



## RSS' Objective Is Nation-Building: PM Modi Celebrates Its Centenary With Commemorative Coin

(Gns). Prime Minister Narendra Modi commended the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for its enduring dedication to nation-building. He acknowledged the organisation's role in nurturing and empowering numerous individuals over the years. His remarks came during the RSS centenary celebrations held in the national capital.

Highlighting the significance of Vijaydashami, PM Modi noted that the RSS's founding 100 years ago on this day was not coincidental. The festival symbolises triumphs such as good over evil and light over darkness. He emphasised that these values align with the RSS's mission since its inception.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) during its centenary celebrations in Delhi, acknowledging its role in nation-building and unveiling a commemorative stamp and Rs 100 coin featuring the National Emblem and Bharat Mata.

Founded by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar in Nagpur, Maharashtra, in 1925, the RSS focuses on national interests and comprises various sub-organisations working in harmony.

PM Modi stated, "Just as human civilisations flourish along the banks of mighty rivers, similarly,

hundreds of lives have blossomed and thrived along the banks and in the flow of the RSS. Since its formation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has

pursued a grand objective. That objective has been nation-building."

The Prime Minister paid homage to Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, founder of RSS, acknowledging his commitment to national service. He expressed grat-

itude for witnessing such a significant milestone as the centenary year of RSS.

Commemorative Coin and Stamp

During this event, PM Modi unveiled a commemorative postage stamp and coin celebrating RSS's contributions to India. The Rs 100 coin features the National Emblem on one side and an image of Bharat Mata on a lion on the other. This marks a first in independent India's currency history.

"... This Rs 100 coin has the National Emblem on one side, and on the other side, there is an image of Bharat Mata, seated on a lion in 'varad mudra', and swayamsevaks bowing down before her with dedication.

## Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel has taken a significant decision to promote Khadi, the symbol of Swadeshi

In line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's call of "Vocal for Local" and "Har Ghar Swadeshi - Ghar Ghar Swadeshi",

Starting this Gandhi Jayanti, 30% special market promotion assistance will be provided on Khadi and Polyvastra in the state.

Benefit applicable from 2nd October to 31st December 2025

Gandhinagar, 01 October 2025: In line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's call for "Vocal for Local" and "Har Ghar Swadeshi, Ghar Ghar Swadeshi," Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel has adopted an approach to provide substantial discounts on Khadi, the symbol of Swadeshi, starting this Gandhi Jayanti.

To realise Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Khadi, CM announced a 30% special market promotion assistance on the production cost of Swadeshi products — Khadi and Polyvastra — starting from

Gandhi Jayanti, 2nd October 2025. Consumers can avail this benefit as a rebate on Khadi purchases until 31st December 2025.

promotion assistance announced on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti is expected to boost sales of Khadi and Polyvastra prod-

will bring a financial boost to rural artisans producing and selling Khadi and Gram Udyog items this Diwali. The Khadi Board will



This decision to provide a discount on Khadi will promote wider production, sale, and use of indigenous goods, furthering the vision of an Atmanirbhar and prosperous India, aligning with the Prime Minister's motto "Khadi for Nation - Khadi for Fashion."

The 30% special market

ucts across the state. This includes items crafted by artisans of cooperatives and organisations, such as mat, carpet, silk patola, woollen sweaters, jerseys, shawls, and various Khadi ready-made garments and hand-crafted goods.

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel's decision

organise Khadi and Polyvastra exhibition-cum-sale fairs at multiple locations across the state this Gandhi Jayanti.

This Gandhi Jayanti, exhibition-cum-sale fairs will be held at Bharuch from 5-14 October 2025, Chikhli 5-14 November 2025 and Vapi 16-25 November 2025.

## Congress flags Trump's meetings with Pak army chief, questions Indian diplomacy

(Gns). Congress leader Jairam Ramesh Wednesday criticized US President Donald Trump's meetings with Pakistani Army Chief Asim Munir, calling it a "huge blow" to Indian diplomacy.

In a post on handle X, Ramesh pointed out that Munir's inflammatory remarks preceded the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 people. "President Trump's inclination towards that individual has remained consistent, against the backdrop of whose inflammatory, provocative, and communal

poison-laden statements the terrorist attack in Pahalgam occurred on April 22," Ramesh said.



"As far as Indian diplomacy is concerned, the era of sloganeering, showman-

ship, boasting, and preaching has now come to an end. The challenges are many—not only with the

his disciples have now been completely exposed," he added.

Trump's meetings with Munir have sparked controversy in India, with many questioning the implications for Indian diplomacy. Munir's presence at the White House has been seen as a significant development, given Pakistan's complex relationship with India.

The Congress party has been vocal about its concerns regarding the Modi government's diplomatic efforts, particularly with regard to the US.

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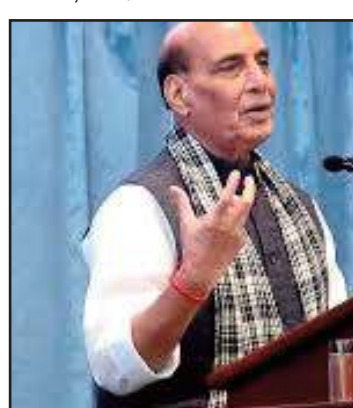
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## 25th Raising Day: HQ IDS reaffirms role in jointness & preparedness

(Gns). The Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) celebrated its 25th Raising Day here on Wednesday. Established on 1st October 2001, the HQ IDS, conceived as a permanent institution for promoting jointness and integration in the Armed Forces, has emerged as the fulcrum of tri-service synergy vanguard for new domains like Cyber and space, a key enabler in shaping India's integrated military preparedness.

In a statement issued here, the Ministry of Defence stated that over the years, HQ IDS has continued the trajectory and has supported the creation of new joint military structures, besides contributing to initiatives aimed at

establishing integrated theatre-level mechanisms. In capability development, HQ IDS has facilitat-



ed tri-service roadmaps and actively engaged with national research organisations and industry partners to accelerate indigenous solutions, in line with the vision of Atmanirbharta in defence.

