



# Congress betrayed Bodoland, BJP brought lasting peace: PM

**Guwahati, (GNS):** The Prime Minister said that due to bad weather, he could not reach Kokrajhar and was virtually on Friday, accused the Congress of betraying Bodoland for years. He said that for decades, the Bodoland region witnessed false promises and paper agreements made by the Congress, while the BJP-NDA government has made sincere efforts for lasting peace and development in the region.

The Prime Minister said that Kokrajhar and the surrounding areas have witnessed difficult times of violence and unrest in the past decades, when the sound of bombs



and bullets echoed in the hills. However, today the situation is changing and a new era of peace and development has begun in the region.

He said that the BJP-NDA "double engine"

government is continuously working to preserve Assam's heritage and accelerate its development. In this regard, the foundation stone and inauguration of various development projects worth over 4,500 crore were laid in Kokrajhar on Friday. Of this, over 1,100 crore will be spent on road development in the Bodoland region. The Prime Minister said that the promises made under the 2020 Accord are being consistently fulfilled. The Bodo language has been granted associate official language status, and a special development package of ₹1,500 crore has been provided for the Bodoland region. A medical college has also been opened in Kokrajhar.

Paying tribute to the great figures of the Bodo community, he said that he had the opportunity to witness the rich Bodo culture in Guwahati a few weeks ago. He praised the Bodo community for preserving its language and culture.

The Prime Minister said that the Congress party is a shop of false promises and has no intention of fulfilling them, whereas the BJP-NDA government has made sincere efforts to fulfill everything it has promised. He said that today Assam is writing a new chapter of peace and development.

**Afghanistan retaliates against Pakistan: Military bases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa targeted**

**Islamabad (GNS):** The Afghan Defense Ministry claimed that the Afghan Air Force carried out airstrikes in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region on Friday. The ministry said the action was in response to attacks by the Pakistani military the previous night. The Ministry of Defense said in a statement posted on social media that Pakistani military installations in the Kohat area were targeted, as well as a military fort. However, no official confirmation of casualties or injuries has been made. Pakistan carried out airstrikes in the Afghan capital, Kabul, and Kandahar on Thursday night. According to Taliban officials, six people were killed and 15 injured, including women and children, and several homes were damaged.

Pakistan attacked an Afghan fuel depot

According to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, Pakistan attacked a fuel depot belonging to the private airline Kam Air, which supplies fuel to civilian aircraft and UN aircraft. He warned that the attack would be retaliated.

Meanwhile, Pakistani security officials told Reuters that the operation targeted targets of the Pakistani Taliban (TTP).

**The US has changed the H-1B visa process: selection will now be based on salary**

**New Delhi (GNS):** The United States has made a major change to the H-1B visa process. Beneficiaries will now be selected based on salary rather than a random lottery. To achieve this, the US immigration agency has created a new system, Form I-129, which will be mandatory from April 1, 2026.

Companies will be required to provide job-related information in applications for foreign workers. This will increase the chances of more experienced and high-paid professionals getting visas than before.

Under the new system, applicants will be divided into four pay levels. The higher the pay level, the more opportunities a position has in the selection process. For example, a Level 4 candidate will receive four opportunities, while a Level 1 candidate will receive only one. Form I-129 is used to invite temporary workers to the United States. The US Department of Labor sets a standard salary for each occupation and city. Based on this, jobs are classified from Level 1 to Level 4.

## After row, TMC team wanted to meet President but was denied time

**New Delhi, (GNS):** In an unusual development, TMC MPs had sought an appointment with President Droupadi Murmu to apprise her about the welfare initiatives taken by the Bengal govt. However, Rashtrapati Bhavan turned down their request citing "paucity of time", as per sources.

This comes after a political row erupted over allegations of protocol lapses during Murmu's Bengal visit on March 7.

A senior TMC members wrote to the President on March 9 submitting that a delegation of AITC comprising members of LS and RS and ministers of West Bengal want to meet her to share the many initiatives by the state govt for inclusive development of all sections of society.

However, Rashtrapati Bhavan sent a communication informing TMC that its request was considered but could not be acceded.

TMC has yet again written to the President's office, requesting time next week.



**New Delhi (GNS):** Due to the ongoing US-Israeli war with Iran, crude oil prices have surged past \$100 worldwide. To control this, the Trump administration has temporarily allowed other countries to purchase oil from Russia. Several Russian oil tankers are stranded at sea.

Previously, the US had offered to ease sanctions on India to purchase crude oil from Russia. However, Indian officials have stated that India is not dependent on any country's permission to purchase oil.

At the same time, Iran has warned that crude oil prices may cross \$200.

Permission to purchase oil only from ships stranded

## All countries allowed to buy Russian oil: US grants 30-day waiver

**Iran warns crude oil could reach \$200**

at sea

The US Treasury Department issued a license on Thursday allowing the delivery and sale of Russian crude oil and petroleum products that were loaded onto ships before 12:01 a.m. on March 12. This exemption is valid only until April 11. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessant stated that the purpose is to increase global oil supply to curb rising prices.

America said - Russia will not benefit much

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessant wrote on the social media platform X that President Trump wants to bring stability to the global energy market. He added that this is a short-term decision and will not provide any significant economic benefit to Russia. According to Bessant, a large part of Russia's income comes from taxes levied at the time of oil extraction, while this exemption is only for oil that is already in transit.

