural figures, and civil society members. A cultural highlight of the event was a performance by K. Bobin, who rendered the official title song of the rally. Built around the central theme of Peace, Progress, and Prosperity, the North East Integration Rally aims to draw attention to development, connectivity, and social cohesion across the region. The rally is scheduled to conclude on February 4.