While it provided a platform for the highest military and civilian leadership, it has also been instrumental

works at the bilateral and multilateral level. Making Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADRR) a priority, HQ IDS supported national disaster response through coordinated exercises and deployments, the statement said, adding the Combined Operational Review and Evaluation (CORE) Programme improved training and education in 2025.

At the same time, HQ IDS has advanced India's preparedness in emerging domains such as cyber, artificial intelligence (AI), and space by promoting cross-service integration, facilitating dialogue with scientific institutions and driving adoption of new technologies for military applications.

## Jaishankar greets Chinese counterpart, says India looks forward to stabilising ties

(Gns). Greeting his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi and the people of China on the occasion of the country's founding day, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday said he looked forward to stabilising and rebuilding the ties between New Delhi and Beijing.

Wednesday marks the 76th anniversary of the People's Republic of China, which was proclaimed by the Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong on October 1, 1949.

In a post on X, the EAM said, "Greetings to Politburo Member and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the Chinese people on

the occasion of the founding day of the People's Republic of China. Look forward to continuing our work to stabilise and rebuild our ties."

Earlier in September, during PM Modi's visit to China for the SCO Summit at Tianjin, PM Modi held talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the summit, during which both the leaders welcomed the positive momentum and steady progress between the two countries since their last meeting during the BRICS Summit in

October 2024.

The Prime Minister had underlined the importance of peace and tranquillity in border areas for continued development of bilateral relations. The two leaders noted with satisfaction the successful disengagement last year along the border areas and maintenance of peace since then.

They expressed commitment to a fair, reasonable, and mutually acceptable resolution of the boundary issue in the interest of their overall bilateral relations and the citizens of their countries.

They recognised the decisions taken by the two Special Representatives during their talks earlier this month, and agreed to further support their efforts.

The two leaders noted the need to strengthen people-to-people ties through direct flights and visa facilitation, building on the resumption of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra and tourist visa. On economic and trade relations, they recognised the role of their economies in stabilising world trade. They also underlined the need to proceed from a political and strategic direction to expand bilateral trade and investment ties and reduce the trade deficit.

## Cabinet approves Rs 6,957-crore project for 4-laning of Kalibor-Numaligarh highway in Assam

(Gns). The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Wednesday approved the widening and improvement of the existing Kalibor-Numaligarh section of NH-715 to 4 lanes, including implementation of wildlife-friendly measures

on the Kaziranga National Park (KNP) stretch in Assam, Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnav said.

The project, estimated to cost Rs 6,957 crore, will be developed on an Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC)



mode.

The total length of car-

riageway will be 85.675 km, and that of the elevated corridor passing through Kaziranga National Park will be 34.5 km.

There will be two Greenfield bypasses with the length of 11.5 km (Jakhlabandha) and 9.5 km (Bokakhat).

# WILDLIFE WEEK 2025

## Human Wildlife Co-existence

**Gujarat, at the forefront in guarding the precious wildlife heritage**

**Asiatic Lions, the pride of Gujarat: With an increase of 32.20%, the Lion population is now 891**

**The Government of Gujarat doubles the reimbursements for the damage caused by wildlife**

**Under Karuna Abhiyan 2025, 15,572 injured birds were successfully rescued**

**Breeding centres established across the state for the rehabilitation of endangered wildlife**

Let's pledge together to conserve and protect Wildlife

Forest and Environment Department, Govt. Of Gujarat

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"Say No to Plastic"



Editorial

# Nurturing Minds Fuels Growth

A nation is recognized by the presence of educated, rational and responsible citizens just as the strength, potential and purpose of an apple tree are inferred from ripe and nutritious apples and not from the hundreds of fruits that remain undeveloped , immature and insect-ridden. Good education right from the school determines a child's ability to become a respectable citizen. School education imparts wonderful knowledge gathered by our ancestors and predecessors over generations , spreading thousands of years.

The knowledge is acquired by tremendous enthusiasm, energy, labour and initiative. Every generation add to it and thus knowledge grows. 'Knowledge is dead.' But a school nurtures and serves living beings – the budding humans. Schools should transform young learners into future citizens who can contribute to the community with rational and logical thinking. The school system is not meant for rote learning but for training each individual to think and act independently. The pupils today should become part of society but with individual dignity and honour. Young pupils aerated with energy and creativity must have dreams.

Schools hold the responsibility, to guide, the tremendous energy of children into the right direction. Even if the goals are not achieved, the journey of life on the right path will give them immense gratification and happiness. Children should also learn the crucial lesson of managing failures. History tells us that it is a hard struggle to make the life of mankind better as a human being has a terrible capacity for destruction. It is important that the children are asked in schools to actually perform – writing a composition, translating a text , solving a mathematical problem , experimenting with physics' laws or with chemical reactions, practising sports events or performing an art.

Such performances ignite one's mind, strengthen the physique and generate confidence. The pupils start to ask questions. Undoubtedly one of the greatest problems plaguing our education system in India is that an enormous number of children do not learn to read or write or learn elementary mathematics at an early age. They cannot comprehend what they read. This creates impediments for their higher learning and employment. A large proportion of these pupils are first-generation learners.

They would not get any assistance from home. Schools are the only resort for them. But various reports, findings and surveys tell us grim stories. The ASER Survey 2010 raised a pertinent question: "Is the child who enrolled in Std 1 in 2006, and who has reached Std 5 today, in a better position than his or her counterpart who was in Std 5 in 2006?" The findings were not at all comfortable. Again, in 2025, the ASER Survey 2024 noted that "children in government schools in Std 5, apart from a decline in reading levels between 2010 and 2012," had reading levels that over time are 'low' and 'stuck'. "Percentage of children in Std V who can read Std II level text is only 48." This figure remains almost the same since 2010 when it was about 50 per cent.

ASER 2024 further reported: "The gap in reading levels between children enrolled in government schools and private schools seems to be growing over time." The performance of children in number recognition, counting and simple arithmetic is no better. In essence, school education is in a dismal condition though the performance varies from state to state. It indicates rote learning still dominates and shaping of a child's life is a distant prospect. A large section of children remains undeveloped. The capacity to read, write and count, i.e. basic education, has a powerful effect on the quality of life of citizens. Written elements like government notices and newspapers play crucial roles in modern society. The ability to understand written information is essential to live with dignity. "Being illiterate is like being imprisoned and school education opens a door through which people can escape incarceration" (Amartya Sen).