### Opposition shouts slogans in Lok Sabha over LPG crisis:

## Opposition gives notice in both houses for removal of Chief Election Commissioner



**New Delhi (GNS):** On Friday, the fifth day of the second phase of Parliament's Budget Session, the opposition created a ruckus. Opposition MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, demanded the reinstatement of eight suspended MPs. Speaker Om Birla responded, "This is the action you will take if you climb on the tables in the House." Due to the uproar in the Lok Sabha, proceedings were first adjourned until 12 noon. Then, they were adjourned again until 2 pm. The proceedings, which resumed at 2 pm, also lasted only an hour. The Lok Sabha was subsequently adjourned until March 16th. During this period, the opposition raised slogans against PM Modi. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the Rajya Sabha that developments abroad are creating difficulties in our country. The government is taking steps to provide necessary funds and be fully prepared.

## Government says there's no shortage of petrol and diesel, LPG is a concern

**7.57 million cylinders are being booked daily, up from 5.57 million before the Iran war**

**New Delhi (GNS):** The Indian government said on Friday that there is no shortage of petrol or diesel in the country, but the closure of the Strait of Hormuz poses a concern for LPG. The government added that the number of gas bookings in the country has increased by about 2 million due to the Iran war. On behalf of the government, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary (Marketing and Oil Refinery), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said that before the war, an average of 55.7 lakh cylinders were booked every day.

Currently, approximately 7.57 million gas bookings are being made daily. The government stated that the sudden increase in LPG cylinder bookings has been observed amid the war situation. This is due to panic among the public.

**The government said that LPG distributors still have gas stock.**

The Petroleum Ministry said, "LPG is a concern because most of the country's LPG comes through the Strait of Hormuz, which is currently closed. However, there have been no reports of gas running out at any of our 25,000 LPG distributors."

### Supreme Court dismisses petition for paid leave during periods

## CJI says: If law is passed, no one will give women work, their career will end



**New Delhi (GNS):** On Friday, the Supreme Court dismissed a petition seeking paid leave for women students and working women across the country during their periods.

CJI Surya Kant said that such petitions could inadvertently reinforce stereotypes about women. If this law is enacted, women will be left without work and their careers will be ruined.

During the hearing, the bench comprising CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi expressed concern about the possible social consequences of making menstrual leave mandatory.

### CJI's comments on paid menstrual leave

- Suppose you allow the entire private sector to take one vacation per month, it could be detrimental to their growth. You have no idea the mindset that can develop in the workplace.
- If this law were to be enacted, the damage to women's careers would be unimaginable. No one would give them responsibilities, even in the judicial service, and they wouldn't be assigned routine cases.
- We direct that the competent authority shall consider the directions given by the Supreme Court vide its orders dated February 24, 2023 and July 8, 2024 and formulate a policy.

## IndiGo averages eight pilots per flight the lowest among domestic airlines

**► In December, it was fined 22 crore for irregularities in flight operations.**

**New Delhi (GNS):** The Civil Aviation Ministry told Parliament on Thursday that IndiGo has a pilot-to-aircraft ratio of 7.6, meaning there are an average of eight pilots per aircraft. This is the lowest compared to other domestic airlines in the country.

This information was provided by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. Because an aircraft makes many flights throughout the day and pilots need to be given rest, there are multiple pilots for one aircraft. According to the data, SpiceJet has the highest ratio, with a ratio of 9.4 pilots per aircraft. Akasa Air is next with 9.33 pilots per aircraft. Air India, meanwhile, has 9.1 pilots per aircraft, while its subsidiary, Air India Express, has the lowest ratio, at 8.8.

Peter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of India's largest airline, IndiGo, resigned on March 10. Flight operations were disrupted in December 2025, affecting approximately 300,000 passengers, prompting aviation regulator DGCA to impose a hefty fine of 22.20 crore on the airline.

### To shed colonial influence, Army renames 246 sites after Indian military personalities

**New Delhi (GNS):** The Indian Army has renamed as many as 246 roads, buildings, complexes, residential colonies and facilities in military stations across the country that bore the names of western officials from the pre-Independence era. The facilities have been rechristened after Indian military personalities. This has been done as part of the government's ongoing review of British influence on its culture and traditions. "The initiative is part of Indian Army's efforts to align its institutional spaces with India's military traditions and national ethos. It gives pride to the nation's gallantry awardees, battle heroes and distinguished military leaders, reflecting the core values of courage, sacrifice and leadership," Minister of State for Defence, Sanjay Seth said in response to a question by Member of Parliament, Dr Ganapathy Rajkumar P, on March 13.

