

THE HEADLINES:

- **India & New Zealand elevate ties to strategic partnership; Set to double bilateral trade to Rs 35,000 crore by 2030**
- **RPP Merges with NPF; Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio Reaffirms Naga Political Issue as Top Priority**
- **Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda says World Population Day underscores importance of voluntary family planning**
- **Transport Department enforces High Security Registration Plates on vehicles**



India and New Zealand today elevated their ties to a strategic partnership and set a five-year target to double annual bilateral trade in goods and services to 35,000 crore rupees by 2030 following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his New Zealand counterpart Christopher Luxon in Auckland. Speaking during delegation-level talks, Prime Minister Modi said that his visit to New Zealand marks historic milestone in bilateral relations and will give fresh momentum to ties between the two countries.

Hailing the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries, Mr Modi appreciated New Zealand's efforts in concluding FTA process in a short period and thanked Prime Minister Luxon and his government for their leadership. Speaking on the occasion, New Zealand Prime Minister announced that India and New Zealand will establish a strategic partnership to provide a broader framework for expanding cooperation across key sectors.



Rising People's Party (RPP) today formally merged with ruling Naga People's Front (NPF). Chief Minister and NPF President Neiphiu Rio described the move as coming together of people, ideas, experiences and aspirations in larger interest of Naga people. Mr. Rio reiterated that resolving Naga political issue remains top priority of both NPF and People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) government, saying party would continue to facilitate an inclusive, honourable and acceptable political settlement. Emphasising greater Naga unity, he said

administrative boundaries across Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Myanmar could not weaken the shared identity of Naga people.

While acknowledging that physical integration of Naga-inhabited areas may not be immediately achievable, Chief Minister urged continued efforts towards emotional integration by strengthening ties among Naga communities. He also appealed to Nagas in Manipur to strengthen NPF ahead of state's Assembly elections. Mr. Rio said NPF's alliance with BJP was aimed at securing an early political solution while safeguarding Naga identity, traditions and Christian values. RPP president Joel Naga formally announced the merger. Formed in 2020, the party failed to win any seat in the 2023 Nagaland Assembly elections.



Today is World Population Day. Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, Jagat Prakash Nadda today said that World Population Day underscores the importance of voluntary family planning, informed choices, and healthy families as the foundation of inclusive and sustainable development. In a social media post, Mr Nadda said that the theme, Healthy Timing and Spacing of Pregnancies for the Well-being of Mother and Child and planned parenthood, and the campaign slogan, ‘When children are spaced correctly, families become healthier and happier’, reinforces the need to improve maternal and child health through informed reproductive choices and quality family planning services.



State Transport Department has directed strict enforcement of High Security Registration Plates (HSRPs) on all motor vehicles in compliance with Supreme Court's December, 2023 order and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways' advisory issued in January this year. The department said HSRPs must be procured only from State-authorized dealers holding valid type approval. It also directed authorized dealers not to manufacture or affix HSRPs without approval from the Registering Authority and updating the VAHAN database. The department warned that vehicle owners and HSRP manufacturers violating the provisions will face penalties under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.



Deputy Commissioner of Kohima, B. Henok Phom, on Friday launched FoodWiFi, a homegrown food delivery app aimed at supporting local businesses and creating employment opportunities in Nagaland. Mr. Phom stressed the need for entrepreneurship. He said shrinking public sector opportunities require youth to explore innovation and self-employment instead of relying solely on government jobs. FoodWiFi CEO Anato Sema said the platform is designed to generate income opportunities for students and unemployed youth by allowing them to work as delivery partners. Mr. Sema added that the app seeks to provide a local alternative to national food delivery platforms while offering restaurants fair and sustainable service rates.



Advisor for CAWD, Nagaland, Kudecho Khamo today inaugurated futsal court at Chetheba in Phek district under LADP Iconic Project. Mr. Khamo said the LADP is meant for the development of the constituency and called for collective efforts to ensure all-round progress. Stressing that development requires unity and public participation, he urged people to support government initiatives, safeguard public property and make use of state and central welfare schemes. The Advisor also encouraged entrepreneurship through better engagement with banks and emphasised the promotion of sports to keep youth engaged, foster peace and create livelihood opportunities.



In the FIFA World Cup, Norway will take on England, while defending champions Argentina face Switzerland tonight in the quarter-finals to determine the remaining semi-finalists. Norway and England will clash at Miami Stadium, with kick-off scheduled for 2:30 a.m. Indian Standard Time. Later, Argentina will face Switzerland at 6:30 a.m. Indian Standard Time. Spain and France have already booked their places in the last four. Spain secured a thrilling 2-1 victory over Belgium to advance, while France progressed with a comfortable 2-0 win over Morocco. The winners of tonight's quarter-finals will complete the semi-final lineup of the FIFA World Cup 2026.



India Meteorological Department has forecast heavy rainfall across Northern and Eastern parts of the country for the next four to five days. IMD scientist Dr Naresh said very heavy rainfall exceeding 12 centimetres is likely in parts of the Northeast over the next two days. He added that due to El Nino conditions, the country's overall monsoon rainfall has now slipped to below normal.