Illiteracy generates insecurity and alienation. However, expansion of basic school education in India is remarkably slow. Data reveals the adult literacy rate for ages 15 years and above was merely 48.5 per cent in 1991 i.e. half the adult population was illiterate. It has now risen to 77 per cent in 2023 after reaching 61 per cent in 2001 and 69.3 per cent in 2011. It took almost 30 years to increase 30 percentage points in literacy. Women are particularly vulnerable with only 70 per cent adult women being literate now as against 85 per cent of adult men. This shows disparity and lack of opportunity for women.

Good schooling for young women in our country will substantially enhance the voice and power of women in families as well as in society and economic activities of the nation. School education is the prime ally of poor families. Basic education for them has become essential to tide over their precarious monetary situations. They would not be able to participate in economic activities if they cannot read and write. Even the poorest of the families perceive the importance of education and send children to neighbourhood schools. However, the poor must have opportunities to access good education – 'the weaker should be given more chances than the stronger'.

But the reality is starkly different. The chances of getting free education in government schools by the poor are getting reduced. In ten years, from 2014-15 to 2023-24, 89,441 government schools in India have closed down, an 8 per cent decline. It is conveyed that most closures resulted from a merger policy often called 'rationalisation'. The primary reason for merging these schools was low enrollment. This requires serious review of why enrolment in government schools is decreasing. On the contrary, the number of private schools during the same time period increased by 42,944, a 14.9 per cent rise. The cost of education in private schools is nine times higher than in government schools. This state of affairs obviously denies poor children easy access to education.

Are all children in India going to school? Enrolment for 6 to 14 year-olds which was 96.7 per cent in 2014 has increased to 98.1 per cent in 2024. However, this almost near universal enrollment over a decade does not convert to full overall literacy, which is 80.9 per cent for those aged seven and above. Drop outs at all levels – 2 per cent at primary, 5 per cent at upper primary and 14 per cent at secondary levels – is a major hindrance for full literacy. Another report suggests that an alarming number of over two crore children dropped out of school from classes 1 to 8 in just three years from 2021 to 2024. Premature departure of students from the education system represents significant wastage of resources. Students who have before completing at least secondary education are more likely to be pushed to low paying.

US President Donald Trump's declaration that Ukraine can reclaim all of its original territory marks one of the most striking ~ and bizarre ~ reversals of his presidency. For months he signaled that any settlement of the war would require Kyiv to surrender land to Russia. Now he speaks of a full restoration of Ukraine's borders and even hints at possibilities beyond them.

The statement, delivered after talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, suggests that Mr Trump sees a fleeting moment of opportunity ~ political, military, and economic ~ to pressure Moscow. The timing is telling. Russia's economy is showing strain from

years of sanctions, with key sectors squeezed and financial reserves thinning. Even as the Kremlin insists it remains resilient, signs of tension are evident. Mr Trump, ever attuned to leverage, now calls Russia a "paper tiger," framing it as weaker than its bluster suggests. By urging Ukraine to act, he is inviting Kyiv to exploit a window where Moscow's vulnerabilities might outweigh its capacity for escalation.

For Ukraine, this sudden encouragement is a morale booster and a strategic opening. Mr Zelenskyy greeted the comments as a welcome shift, understanding that American backing ~ especially from a President who has often questioned for-

## Remarkable U-Turn

eign commitments ~ remains critical. The prospect of additional air defences, drones, and other security guarantees after the war reinforces the



sense that Washington will remain engaged, even if Mr Trump avoids the open-ended pledges of his predecessor.

Europe, too, must read the moment carefully. Mr Trump's simultaneous call for NATO nations to be ready to shoot down Russian aircraft breaching

ed Russian incursions, will likely see this as validation of their warnings and a green light to respond more decisively. With European leaders phasing out Russian energy imports and boosting defence budgets, the transatlantic alliance appears more unified than at any point in recent years.

Yet, the risks are as large as the opportunity. Mr Trump's history of unpredictable diplomacy ~ from sudden summits to abrupt policy pivots ~ means today's encouragement could become tomorrow's bargain. Only weeks ago he floated ideas of land swaps and ceasefire deals. If negotiations resume, he may again reach for a dramatic deal, leaving allies

## Centres of Excellence Driving Innovation in Horticulture in Gujarat

**Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference in Mehsana to Showcase Gujarat's Horticulture Achievements**  
**The Centre of Excellence at Vadrad, Sabarkantha, has produced and distributed more than 14 million seedlings since last 10 years**

Gandhinagar, 1 October 2025: The Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), has been providing strong support for the establishment of Centres of Excellence (CoEs) for fruits and vegetables. Under MIDH, a total of 58 CoEs have been approved across various states in the country, out of which Gujarat has 4 CoEs for fruits and vegetables.

Government of India has entered into bilateral cooperation agreement with Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand for establishment of CoEs. Besides, CoEs are also established with technical assistance from Indian Research Institutes such as Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Delhi.

The objective of CoEs is

to serve as hubs for demonstration, training, and dissemination of the latest technologies in horticultural production. They play an important role in promoting capacity building, supplying planting materials, and supporting farmers in adopting modern technologies. By bridging the gap between research and field-level practices, CoEs ensure higher productivity, better quality, and long-term sustainability in the horticulture sector.

The CoE encourages innovation and promotes self-reliance while also generating economic benefits for farming communities. They showcase modern agricultural practices and provide hands-on training to farmers, entrepreneurs, and extension workers. Through these efforts, CoEs have become a key component in transforming India's horticulture sector.

In North Gujarat, there are two CoEs for the horticulture development aims for works on applied research, crop standardisation, and technology adop-

tion. The centres also provide technical advisory



services and produce quality planting materials to enhance crop productivity.