## Gas crisis: Government claims and ground reality?

Sanat Jain

The situation surrounding cooking gas in many parts of the country has increased public concern. People have no access to cooking gas, kerosene oil, or wood. In many places, electricity supply is also disrupted. Cooking at home has become a difficult task. While the government claims there is no shortage of LPG in the country, consumers are forced to wait in long queues for hours to get gas cylinders. Videos and photos from hundreds of locations across the country are appearing in newspapers, news channels, and social media. In many places, dealers are openly claiming they do not have sufficient stock. Gas booking and supply have been halted for several days. This contradiction is not merely an administrative, policy,

and systemic problem, but also a problem for millions of people who are unable to make tea or cook food at home. This exposes the reality of the government's claims. Domestic cooking gas supply in India is primarily provided by public sector companies—Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum, and Hindustan Petroleum. Private gas companies also supply gas, but the supply of all companies has been affected. The government claims these companies have sufficient reserves and the distribution system is operating normally, but in reality, consumers are unable to obtain gas cylinders. Domestic LPG cylinders are being sold through black marketing for ₹1,800 to ₹2,000, while commercial cylinders are being sold for up to ₹4,000. The government is dismissing this as a serious flaw in the

distribution system. Ground-level dealers say they are not receiving sufficient cylinders from companies on time. The portal is malfunctioning. The portal through which gas dealers make bookings frequently either slows down or shuts down, preventing them from meeting consumer demand. Even after booking, consumers are having to wait for several days for cylinders. Due to which cooking has become difficult in crores of homes.

This raises the question: if production and storage are sufficient, then why is there a disruption in gas supply? This problem is causing significant inconvenience to everyone, from the common man to those involved in the hotel business and those attending weddings. Gas shortages are not only causing inconvenience, but inci-

dents of gas theft are also occurring. Cooking gas is a basic necessity for ordinary families, and there is no alternative available. Millions of families in urban and semi-urban areas depend on LPG gas. Consequently, the disruption in gas supply has a direct impact on the livelihoods and small businesses of millions of people. The government should not limit itself to mere statements. The government and the executive have a paramount responsibility to undertake a war-like effort to improve the actual situation of the gas supply system. Any irregularities in hoarding, transportation, or distribution should be addressed immediately and strictly. Transparency and accountability between gas agencies and consumers are essential. Ensure gas supply to public sector institu-

tions and temples, where langar (food distribution) programs are run for the poor, to eliminate confusion. In a democratic system, solving public problems should be a priority. If the government's claim is true, that there is no gas shortage, why has the public taken to the streets? It is the government and administration's responsibility to provide a clear and honest answer to this question. A real solution to the gas crisis can only be found when all parties cooperate honestly, taking into account the actual situation. Gas, petrol, and diesel are now a matter of daily use for everyone, and life without them is unimaginable and impossible to deny. The sooner all parties understand the reality, the sooner they will be able to find a solution to the problem.

## Editorial

**70% of rivers have become dead zones: Will those who discovered water on Mars be able to save the nectar of their own Earth?**

Rivers are not just a source of water, but the heartbeat of great civilizations that have flourished and thrived on their banks for thousands of years. But today, on March 14th, as the world celebrates International Day of Action for Rivers, the biggest and most poignant question is: have we abandoned these lifelines to become mere sewage? In a country like India, where rivers are revered as mothers and goddesses, the poison seeping into their streams has become a symbol of our deepening duality. We light lamps on the ghats with devotion in the morning, and by evening, we dump toxic factory chemicals, plastic, and city sewage into those same sacred waters. What a profound irony it is that the rivers that have provided us with life and purity for centuries are now struggling for their own survival amid human greed.

It's astonishing that we're searching for water on Mars, yet turning the nectar flowing on our own planet into a gutter. Statistics show that thousands of crores of rupees are spent every year in the name of cleaning, but the results are mere eyewash. Unless people develop compassion for rivers, every government scheme will only serve files, not rivers. According to a NITI Aayog report, approximately 70 percent of India's rivers are polluted. The Central Pollution Control Board has identified more than 350 river stretches across the country that have become dead zones, where oxygen levels are zero and aquatic life has vanished. The legendary Yamuna falls into this trap as soon as it reaches Delhi. Furthermore, industrial waste from hundreds of cities along the banks of the life-giving river Ganga continues to flow directly into the water stream without treatment, causing water pollution and serious illnesses. Over the past few decades, we have completely lost hundreds of our small rivers and tributaries. Rivers that used to be perennial now only see life during the monsoon season. The Hindon River in Uttar Pradesh, the Khan River in Madhya Pradesh, and many small streams in South India have now become sewage-carrying drains.



**Whenever the global economy experiences a deepening energy crisis, its direct impact is felt on financial markets and the pockets of ordinary people. In recent days, amid rising crude oil and gas prices and growing uncertainty about supply, the Indian stock market's major indices have declined. This decline may not merely reflect normal market movements but also signal a potential major crisis facing the economy. As I write this article, the Sensex and Nifty have fallen significantly.**



## Sensex falls amid oil and gas crisis: Is it a sign of a major economic crisis?

Saurabh Varshney

Despite the government's warnings, the public is eager to stockpile energy amid this war. No one knows what this war will entail, as the Russia-Ukraine war hasn't even ended yet.

A country like India relies heavily on imported oil and gas for its energy needs. When global oil and gas prices rise or supplies are disrupted, it directly impacts inflation, production costs, and the trade balance. Industrial costs rise, transportation becomes more expensive, and ultimately, the burden is passed on to the average consumer. This also signals to investors that corporate profits may face increased pressure in the future.

The stock market crash reflects this concern. Investors, fearing the future, begin withdrawing money from the market. Foreign investors, too, withdraw capital from emerging markets to avoid risk, further exacerbating the market decline. If this situation persists for a long time, it could impact investment, employment, and economic growth.

