

Evening News Script

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**:: THE HEADLINES ::**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi says, peace, security and stability of South China Sea is in the interest of entire Indo-Pacific region.

NHIDCL Warns EPC Contractor over negligence in Kohima-Jessami Highway maintenance.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurates Prerna Sthal at Burdang in Sikkim.

Reserve Bank of India instructs all Payment Service Providers to review their payment systems and improve accessibility of digital payment systems for Persons with Disabilities.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stressed that a free, open, inclusive, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific is vital for the peace and progress of the entire region. He said peace, security and stability of the South China Sea is in the interest of the entire Indo-Pacific region. The Prime Minister was speaking at the 19th East Asia Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR today. Highlighting concern over the ongoing conflict in different regions of the world, Mr Modi said, development should be the approach and not expansionism. He said the ongoing

conflicts in different regions are negatively impacting the countries of the Global South. He said that everyone wants peace and stability to be restored in Eurasia and the West Asia region. He reiterated that this is not an age of war and solutions to problems cannot come from the battlefield. Mr. Modi emphasized that it is necessary to respect sovereignty, territorial integrity and international laws. The Prime Minister said, emphasis must be laid on humanitarian approach, dialogue and diplomacy.

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National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) has warned M/S Ratna Infrastructure Projects Private Limited, the EPC contractor overseeing Package 2 of the Kohima-Jessami road project, for failing to maintain the highway in traffic-worthy condition during construction. This neglect has led to hazardous conditions for commuters, with NHIDCL citing multiple violations of the contract agreement. According to the letter issued by General Manager (P) Gajendra Singh Rana, of NHIDCL's Project Management Unit in Pfütsero, the contractor has repeatedly ignored requests to carry out essential maintenance to keep the road safe for use, in direct violation of the Contract Agreement. NHIDCL's letter outlined several critical safety instructions for the contractor. NHIDCL has made it clear that if any accidents occur due to contractor's failure to comply with safety and maintenance requirements, strict action will be taken in accordance with contractual provisions.

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Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, today virtually inaugurated Prerna Sthal at Burdang in Sikkim in the memory of 22 soldiers who lost their lives during a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood at the South Lhonak Lake in the state in October last year. Owing to the bad weather in Gangtok, the Minister carried out the inauguration from Headquarters, Trishakti Corps in Sukna, West Bengal. Addressing the

gathering, the Union Minister paid tributes to the fallen heroes and commended their unyielding spirit to stand firm for the country in every situation. He stated that the Prerna Sthal has immortalised the sacrifice of the bravehearts and etched their bravery in history forever. Mr. Singh asserted that while such memorials are symbol of sacrifices of the soldiers, they also give shape to collective consciousness of the people, awakening the sense of national pride in them.

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Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has instructed all Payment Service Providers (PSPs), including all banks and non-bank entities, to review their payment systems and improve the accessibility of digital payment systems for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). In a statement, RBI mentioned that based on this review, PSPs may need to carry out modifications so that all payment systems and devices, such as Point-of-Sale machines, can be accessed and used easily by the PwDs. RBI emphasized that while selecting potential solutions, PSPs must ensure that any modifications or enhancements do not compromise the security of their systems. PSPs are required to submit details of the systems or devices that need modification, along with a time-bound action plan for achieving accessibility improvements.

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In a significant move towards self-reliance, the Indian Army has rolled out its first overhauled T-90 Bhisma tank, further enhancing its operational readiness. The T-90 Bhisma, the Army's main battle tank since 2003, is known for its firepower, speed, and protection. With this overhaul, the tank has become even more powerful and lethal. As part of the ongoing Decade of Transformation in the Indian Army, Chief of the Army Staff General, Upendra Dwivedi, witnessed the rollout ceremony of the overhauled T-90 Bhisma tank recently. The complex overhaul process involves disassembling the tank and replacing any damaged parts. Weighing approximately 47 tons, the T-90 Bhisma is

9.6 meters long and 2.8 meters wide. Its compact size enables it to manoeuvre quickly through forests, mountains, and marshy terrain at a speed of up to 60 kilometres per hour.

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Noel Tata has been unanimously appointed Chairperson of Tata Trust, the philanthropic arm of the Tata Group, today. This decision was made during a board meeting following the passing of Ratan Tata on Wednesday at the age of 86. Noel Tata, Ratan Tata's half-brother, serves on the boards of several listed companies, including Tata Steel and Voltas. The decision to appoint Noel Tata as chairperson was made with Ratan Tata's philosophy of 'moving on' in mind.

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Durga Puja, the grand festival that reverberates through the hearts of Indians, is more than just a religious celebration, it is a cultural phenomenon that brings communities together in joy, devotion, and creativity. **Durga Ashtami, also known as Maha Ashtami, one of the most revered and significant days during the grand Durga Puja celebrations was observed today in Dimapur. Convenor, Puja Committee, Mahesh Agarwal, said, around 50,000 devotees gathered at Durga Mandir, Dimapur to offer their prayers. He thanked the administration and the security personnel for their immense support. He further hoped that everyone unite and celebrate the puja in harmony and peace. (*underplay puja in the bold sections*)**

Fifty one pandals were set up in various parts of Dimapur town to observe the celebration. The festival signifies the victory of good over evil, celebrating the goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura, symbolising the triumph of righteousness and the destruction of ignorance.

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Nihon Hidankyo, a Japanese group of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, has won the Nobel Peace Prize 2024. The group also known as Hibakusha was recognised for its tireless efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again. The award was announced at the Norwegian Nobel Institute in Oslo.

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