Since its inception in 2015, the Centre of Excellence for Protected Cultivation and Precision Farming on Vegetables at Vadrad, Sabarkantha, has carried out several impactful initiatives. Under its planting material programme, the centre has produced more than 14 million vegetable seedlings, supporting large-scale

adoption of improved varieties. Every year, the cen-

tre organises 18 frontline demonstrations to showcase advanced cultivation practices, along with training programmes and exposure visits that have benefited more than 1,13,455 farmers and officers. During these visits, participants gain first-hand experience of innovative techniques. In addition, the centre conducts residential training programmes to strengthen knowledge sharing, and regularly

organises workshops as well as Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes. Collectively, these activities have made the Centre of Excellence a hub of technology transfer and skill development for the horticulture sector.

The CoE also focused on large-scale vegetable seedling production. These seedlings had high germination rates, in some cases up to 90%, ensuring better productivity for farmers.

The infrastructure of the 'Centre of Excellence of Vegetables and Citrus' in Visnagar, Mehsana district, includes modern protected cultivation facilities. It has two Net houses spread over 1,800 sq. m., four poly tunnels covering 1,800 sq. m., and a fan-pad poly house of 1,100 sq.m. for controlled crop production. The centres test new lemon varieties that are suited to the local climate. They raise healthy and disease-free seedlings and demonstrate modern farming technologies such as drip irrigation, fertigation, and protected cultivation.

To strengthen farmers' knowledge, this centre has training programmes covering diverse topics, including citrus crop production, nutrient management, pruning, nursery management, pest control, and organic farming. Also, specialised training is offered for landless farm labourers, enhancing their livelihood opportunities. These initiatives provide farmers with practical knowledge and support them in adopting effective cultivation practices.

The upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (North Gujarat, Mehsana district), scheduled for 9-10 October, will showcase horticultural development and networking opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs in North Gujarat. Through wide-ranging activities, these CoEs in North Gujarat continue to play a transformative role in advancing horticulture, empowering farmers, and contributing to the vision of a modern and self-reliant agriculture sector.

## Exercise in Futility

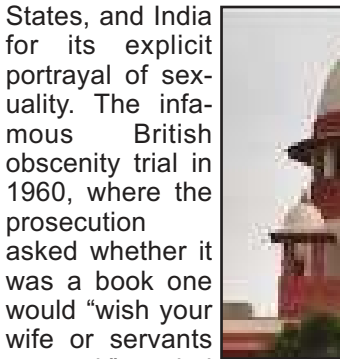
When the Supreme Court of India recently dismissed a petition to ban Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses, it sent out a powerful message: book banning is a relic of the past. In an age where information travels faster than ever before, censorship of literature is both futile and regressive. What once may have been enforced by governments with confiscations and customs checks is now undone by a simple download link, a digital library, or a shared PDF file. The attempt to control the spread of ideas by banning books is like trying to stop a flood with bare hands.

It is a battle already lost. The case of The Satanic Verses epitomizes the futility of book banning. Published in 1988, Rushdie's novel sparked a global firestorm. It was accused of blasphemy, banned in several Muslim-majority countries, and outlawed in India within days of release. Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against the author, making Rushdie a target for decades. Translators and publishers faced violent reprisals, and Rushdie himself survived an assassination attempt as recently as 2022. Yet despite the bans and threats, the book has remained in circulation worldwide. This pattern repeats itself across history. In South Asia, Taslima Nasrin's Lajja (1993) was banned in Bangladesh for allegedly insulting religious sentiments.

The ban, far from silencing her, propelled the book to international fame. It was translated into more than 20 languages and became a symbol of the struggle for free expression in the face

of authoritarian control. Readers who might never have heard of Nasrin rushed to find her work precisely because the government tried to erase it. The lesson is simple: the forbidden fruit is often the sweetest. The history of banned books is long and diverse. D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover was prohibited in Britain, the United

States, and India for its explicit portrayal of sexuality. The infamous British obscenity trial in 1960, where the prosecution asked whether it was a book one would "wish your wife or servants to read," ended



with an acquittal that reshaped the cultural landscape. Today, Lawrence's novel is part of the canon, studied in classrooms and celebrated as literature.

The ban, once taken so seriously, now seems absurd. The Catholic Church's Index Librorum Prohibitorum ~ a list of forbidden books maintained from 1559 until 1966 ~ shows how censorship was once systematized. Works by Galileo Galilei, Jean-Paul Sartre, and even Voltaire were condemned. Yet many of these writers now stand at the centre of world intellectual heritage. The Church abandoned the list not because the books became less controversial, but because it became clear that prohibition in an age of mass printing was impossible to enforce. The same truth applies today with digital media, only magnified a thousandfold. Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code (2003) demonstrates

remains one of the most widely read thrillers of all time. The attempt to silence only amplified its allure. Globally, there are countless examples. George Orwell's Animal Farm, a satirical allegory of authoritarianism, was banned in the Soviet Union and several Eastern Bloc countries. Yet the book not only survived but became a timeless critique of political repression. In the United States, Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird and Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn have faced challenges for their depictions of race.

Ironically, these works that once offended sensibilities are now pillars in debates about justice, equality, and America's moral struggles. Even fantasy fiction has not been spared. J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series was banned in some schools and communities in the United States for allegedly

promoting witchcraft. In the Middle East, it faced restrictions for similar reasons. But the bans only intensified its mystique. Today, Harry Potter is a global cultural phenomenon, its readers numbering in the hundreds of millions. The children who were once told not to read it are now adults passing the books to their own children.



James Joyce's Ulysses is another example of how censorship ultimately collapses under the weight of literary merit. Once branded obscene and banned in both the United States and the United Kingdom, the book was smuggled in by determined readers and publishers. Today, it is hailed as one of the greatest modernist novels of the 20th century. The world remembers the bans as footnotes; the book itself lives on as a milestone of literature. These examples underline two truths: first, that banning a book is almost always an admission of fear ~ fear of new ideas, of dissent, of cultural change; and second, that bans are inherently counterproductive. What is forbidden becomes desirable.