Another aspect of the energy crisis is fiscal pressure. To control inflation, the government may have to cut taxes, provide subsidies, or provide other relief measures. This places additional burden on the government treasury. Furthermore, if the import bill rises, the current account deficit may widen, posing a challenge to economic stability.

However, it's also true that the stock market isn't always an accurate reflection of long-term economic conditions. Sometimes, global conditions, geopol-

itical tensions, or even investors' psychological reactions can cause the market to suddenly fall. Therefore, it's not appropriate to immediately label the Sensex decline as a major crisis. However, it should certainly be considered a warning sign.

At this time, the biggest challenge facing the government and policymakers is strengthening energy security. The country must rapidly implement policies such as reducing dependence on oil and gas imports, promoting renewable energy, and increasing strategic reserves. It is also crucial to maintain market confidence by promoting economic reforms and investment.

Ultimately, the Sensex's decline amid the oil and gas crisis is not merely a market phenomenon, but a reminder of the challenges facing the economy. If concrete steps are taken in time, this crisis could be turned into an opportunity, but if ignored, it could have serious economic consequences.

Investors face a double dilemma. Investors are facing a difficult time today, given the global and domestic economic situation. Market uncertainty, international tensions, and inflationary pressures have placed investors in a double dilemma. While the stock market is fluctuating, even safe investment options are failing to deliver expected returns. In such an environment, the question of where and how investors should protect their wealth has become crucial.

Recently, several global events have been impacting economic markets. Volatility in oil and gas

prices, international conflicts, and policy shifts in major economies are impacting global stock markets, including India. Whenever a global crisis deepens, investors turn to safer options to avoid risk. However, even safe investments are not looking very attractive in the current situation.

On the other hand, domestic investors are also facing numerous questions. Fluctuating inflation, uncertainty about interest rates, and concerns about the future of companies are making it difficult for investors to make decisions. Investing in the stock market carries high risk, while returns from bank deposits and other safe options are limited. This is why investors are unsure whether to stay in the market and take risks or invest in safer options.

This investor dilemma is not only economic but also psychological. Market volatility causes many small investors to panic and withdraw their investments, leading to further market declines. However, some experienced investors see this as an opportunity and increase their investments during the falling market.

In such a situation, a balanced and long-term approach is crucial. Experts suggest that instead of making panicked decisions, investors should diversify their investments and adopt a long-term strategy. This can reduce risk and limit the impact of market volatility. Governments and regulatory bodies also have a responsibility to take necessary steps to maintain economic stability. Investor confidence can be strengthened by trans-

parent policies, a conducive investment environment, and promoting financial literacy.

It can be said that the current times are testing for investors. Amidst the dual dilemma, the right decisions will be those based on patience, understanding, and long-term thinking. If investors adopt a balanced strategy, even volatile markets can turn into future opportunities.

How to get rid of the oil and gas crisis?

Growing uncertainty in global politics and the energy market has once again raised the specter of an oil and gas crisis. Escalating tensions in the Middle East, supply disruptions, and price fluctuations in the international market directly impact import-dependent countries like India. India imports a significant portion of its energy needs, so whenever a global crisis arises, the pressure is clearly felt on the country's economy, industry, and consumers. Oil and gas are not just fuel, but the backbone of the modern economy. Every sector—transportation, power generation, industry, and domestic use—depends on them. When prices rise or supplies decrease, inflation increases, production costs increase, and economic growth is impacted. Therefore, this becomes not just an energy crisis but also an economic and social challenge. To address this crisis, the government must adopt a multi-pronged strategy. First, diversification of energy sources is essential. India must ensure oil and gas supplies from various regions rather than relying solely on a few limited countries.

## Deepening tensions in Middle East geopolitics – Indian government on alert mode

Advocate Kishan Sanmukhdas Bhavani

A high-level crisis committee of three ministers has been formed to protect the safety of citizens and strategic interests. Action has been initiated.

Middle East Crisis, Strait of Hormuz and India's Energy Security - Challenge of Strategic Balance in Global Geopolitics

Regardless of the direction Middle East geopolitics takes, energy security will remain the most decisive force in international politics and economics for years to come.

Globally, in 21st-century global politics, energy resources are no longer just the basis for economic development, but have also become the focus of strategic power, diplo-

macy, and geopolitical conflict. West Asia, the Middle East region in particular, has been a pivotal point in global energy politics. Currently, the escalating military tensions between Iran, the United States, and Israel have reached a point where their impact is not limited to regional boundaries but is affecting the energy security, trade, and economic stability of the entire world. Against this backdrop, the Strait of Hormuz, the world's most important maritime energy route, has become the center of global discussion. This strait is considered the lifeline of the world's oil trade. Any instability here has an immediate impact on the global economy. In recent days, reports of attacks on ships transiting this route, drone strikes, and possible mine laying have destabilized international mar-

kets. I, Advocate Kishan Sanmukhdas Bhavani, Gondia, Maharashtra, believe that this is why many countries, including India, have increased their energy security vigilance. The Indian government has taken the growing tensions in the Middle East very seriously. India is the world's third-largest oil importer, and a large portion of its energy needs come from West Asia. Therefore, any supply disruption could directly impact India's economy and the lives of ordinary people. In light of this potential threat, the Indian government has initiated high-level preparations. The central government has formed a three-member ministerial group, chaired by the Home Minister, to monitor the situation and address any potential crisis. This committee also includes the

Foreign Minister and the Petroleum Minister. This committee is continuously reviewing the situation in collaboration with various ministries and energy companies. The government's objective is clear that the supply of petrol, diesel, gas and LPG in the country should not be disrupted under any circumstances. The PM's Office has also given instructions to coordinate with all the concerned departments on this issue and keep the supply chain strong.

