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**‘हर काम देश के नाम’**

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**North-East has ushered in a new era of fast-paced development under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi: Raksha Mantri while inaugurating first-ever Durand Cup match in Manipur**

**Durand Cup in Manipur symbolises the rise of a ‘New India’, where all states/UTs together are taking the country to greater heights, says Shri Rajnath Singh**

The entire North-East region has ushered in a new era of fast-paced development under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. This was stated by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at Khuman Lampak Man Stadium in Imphal, Manipur on August 18, 2022, during the inaugural ceremony of the first-ever Durand Cup match (NEROCA FC vs TRAU FC) played in the North-Eastern state, a powerhouse in Indian football. The Raksha Mantri stated that the North-East has set new records in the fields of health, education, transport, agriculture and urban development in the last few years, which is a testament to the Government’s unwavering commitment to ensure holistic development of the region.

The Raksha Mantri added that the Government believes in ensuring progress of all States/Union Territories, stressing that special emphasis is being laid towards infrastructural development in far flung areas. “We have connected the remote areas with the mainland by providing connectivity,” he said. Shri Rajnath Singh asserted that the first Durand Cup match in Manipur, at a time when the country is celebrating ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’, symbolises the rise of a ‘New India’, in which every region and state is moving forward hand-in-hand to take the country to greater heights.

Shri Rajnath Singh voiced the Government’s resolve to encourage all kinds of sports, stating that due to the efforts in the last few years, India has scaled newer heights of success in major sporting events such as Olympics, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. Players from all

regions in the country are now getting equal opportunities, the results of which are now visible, he said. The Raksha Mantri lauded the Armed Forces, who besides protecting the Nation, are bringing medals for the country in different disciplines at these Games.

Highlighting a number of similarities between sportspersons and Armed Forces personnel, the Raksha Mantri said, “Dedication, commitment, loyalty, team work, discipline and the spirit of patriotism are some of the common traits in sportspersons and Armed Forces personnel. This is why there is a reflection of a soldier in a sportsperson and sportsperson in a soldier,” he said.

Manipur Chief Minister Shri N Biren Singh, Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Pande, GOC-in-C Eastern Command Lt Gen RP Kalita and GOC Spear Corps Lt Gen RC Tiwari were among those present during the inaugural ceremony. For the first time, Manipur is co-hosting the Durand Cup, one of the oldest football tournaments, along with Assam. This is the 131<sup>st</sup> edition of the tournament.

**ABB/GC/Savvy**