What is censored gains power. In the age of the internet, the futility of bans is even clearer. A book that is prohibited in one country can be purchased online

from another. PDFs circulate freely, often within hours of a ban being announced. Social media creates buzz around the controversy, ensuring more people hear of the book than would have without censorship. The tools of suppression are overwhelmed by the tools of sharing. Governments that still attempt bans appear increasingly out of step with reality, as though they are trying to trap ideas in a box that no longer exists. The argument for banning books is usually couched in noble terms: protecting society from obscenity,

shielding faith from insult, preventing unrest. But these rationales ignore the intelligence and agency of readers.

Readers are not passive sponges; they can question, reject, and debate what they encounter. Shielding them from ideas is both patronizing and undemocratic. The true test of a mature society is not in its ability to silence writers but in its willingness to engage with them ~ even when their ideas offend. More importantly, book banning stifles growth. Literature thrives on discomfort. The books that provoke outrage are often the ones that force societies to confront uncomfortable truths. Lajja challenged sexual repression, The Satanic Verses pushed boundaries on faith and identity. To suppress these works is to deny society the chance to wrestle with its own contradictions.

What history shows, time and again, is that books outlive bans.

The Index of Forbidden Books is gone, but Voltaire remains. The obscenity trials are forgotten, but Lawrence and Joyce endure. Nasrin is still read; Rushdie is still debated; Rowling is still celebrated. The bans, meanwhile, survive only as historical embarrassments ~ a record of fear, intolerance, and resistance to change. As India's Supreme Court has now affirmed in Rushdie's case, the age of banning books should be behind us. The information superhighway has changed the game forever. To ban a book today is not just futile; it is an act of willful blindness to the realities of the digital era. If a work offends, the solution is dialogue, debate, and counter-narrative ~ not censorship. For every attempt to silence, there will be readers who seek.

For every ban, there will be a backchannel of circulation. For every act of suppression, there will be an act of resistance. The written word is resilient. It slips through cracks, leaps across borders, and endures in ways its censors cannot imagine. Banning books is not a sign of strength but of insecurity. It does not protect societies; it infantilizes them. In the long run, books remain, ideas survive, and bans are consigned to history's dustbin. In the age of the information superhighway, to attempt censorship is to fight a war already lost. The only path forward is openness ~ the courage to read, to argue, and to let ideas, however uncomfortable, compete freely in the marketplace of thought.



## RBI Keeps Repo Rate Unchanged At 5.5%

(Gns).

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously voted to keep the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 5.5%, Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced on Wednesday.

The committee adopted a "wait-and-watch" approach to assess the impact of previous policy actions and gain more clarity on the economic outlook before making its next move.

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra announced that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) made a unanimous decision to maintain the policy rate at 5.5 per cent, following an assessment of changing macroeconomic conditions.

Consequently, the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate remains at 5.25%, while the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate are unchanged at 5.75%. The MPC also decided to maintain its "neutral" stance.

Inflation Eases, But Growth Headwinds Emerge

The decision to pause was supported by a significantly improved inflation outlook.

Governor

Malhotra highlighted that the average headline inflation year has been revised downwards to 2.6%, a sharp drop from the 3.7% projected in June. Core inflation is also expected to remain contained.

However, the committee noted emerging risks to economic growth. While domestic economic activity remains resilient-buoyed by a favourable monsoon, lower inflation, and previous monetary easing-external factors pose a threat. The Governor stated that global uncertainties and "tariff-related develop-

## Russian President Putin's Visit To India Expected In Early December

(Gns).

Russian President Vladimir Putin is anticipated to visit India in December, as revealed by Sergey Lavrov at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This visit, his first since the onset of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Sources indicate that President Putin is likely to be in India during the first week of December for the 23rd annual India-Russia bilateral summit. Although official confirmation is pending, further details are expected soon. According to an NDTV report, the visit is tentatively scheduled for 5-6 December.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to visit India in December to enhance cooperation in trade, military, and global forums like SCO and BRICS. This would mark Putin's first trip to India since the onset of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

BRICS, as confirmed by Sergey Lavrov at the UNGA. This visit, his first

importance of bilateral relations and mutual interests. Deputy NSA Pavan



since the Russia-Ukraine conflict, will address sectors including trade, defence, finance, health-care, and high technology; preparations are underway, led by Deputy NSA Pavan Kapoor.

The India-Russia Annual Summit, a cornerstone of their strategic partnership, was established in 2000. It alternates between the two nations but faced interruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The summit underscores the

Kapoor has confirmed that preparations for President Putin's visit are actively underway. The upcoming summit will address various sectors including trade, defence, finance, health-care, and high technology. These discussions aim to strengthen ties and explore new avenues for collaboration.

Extensive Bilateral Agenda

During a press briefing on 28 September at the UNGA's 80th session,

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov highlighted the extensive bilateral agenda. He stated: "We have a very extensive bilateral agenda, trade, military, technical cooperation, finance, humanitarian matters, healthcare, high-tech, artificial intelligence, and of course close coordination at the international level within the SCO, BRICS and bilaterally."

The high-level visit was initially discussed during National Security Adviser Ajit Doval's trip to Moscow in August. Although dates were not finalised then, this dialogue laid the groundwork for future engagements between both countries.

This anticipated visit by President Putin signifies a renewed focus on strengthening Indo-Russian relations across multiple domains. Both nations are keen on advancing their strategic partnership through comprehensive dialogues and collaborative efforts.

## Mohsin Naqvi Apologises To BCCI, Heads To Lahore Amid Asia Cup Trophy Row: Sources

(Gns).

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi has apologised to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for leaving the Dubai Cricket Stadium on September 28 with the trophy won by the Suryakumar Yadav-led India team in the T20 Asia Cup 2025 final.

According to a report by Sports Tak, Naqvi said, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi apologized to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for removing the T20 Asia Cup 2025 trophy from Dubai, refusing to return it or the medals to the Indian team; the BCCI plans to file an official complaint with the International Cricket Council (ICC).