Friends, if we consider energy security and domestic supply: the government's priority, India's energy needs are constantly increasing with its rapidly growing economy. Demand for petroleum products is high across all sectors, including industrial production, transportation, agriculture, and domestic use.

Therefore, the government is striving to minimize the impact of the international crisis on Indian consumers. Oil companies have been instructed to maintain adequate storage and ensure smooth distribution. Furthermore, special arrangements are being made to prioritize the supply of domestic LPG cylinders. While reports of temporary LPG shortages in some areas have raised public concern, the government has clarified that this is not a widespread crisis but rather a local issue related to the distribution system. To manage this situation, the government has also established a special control room to continuously monitor LPG availability across the country. This step indicates that the Indian government intends to prepare in advance for a potential crisis.

JMC – Historic Standing Committee-- Bravo Chairman Kagathra

# Chairman Kagathra Breaks All Records in Historic Standing Committee Meeting; Analysts Say a Golden Page Added to JMC Governance

Jamnagar Municipal Corporation's Standing Committee Chairman Nilesh Kagathra stated that during the final phase of this local self-government term in Jamnagar, a record-breaking agenda, record-breaking decisions, and record-breaking financial approvals were all taken in a single meeting, which is a matter of pride. He said he was fortunate to get the opportunity to fulfill the goal of balanced development across all 16 wards of Jamnagar city. For this opportunity, he expressed gratitude to the Government of Gujarat, the state leadership, the Government of India, and the national leadership. He said he received the chance to work for public welfare and utilized it with honesty and principled governance, which gives him great personal satisfaction. He extended his best wishes for the continued progress of the citizens of Jamnagar. Chairman Kagathra also thanked all members, office bearers, officials, the secretary branch staff, the Commissioner, and the entire administrative team. He expressed special gratitude to Secretary

Hitenbhai and the entire Secretary branch, the Mayor's office, Dinesh Modi and the entire Commissioner's office, City Engineer Bhavesh Jani and his team, Jignesh Nirmla and the Accounts Department, Chief Auditor Komalben and her staff, all Assistant Commissioners and their teams, departmental head officers and staff, as well as the leadership of the ruling party that provided him this important responsibility. He noted that these teams continuously provide guidance, direction, approvals, implementation, financial strength, and administrative support to serve the citizens. He also acknowledged the contribution of clerical staff, operators, housekeeping personnel, peons, drivers, and security staff, whose indirect service in administrative and development work is equally commendable. Secretary Hiten Buddhbhatti said Chairman Kagathra has always been committed to public service-oriented work, which inspires us. He added that Mayor Khimsurya, Deputy Mayor Krishnaben, Ruling Party corporator's Leader



Ashish Joshi, Chief Whip Ketan Nakhwa, and all Standing Committee members and corporators, Administrative wing, consistently work hard to keep the local self-government system progressive. They provide continuous guidance to ensure efficiency and accelerate development. Deputy Secretary Chandresh Sanghani stated that the Chairman's administrative skills, precise drafting abilities, and

strong record-maintenance practices have been a constant source of learning and inspiration for us. It can also be said that City BJP President Binaben, MP Poonamben, MLAs Rivaben, Divyeshbhai, and Raghavjibhai, along with the city leadership and organizational office bearers, take pride in the fact that the promises made to the public are being fulfilled through the actions of the municipal cor-

poration. It is natural that Team JMC – both the ruling wing and the administrative wing – receive appreciation, because good governance and administration together maintain strong coordination to deliver public welfare works. The Standing Committee meeting of the Jamnagar Municipal Corporation held on March 10 included 50 agenda items and 44 additional chair agenda items, involving development proposals worth 970 crore. Significant development works were approved, and projects worth more than 600 crore received the green signal under the chairmanship of Nilesh Kagathra. This meeting is considered historic. Over the past two and a half years, Chairman Kagathra has overseen decisions on development projects worth nearly ₹2,000 crore for the citizens of Jamnagar, while preserving the city's heritage. Major initiatives have included widened roads, CC roads, drainage systems, community halls, cleanliness drives, and solid waste management projects.

**Report By:**  
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**Journalist – JMR & A"BAD**

## Minister felicitates Delhi Metro enthusiast for 24 year tradition of first rides

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Union minister of state for housing and urban affairs Tokhan Sahu felicitated Anil Marwah, a dedicated metro enthusiast, for his 24-year tradition of riding the first train on all new corridors of Delhi Metro. Media reported on Monday that Marwah (65) never missed riding Delhi Metro on the first day of any inauguration since Delhi Metro Rail Corporation began operations on an 8.4-km stretch on Dec 25, 2002. On Sunday, he completed his 41st inaugural ride on the first train from Deepali Chowk to Majlis Park, followed by his 42nd ride on the Majlis Park-Maujpur-Babarpur stretch. Sahu said such stories reflect the strong emotional connection citizens developed with Delhi Metro. He described the metro as a transformative urban mobility solution and a symbol of India's modern infrastructure development. He also noted that the project was initiated during the tenure of the National Democratic Alliance government led by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, whose vision laid the foundation for modern metro rail systems in the country and triggered rapid expansion of metro networks nationwide.

## Enforcement directorate challenges interim bail granted to jawad ahmed siddiqui in money laundering case

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday challenged in Delhi High Court the two-week interim bail granted to Al Falah University group chairman Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui in a money laundering case, arguing that the trial court failed to consider his alleged involvement in the Red Fort blast case. Appearing before Justice Saurabh Banerjee, ED contended that ill health of Siddiqui's wife was merely a "ruse" to secure relief and that the trial court's order was perverse and contrary to the mandate of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The agency also argued that the trial court's observation that the couple's children could not return to India due to the ongoing crisis in West Asia was contrary to ground reality, noting that international travel continued daily. The high court issued notice to Siddiqui and listed the matter for further hearing on March 19.

## 4 days after opening of Delhi's Magenta Line corridor, cable theft hits services

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Just four days after it became operational, train services on the new 9.9km Deepali Chowk-Majlis Park stretch on the Magenta Line were impacted on Thursday after 1,000 metres of signalling cables were stolen before the start of service. Police arrested one of the suspects from the spot. "The cable theft disrupted the signalling system. Trains ran at a restricted speed of 25 kmph in the affected section between Bhalswa and Majlis Park metro stations," said Anuj Dayal, principal executive director, corporate communications, DMRC. This corridor - along with the Majlis Park-Maujpur stretch, an extension of Pink Line - was inaugurated by PM Modi on Sunday. Dayal said installation of signalling cables would not be possible without adversely affecting passenger services during revenue hours. To minimise passenger inconvenience, restoration work will be taken up at night after the end of revenue service on Thursday night. The necessary planning and preparatory works are already being undertaken during the daytime



for the activities to be done at night," he added. Police received information about the incident around 4.20am Thursday from the signal controller at Majlis Park, who told cops that the theft of cables had severely affected the signalling system, causing it to go down. The complainant further said that during inspection, it was found about 1,000 metres of signalling cable had been stolen. "A night patrolling team immediately reached the spot and noticed some

people melting wires to extract copper in a nearby jungle area. The team arrested one suspect, who was found in possession of 170-180 metres of burnt cable, which was seized," said DCP (Metro) Bharat Reddy Bommarreddy. The accused was identified as Seikh Safiq (28), a resident of Jahangirpuri. A case was registered under sections 329(4) (criminal trespass and house-trespass), 305(1) (theft in a dwelling house or place of transportation), 3(5) (common intention) and 331 (punishment for house-trespass or house-

breaking) of BNS, along with sections 74(1) and 78 of DMRC Act at Azadpur Metro police station. A joint survey of vulnerable points was also conducted by teams of Metro Police and DMRC. Raids are being conducted to nab the other suspects. "DMRC deeply regrets the inconvenience caused to the passengers due to such incidents of cable theft and is also in touch with the law and order machinery to resolve such recurring issues," said Dayal. In the past, cable thefts have often led to delays in Metro service. On Jan 11, service on the Airport Express Line (Yashobhooni Dwarka Sector 25 to New Delhi) was affected after an attempted cable theft. Nearly 800 metres of signalling cables were found damaged on the tracks. According to a DMRC official, cable thefts typically occur between 12.30am and 4am, when Metro services are not operational. At night, thieves climb onto the viaduct, cut the cables, hand them to accomplices, and escape. The official said the cables are highly valuable due to their copper and aluminium content.

## SWADOTSHAV UNCOVER THE GLORY OF AYURVED, ORGANISED BY ITRA JMR

Ayurveda is a vast treasure of deep knowledge that includes lifestyle, the natural functions of the human body, methods to remain healthy at all times, and treatments through medicines when required. To promote our traditional knowledge at the global level, Prime Minister Narendra Modi established the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) at the Ayurveda University campus in Jamnagar six years ago as an institution of national importance. Union Government AYUSH Secretary Rajesh Kotecha stated that Prime Minister Modi has set two major goals for Ayurveda: development within the country and expansion on the global stage. Institutional progress is being made in that direction. A team from the World Health Organization (WHO) is also conducting research on traditional medicine in Jamnagar. The secretary added that once the results of



this research are available, Ayurveda will receive greater recognition on the global platform. ITRA Director Tanuja Nesari said that two unique events were organized in Jamnagar. One of them was a national-level conference held under the theme of Ras-Mimansa. The aim of this conference was to present research progress, safety evaluation, regulatory perspectives, and pharmacovigilance compliance of herbomineral and metallo-mineral Ayurvedic formulations to representatives and the scientific community. The second important event was organized because the ITRA Pharmacy Education

Department in Jamnagar is completing 25 years of its establishment. On March 7 and 8, an expo was organized at Dhanvantari Ground. Based on Ayurvedic principles, a variety of healthy food dishes were presented at the event, attracting citizens through an Ayurvedic food festival (Ayurveda Swadotsav). On this occasion, Media Manager Chitrangad Jani said that since Director Dr. Tanuja Nesari assumed charge at ITRA, significant efforts have been made to ensure quality education, quality research, institutional decorum, and to make this science more accessible to the public. As a result, awareness among people has increased considerably. Citizens enthusiastically participated in the recent events, and the programs were especially appreciated by young men and women. **Report By- -Bharat G. Bhogayata- Journalist-Jmr & A"bad**