Earlier this week, he had insisted that the trophy would be handed over to India only if captain Suryakumar Yadav came to

versy continues. On September 30, Naqvi had also refused to congratulate the winning team their trophy:

"This is one thing which I have never seen. Since I started playing cricket, I have been following cricket. That a champion team is denied a trophy. That too, a hard-earned one. It's not like it happened easily. But it was a hard-earned victory. We have been here since the 4th, and played a game today. Two back-to-back good games in two days. I feel we deserved it. And I can't say anything more. I think I have summed it up really well."

In response to Naqvi's controversial actions of retaining the trophy and medals after Pakistan's five-wicket defeat in the final-their third consecutive loss to India at the event-the BCCI plans to file an official complaint with the International Cricket Council (ICC).



late India during the ACC meeting, following their triumph over Pakistan.

"I was standing there as a cartoon without any reason. There was no information to ACC in writing that the Indian team would not accept it from me."

Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav also criticised the ACC for denying

## At least 19 dead as 6.7-magnitude earthquake strikes Philippines

(Gns).

At least 19 people were killed and dozens injured as a 6.9-magnitude earthquake hit Cebu province in the central Philippines on Tuesday night, local media reported Wednesday.

Authorities updated the death toll to 19, amid ongoing rescue efforts and fears that the number could rise further.

Citing the provincial information office, local newspaper SunStar Cebu reported that 13 people were killed in Bogo City, the quake's epicenter, while four others died in San Remigio town in northern Cebu, Xinhua news agency reported.

The municipality of



Medellin in Cebu reported at least one death and multiple injuries, along with damage to two bridges.

SunStar Cebu added that victims of the quake continued to pour into Cebu Provincial Hospital (Bogo City), straining medical staff.

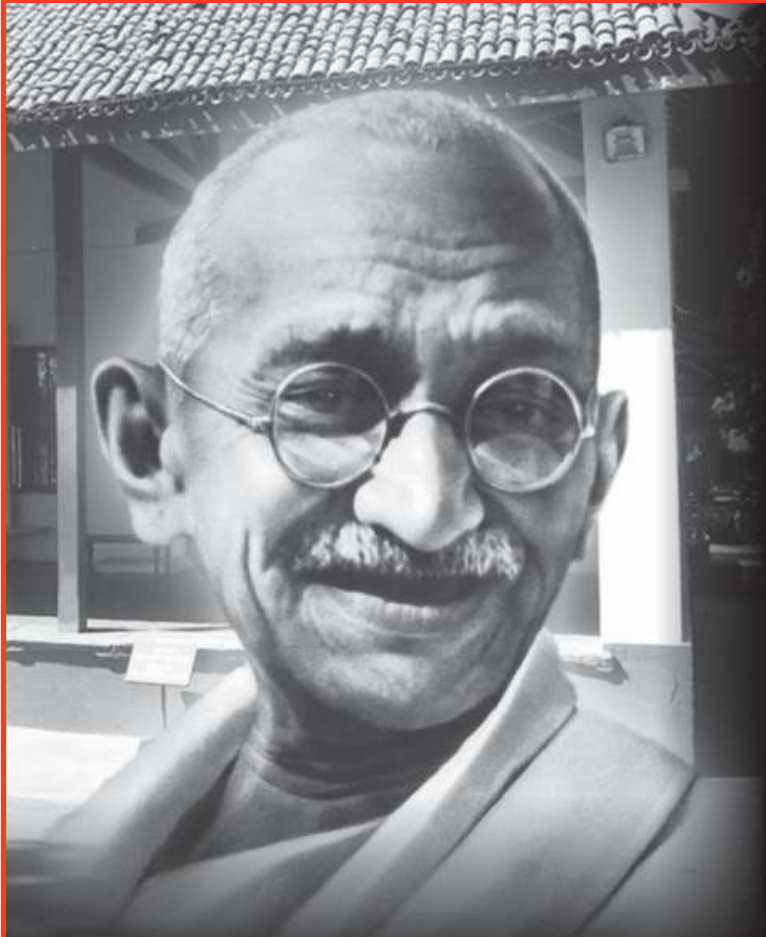
The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology initially reported that a 6.7-magnitude earthquake struck Cebu province at 9:59 p.m. local

time on Tuesday. The institute later revised the magnitude to 6.9, adding that the quake struck at a depth of 5 kilometers, approximately 19 kilometers north-east of Bogo City.

The tremor was also felt in many neighboring provinces in the central Philippines, as well as some regions in the southern Philippines.

A number of village roads also sustained damage.

The quake caused power lines to trip, leading to outages across Cebu and nearby central islands, though power was restored shortly after midnight in Cebu and four other major central islands.



## દાર્શી આત્માનો નાશ થાય છે. દાર્શી લતથી ગાંડપણ, વ્યાભિચાર, જુગાર વગેરે જેવી બદીઓનો શિકાર બનાય છે. જો આપણે કોઈને દાર્શી ખરાબ લત છોડાવીએ તો તેને જેલમાંથી મુક્ત કરાવ્યા જેવું છે. માણસને દાર્શી બિલકુલ જરૂર નથી. એ જગજાહેર છે. દાર્શિયો સંયમ ન રાખી શકે તેનાથી કોણ અજાણ છે? તેથી, મને આશા છે કે વિવેકથી, જોર-જુલમ કર્યા વિના, સમજૂતીકર ‘દાર્શનું વ્યસન છોડાવવાનો પ્રયત્ન દરેક વ્યક્તિ કરે.’

### -મહાત્મા ગાંધી



## નિયામક, નશાબંધી અને આબકારી, ગુજરાત રાજ્ય

તા. ૦૨-૧૦-૨૦૨૫ થી તા. ૦૮-૧૦-૨૦૨૫ સુધી નશાબંધી સપ્તાહની ઉજવણી કરે છે.