## Challenging heart procedure saves 40-minute-old girl

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Doctors at a Delhi private hospital performed a minimally invasive cardiac procedure on a pre-term newborn barely 40 minutes after birth, restoring heart function in what doctors described as one of the most challenging neonatal cardiac emergencies they had handled. The girl was born with a critically narrowed aortic valve, severely weakened heart muscle, and significant fluid accumulation around the heart - a combination of conditions that often carries a poor prognosis. The complication was first detected during a fetal ultrasound at 30 weeks of pregnancy at another city hospital. After the diagnosis, the parents consulted specialists at Fortis Escorts Okhla, where a multidisciplinary team led by paediatric cardiologist Dr Neeraj Awasthy began plan-



ning an emergency intervention to save the unborn child. At 31 weeks of pregnancy, the baby was delivered via caesarean section at the referral hospital. Within minutes, a team from Fortis Escorts - including paediatric cardiologists, neonatologists, anaesthetists and critical care staff - reached the facility. The newborn was intubated and stabilised within 15 minutes of birth before being prepared for the cardiac intervention.

## HC questions blanket ban on protests at Delhi University

**New Delhi, (GNS):** The Delhi High Court on Thursday declined to immediately stay the blanket prohibition on protests, demonstrations and processions across the Delhi University campus, but made it clear that such an absolute restriction cannot exist in law and requires closer scrutiny. A Bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia asked Delhi University and the Delhi Police to file their responses to a petition filed by a law student challenging the ban imposed by the university administration. During the hearing, the Bench said the order had already been in operation for some time and could continue for a short period until the court examined the



matter in detail. "Since when has this order been operating? Let it operate for 10 more days," the Bench observed, while directing the authorities to file their replies within a week. The matter has been listed for further hearing on

March 25. The court also issued notices to the Centre and two colleges affiliated with University of Delhi. Appearing for the university, the counsel submitted that the proctor's order imposing the ban was issued in view of a pro-

hibitory order passed by the Delhi Police restricting the assembly of five or more persons in the North Campus area. The Bench, however, questioned the rationale behind a complete prohibition on protests and demonstrations, observing that such sweeping restrictions may run contrary to the fundamental freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution. At the same time, the court cautioned students against misusing their constitutional liberties. "This liberty can't be misused. It is only because of Article 19 that we are interfering. You need to conduct yourself fairly," the Bench remarked, indicating that a balance must be maintained between maintaining public order and protecting con-

stitutional rights. The police informed the court that the prohibitory order was initially issued for a month after intelligence inputs indicated the possibility of a clash between two student groups. The order was later extended till April 25. The Bench responded that maintaining law and order was the responsibility of the police and questioned why controlled or regulated gatherings could not be permitted instead of imposing a blanket ban. "Permit meetings with restrictions. Take action if there is a violation, but won't a blanket ban on meetings be an infringement of Article 19?" the court asked. The petition has been filed by Uday Bhadoriya, a student of the Campus Law Centre. The plea

contends that the prohibition order issued on February 17 by the university proctor was arbitrary, vague and disproportionate, and was issued without consultation with the students' union, teachers' bodies or academic councils. According to the petition, the ban has disrupted academic life, with seminars and student events cancelled or postponed, including several annual college festivals. The restriction followed two FIRs registered by the Delhi Police after clashes between student groups during a protest in February. In a separate incident on February 12, historian Irfan Habib had a bucket of water thrown at him while addressing a social justice programme on the campus.

# CM highlights women's role in country's development

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Chief minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday highlighted the concept of woman-led development, stating that women are emerging as leaders across sectors and playing an increasingly important role in shaping the country's future. Every girl in Delhi should pursue education at least up to the graduation level, Gupta emphasised while addressing the eighth convocation of Indra Gandhi Technical University for Women. Courage and determination are not defined by gender and women had made remarkable contributions in every field throughout history, she said, highlighting the growing role of women in leadership and nation-building.

"Delhi govt remains committed



to promoting education, skills, technology and research. When women are empowered through education and skills, it not only transforms their own lives but also drives progress for society and the nation," CM said.

During the ceremony, 1,181 degrees were awarded to graduating students across various programmes, including 938 undergraduate, 212 postgraduate and 31 PhD degrees. In recognition of outstanding academic achievements and leadership, the university also conferred two Chancellor's Medals, 15 Vice-Chancellor's Medals and 26 awards for academic excellence.

Education minister Ashish Sood, university vice-chancellor Ranjana Jha, faculty members, parents and a

large number of students were present. Addressing the students, CM said, "A convocation is not merely the end of academic life but the beginning of a new journey. The 1,181 graduating students are not merely receiving degrees but are stepping out as future leaders who will shape the direction of society and the nation through their knowledge, skills and leadership." National initiatives such as Digital India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Startup India and Skill India have opened new avenues for youth in innovation, research and entrepreneurship, Gupta said, adding that the university "is working in alignment with these initiatives and contributing significantly to the vision of women's empowerment and Viksit

Bharat 2047". Sood said the occasion was also about sending a message to the world that young women today were the builders, innovators and leaders of the future. "The capital is currently being led by a woman who is actively working to strengthen women's empowerment and create new opportunities for young people. Our country is currently passing through the phase of Amrit Kaal and women's participation during this period is emerging as one of the country's greatest strengths," he said.