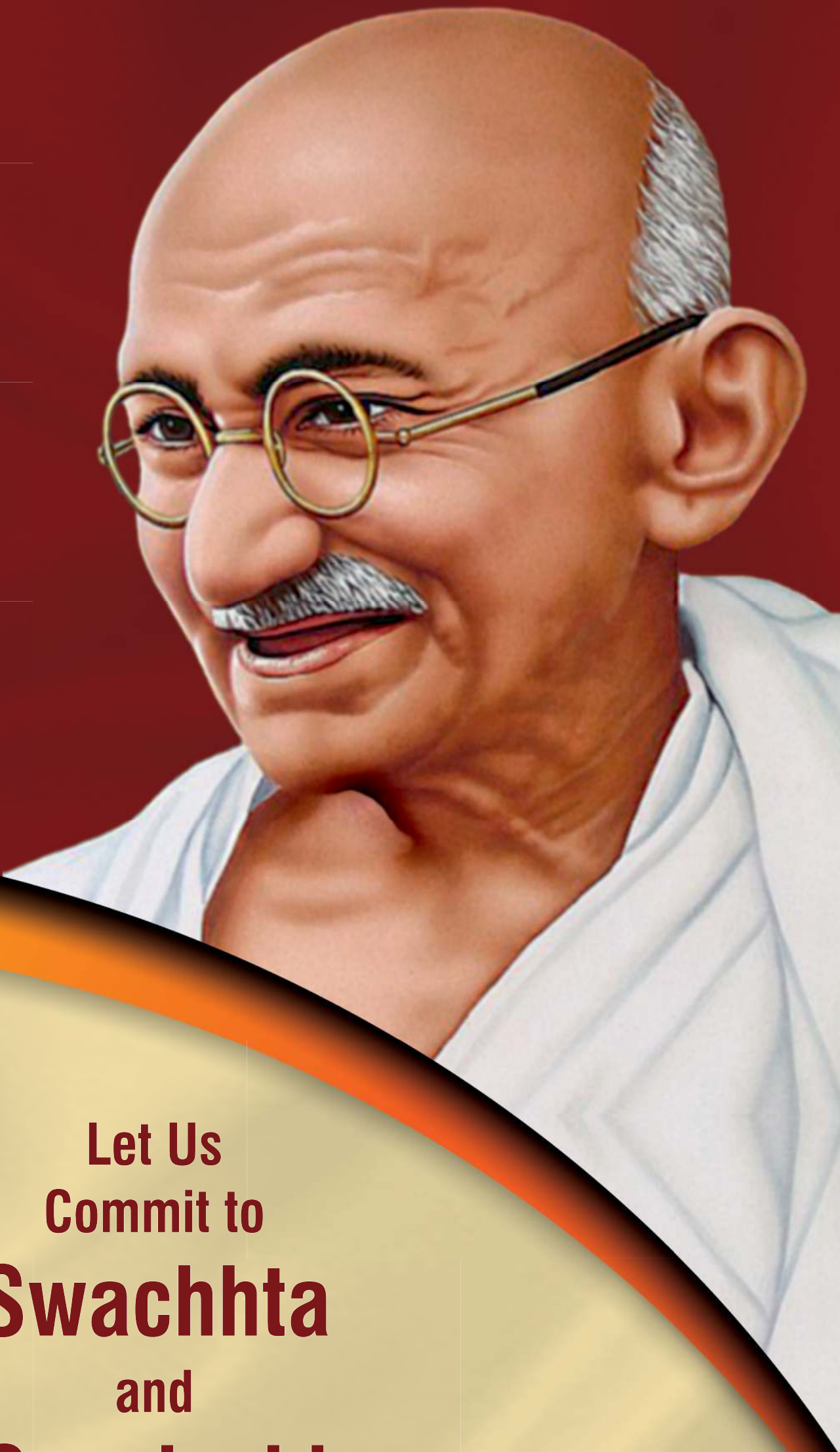
સંદેશો		
<p>ગુજરાત સરકાર દ્વારા ૦૨-૦૮ ઓક્ટોબર, ૨૦૨૫ દરમિયાન ‘નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ’ મનાવાઈ રહ્યું છે તે સ્તુત્ય પગલું છે.</p> <p>મહાત્મા ગાંધીના સિદ્ધાંતોને સમર્પિત ગુજરાત રાજ્ય આરંભથી જ સંપૂર્ણ નશાબંધીની નીતિ પર ચાલવું આવ્યું છે. ગુજરાતી પ્રજાની સુખાકારી, સામાજિક સુરક્ષા અને આર્થિક સમૃદ્ધિના ફળદાયી પરિણામ પાછળ નશાબંધી એક મોટું પરિણામ છે.</p> <p>ગુજરાત સરકાર દ્વારા આરંભાયેલી નશાબંધી મુંબેશ વધુ અસરકારક નીવડે એવી શુભકામના.</p> <p><b>શ્રીમતી દ્રૌપદી મુર્મુ</b> રાષ્ટ્રપતિ, ભારત</p>	<p>ગુજરાત સરકાર દ્વારા ૦૨-૦૮ ઓક્ટોબર, ૨૦૨૫ દરમિયાન ‘નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ’ મનાવાઈ રહ્યું છે તે સ્તુત્ય પગલું છે.</p> <p>મહાત્મા ગાંધીના સિદ્ધાંતોને સમર્પિત ગુજરાત રાજ્ય આરંભથી જ સંપૂર્ણ નશાબંધીની નીતિ પર ચાલવું આવ્યું છે. ગુજરાતી પ્રજાની સુખાકારી, સામાજિક સુરક્ષા અને આર્થિક સમૃદ્ધિના ફળદાયી પરિણામ પાછળ નશાબંધી એક મોટું પરિણામ છે.</p> <p>ગુજરાત સરકાર દ્વારા આરંભાયેલી નશાબંધી મુંબેશ વધુ અસરકારક નીવડે એવી શુભકામના.</p> <p><b>નરેન્દ્રભાઈ મોદી</b> વડાપ્રધાનશ્રી, ભારત</p>	<p>મહાત્મા ગાંધીજીના આદર્શોથી પ્રેરિત નશાબંધીની નીતિ ગુજરાત રાજ્યની સામાજિક અને નૈતિક પરંપરાનું પ્રતિબિંબ છે. આ માત્ર કાયદાકીય વ્યવસ્થા નથી, પરંતુ નાગરિકોના સુખ-સમૃદ્ધિ, આરોગ્યનું રક્ષણ અને સમાજના નળના વર્ગોના કલ્યાણ માટેની નૈતિક પ્રતિબદ્ધતા છે.</p> <p>૨ થી ૮ ઓક્ટોબર, ૨૦૨૫ દરમિયાન ઉજવવામાં આવનાર નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ ગાંધીજીના મૂલ્યોને યાદ કરવાની વધુ એક સુંદર તક છે. આ અભિયાનને સફળ બનાવવા માટે નાગરિકોની સહભાગિતા અને જનજાગૃતિ અત્યંત આવશ્યક છે.</p> <p>આ અવસરે હું ગુજરાત સરકાર અને રાજ્યના તમામ નાગરિકોને હાર્દિક શુભેચ્છાઓ પાઠવું છું. આ અભિયાનથી સમાજમાં વધુ સ્વસ્થ, સુમેળસભર અને મૂલ્ય આધારિત જીવન માટે સૌને પ્રેરણા મળે તેવી મારી શુભકામનાઓ.</p> <p><b>આચાર્ય દેવવ્રત</b> રાજ્યપાલશ્રી, ગુજરાત રાજ્ય</p>
<p>સમાજમાં એક નજર કરીએ તો જોઈ શકાય છે કે સ્વ-પ્રસજ્ઞતા માટે શરૂ કરવામાં આવેલું વ્યસન અનેક વિપરિત પરિણામોનું કારક બની રહે છે. ઘણા લોકો વ્યસનને વ્યક્તિગત નળનાઈની સમસ્યા માને છે. પૂરતી ઇચ્છાશક્તિના અભાવને કારણે વ્યસન પર નિયંત્રણ લાવવું કઠિન બને છે. વ્યસનનો અતિરેક વ્યક્તિના માનસ, વ્યવહારિક જીવન અને સંબંધો પર ગંભીર અસર પહોંચાડી શકે છે. રાષ્ટ્રપિતા મહાત્મા ગાંધીએ ભારત ભ્રમણ કર્યું તે સમયે તેમણે પ્રજાની વ્યથાને અનુભવી અને દેશના નાગરિકો સ્વચ્છતા, સાદગી અને નશામુક્તિના માર્ગ તરફ વળે એ માટે હાકલ પણ કરી હતી. નાગરિકો સ્વચ્છતા જાળવે અને સાથે સાથે વ્યસનથી પણ દૂર રહે તેનો આગ્રહ માનનીય વડાપ્રધાન શ્રી નરેન્દ્રભાઈ મોદી પણ હંમેશાં રાખતા આવ્યા છે.</p> <p>ગુજરાતની સ્થાપનાથી જ રાજ્યમાં નશાબંધી-દાર્શનિકો કડક અમલ અસ્તિત્વમાં છે. ગાંધીજીનું ગુજરાત નશા-દાર્શી બંધીથી મુક્ત રહે એવા પ્રયાસો અને કાયદાકીય અમલ કરાયા તે આવકાર્ય છે. નશાબંધી અને આબકારી ખાતા દ્વારા મહાત્મા ગાંધીના જન્મદિન તા. ૨ ઓક્ટોબરથી તા. ૮ ઓક્ટોબર સુધી “નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ”ની ઉજવણી કરવામાં આવી રહી છે, તેનું આયોજન અભિનંદનીય છે. ગુજરાતમાં નશામુક્ત અને તંદુરસ્ત સમાજના નિર્માણ સાથે વિકાસની વાટને વધુ બળવત્તર બનાવવા સરકાર અને સામાજિક સંસ્થાઓના પ્રયાસોને બહોળી સફળતા મળે એવી શુભકામના સાથે કાર્યક્રમમાં સહભાગી સર્વે હિતદારકોને અભિનંદન.</p> <p><b>ભૂપેન્દ્રભાઈ પટેલ</b> મુખ્યમંત્રીશ્રી, ગુજરાત રાજ્ય</p>	<p>વ્યસન એ સમાજ માટે એક એવી ગંભીર સમસ્યા છે, જે દેશના સુવાદન અને પરિવારોને ખૂબ મોટું નુકસાન પહોંચાડે છે. આ પડકારને પહોંચી વળવા માટે, નશાબંધી અને આબકારી વિભાગ દ્વારા દર વર્ષે યોજાતો નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ એક અત્યંત પ્રેરણાદાયક અને મહત્વપૂર્ણ પહેલ છે.</p> <p>મને એ જાણીને ખૂબ જ આનંદ થયો છે કે નશાબંધી સપ્તાહ દરમિયાન આપના વિભાગે સમાજમાં નશાબંધી પ્રત્યે જાગૃતિ લાવવા માટે વિવિધ કાર્યક્રમોનું આયોજન કર્યું છે. ખાસ કરીને, “નશામુક્ત ભારત અભિયાન” અંતર્ગત કરવામાં આવેલા પ્રયાસો પ્રશંસનીય છે. આ પ્રકારના કાર્યક્રમોથી સમાજમાં સકારાત્મક પરિવર્તન આવશે અને સુવાનો વ્યસનમુક્તિ માટે પ્રેરિત થશે.</p> <p>હું આશા રાખું છું કે આપના વિભાગના નિષ્ઠાવાન પ્રયાસોથી આપણે સૌ એક સ્વસ્થ, તંદુરસ્ત અને વ્યસનમુક્ત સમાજનું નિર્માણ કરી શકીશું.</p> <p>આપની સમગ્ર ટીમની મહેનત અને સમર્પણ બદલ હું હૃદયપૂર્વક આભાર વ્યક્ત કરું છું અને ભવિષ્યના આવા તમામ પ્રયાસો માટે મારી શુભેચ્છાઓ પાઠવું છું.</p> <p><b>હર્ષભાઈ સંઘવી</b> રાજ્યકક્ષાના ગૃહમંત્રીશ્રી, ગુજરાત રાજ્ય</p>	





# Swadeshi Vrat is the Maha Vrat of our Era – Mahatma Gandhi

Paying Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi  
on His Birth Anniversary



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Hon'ble Chief Minister, Gujarat

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the Father of the Nation

Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025  
Time: 8:00 AM  
Venue: Kirti Mandir, Porbandar

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