While women were once discouraged from stepping forward, they are today demonstrating their capabilities and leadership in every field, he added.

## Delhi amends law to let women work night shifts across board

**New Delhi, (GNS):** Close on the heels of the Centre formalising new labour codes to expand workers' rights, the Delhi Government has amended existing laws to enable women to work night shifts, besides introducing other changes.



Amending the Delhi Shops and Establishments Act, 1954 through the Delhi Shops and Establishments (Amendment) Act, 2026, the government has allowed women workers in night shifts in all establishments subject to some conditions. The Bill had received the assent of the President of India on February 23, 2026 and had earlier been passed by the Delhi Legislative Assembly on January 9, 2026. The Act was notified last night.

The amended law will apply to shops and establishments employing 20 or more employees and will come into force on a date to be notified by the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. In a major change, the amended Act provides for an increase in daily working hours from nine hours to 10 hours, inclusive of rest interval and lunch break.

The maximum weekly working hours have also been raised from 54 hours to 60 hours per week.

However, the aggregate overtime hours have been

capped at 144 hours per quarter, replacing the earlier limit of 150 hours per year.

The amendment also raises the continuous working period before a break is required from five hours to six hours. The maximum spread-over hours for any establishment have been unified at 12 hours, replacing the earlier provision of 10 and a half hours for commercial establishments and 12 hours for shops. Child labour age threshold has also been raised. The amendment law takes the threshold for child labour applicability from 12 years to 14 years, in line with central labour laws.

Women have been allowed in night shifts with strict safeguards. The law now lets women work in night shifts across all establishments, subject to their written consent and a set of mandatory safeguards.

Under the new provi-

sions, women employees can be employed between 9 pm and 7 am during summer and between 8 pm and 8 am during winter, provided the following conditions are met.

The employer will be required to obtain written consent of the woman employee before deploying her in a night shift. Adequate CCTV surveillance, security arrangements and proper transport facilities must be provided to all women employees, including those engaged through contractors, during night shifts. A minimum of two women employees must be present during the night shift at any point of time.

The law also prohibits employers from knowingly employing a woman during the six weeks following childbirth or miscarriage. All employers covered under the Act will be required to comply with the provisions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Delhi Government has also reserved the right to notify additional conditions in this regard from time to time. The notification was signed by Reetesh Singh, Principal Secretary, Department of Law, Justice and Legislative Affairs, Government of NCT of Delhi.

## Supreme Court hikes green fee on vehicles passing through Delhi: LMVs to Pay Rs 2,000, trucks Rs 4,000 from April 1



**New Delhi, (GNS):** In an effort to deter heavy vehicles from using Delhi as a transit route and adding to pollution, the Supreme Court on Thursday accepted the recommendations of the Commission on Air Quality Management for a steep hike in the Environment Compensation Charge (ECC) for LMVs from Rs 1,400 to Rs 2,000 and for trucks from Rs 2,600 to Rs 4,000 with effect from April 1. Additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati told a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi that CAQM is of the opinion that the proposed revision would restore the deterrence value of ECC as originally fixed in 2015 and reinstate a significant cost differential between transit through Delhi and diversion via peripheral expressways.

Bhati said that the ECC had not been revised since 2015 and added that the rates would be revised upwards by 5% from April 1 every year. The bench said the first revision of ECC would be from April 1, 2027. The bench, while accepting the CAQM recommendations, directed all stakeholders to ensure that commercial and heavy vehicles are not permitted to transit through Delhi and diverted to eastern and western peripheral expressways. CAQM also recommended that MCD must undertake rationalisation of its toll structure for revision of existing toll rates, address disparities in vehicle classification vis-a-vis the framework adopted by NHAI and undertake a comprehensive traffic and revenue study to assess traffic potential and route diversion patterns, particularly in light of the proposed ECC revision.

Government of Gujarat

# Shaping a Viksit Gujarat Through Quality Education

### Provision of ₹63,184 Crore For The Education Department

- Mission Schools of Excellence: Allocation of ₹3,055 Crore for Infrastructure Improvement in primary and secondary schools
- Provision of ₹1,250 Crore for Namo Lakshmi Yojana
- ₹223 Crore Planned for Gyan Shakti Residential Schools of Excellence
- Provision of ₹91 Crore for transport/escort facilities and sensory parks for Divyang students
- Allocation of ₹18 Crore to build Raksha Shakti School, benefiting 1,328 students
- Provision of ₹598 Crore for Mukhyamantri Paushtik Alpahar Yojana
- Allocation of ₹223 Crore for the Bus Pass Fee Concession Scheme, benefiting about 13 lakh students travelling in ST Corporation buses

"Our government is committed to providing every student with quality education and optimal nutrition, backed by modern infrastructure. This budget for the Education Department will truly realize our vision of an 'Educated Gujarat, Prosperous Gujarat'."

**- Shri Harsh Sanghavi, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat**