



Gas shortage in Gujarat

Migrant workers returning to their villages

Surat(GNS): The ongoing war in West Asia is beginning to have an impact on India. In Gujarat, street food stalls, small hotels, and eateries have closed due to a shortage of cooking gas, leaving their owners unemployed. Additionally, thousands of workers and students from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are also having to return home. This has led to long queues at Surat station. On this occasion, News Agency spoke to some people at Surat's railway



station. They said that gas, which used to be available for around 100 per kg in small cylinders, is now being sold for 300-400 per kg. Meanwhile, the price of a large cylinder has reached 5,000. Living in a flat, they can't light a stove. This has left them facing the prospect of starvation.

Mamata Banerjee announces monthly 1,700 for SC/ST women, 1,500 for others

TMC manifesto promises permanent homes and 18,000 annually for the unemployed

New Delhi(GNS): West Bengal Chief Minister and All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee released her party's manifesto for the assembly elections on Friday. She promised to increase the monthly assistance provided to women under the Lakshmi Bhandar scheme by 500. According to the manifesto, if Mamata Banerjee's government is formed, women in the general category in Bengal will receive 1,500 per month. Currently, the Bengal



government provides 1,000 per month to women in the general category. SC/ST women will receive 1,700 per month. Currently, SC/ST women receive 1,200. Mamata Banerjee has also announced 1,500 per month

for unemployed youth. She has promised to provide every family with a permanent home and clean drinking water through a tap. TMC releases list of 18 star campaigners, including Mamata, Abhishek. The Trinamool Congress (TMC) has also released a list of 18 star campaigners in support of its candidates for the Bengal Assembly elections. This list includes Mamata Banerjee and the party's national general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee.

The President met Saint Premananda folded her hands and bowed to him



President Murmu is on a three-day visit to Uttar Pradesh, beginning Thursday (March 19). After visiting Ayodhya on Thursday, she arrived in Mathura, where she offered prayers at temples and participated in several other events. This morning, the President began her day with several spiritual programs. President Murmu visited the ashram of Saint Premanand Maharaj at Radha Keli Kunj in Vrindavan Dham in Vrindavan. Officials said the President also listened to the saint's sermons during the meeting.

Mathura(GNS): Officials say the President will also visit the samadhi of Baba Neem Karoli in Vrindavan to pay her respects. She will also visit the Oriya Baba Ashram and Devnal Kund in Vrindavan.

Assam CM Himanta files nomination holds roadshow in Guwahati

TMC MPs approach High Court over transfer of IAS-IPS in Bengal

Guwahati(GNS): Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma filed his nomination from the Jalukbari seat on Friday, contesting from there for the sixth time. Before filing his nomination, he held a roadshow, accompanied by his wife Riniki Bhuyan Sarma and son Nandil Biswa Sarma. The BJP released its list of 88 candidates for the Assam elections on Thursday. The party has also given tickets to Pradyut Bordoloi and Bhupen Bora, who defected from the Congress. Meanwhile, a TMC MP



has filed a petition in the Calcutta High Court challenging the Election Commission's transfer of IAS and IPS officers in West Bengal. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has been made a party in the petition. The Congress party on Thursday released its second list of 37 candidates for the Kerala Assembly elections. Previously, on March 17, the party had announced the names of 55 candidates. The party has decided not to field any of its MPs in the elections, scheduled for April 9.

Organized by the Department of Agriculture, Farmers Welfare & Co-operation, Government of Gujarat

Millet Mahotsav
A Natural Farmer Market
2026

A unique celebration of health, prosperity, and culture

Grand organisation of Millet Products Exhibition through various stalls along with the sale of natural agricultural produce

Chief Guest

Shri Jitubhai Vaghani
Hon'ble Minister, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Co-operation, Animal Husbandry, Cow-Breeding, Fisheries, Protocol, Government of Gujarat

August Presence

Shri Rameshbhai Katara
Hon'ble Minister of State, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Co-operation, Animal Husbandry and Cow-Breeding, Government of Gujarat

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Rich in protein, fiber, iron, & vitamins

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📅 21-22 March, 2026 🕒 From 09:00 AM to 10:00 PM 📍 Sabarmati Riverfront, NR. Vallabh Sadan, Ahmedabad

Launch in Ahmedabad, as well as organized in 16 Municipal Corporations

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- Shri Harsh Sanghavi
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS
21st March, 2026

Forests and Economies

- 🌳 The number of trees outside the forest area in the state increased from 39.75 crore in 2021 to 44.35 crore in 2025
- 🌳 To make Gujarat greener and for a prosperous future, the total budget of Forest and Environment Department for the year 2026-27 has been increased to ₹3560 crore
- 🌳 Under the 'Ek Pad Maa ke Naam-2.0' campaign, 10.96 crore saplings were planted/distributed in the state
- 🌳 In the year 2025-26, Mangroves were planted across 14,030 hectares of Gujarat Coastal Areas
- 🌳 The Chharidhandh wetland area in Kutch district declared as the state's fifth Ramsar Site (Wetland of International Importance)
- 🌳 In 2025-26, 2.76 crore saplings were planted across 34,300 hectares under territorial wing in the state's forest area
- 🌳 During 2025-26, the state covered 39,295 hectares under plantation through departmental and farmer-oriented models of the Social Forestry Scheme
- 🌳 Join the green movement-plant trees to fight climate change, conserve natural resources and build a resilient economy

"Our forests are the foundation of a strong economy and a sustainable future. Let's unite to plant more trees and build a greener, more prosperous Gujarat for generations to come"

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

For more details of Forest Department
Call Helpline No. **1926**
Give a Message/Whatsapp/Missed Call on **8320002000**

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FOREST AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF GUJARAT

To maintain the balance of the universe we will have to listen to the call of forests

Lalit Garg

International Forest Day, celebrated annually on March 21st, is not merely a symbolic celebration but an opportunity to highlight the serious challenge facing human civilization. The United Nations declared this day in 2012 with the aim of encouraging the global community to recognize the importance of forests, make concerted efforts to conserve them, and move towards a balanced coexistence with nature. Today, as the Earth faces unprecedented environmental crises, the relevance of this day increases. The theme for 2026, "Forests and

Food," makes it clear that forests are not just green cover but a fundamental pillar of global food security.

Environmental imbalance is at its peak today. Climate change has led to rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, droughts, floods, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters, endangering human life. In these circumstances, forests emerge as a central natural system in maintaining the Earth's balance. They absorb carbon dioxide, control global warming, maintain a balanced water cycle, and prevent soil erosion. Ironically, humans are recklessly exploiting forests to meet their

immediate needs and in the pursuit of economic development. This is why events like Van Mahotsav are being felt today not merely as a formality, but as a form of widespread social awakening.

The utility of forests is not limited to environmental balance; it is also deeply intertwined with economic and social life. The proposed theme of "Forests and Economy" for 2026 underscores the fact that forests are the foundation of sustainable economic development. The livelihoods of millions of people are directly dependent on forests. Products such as minor forest produce,

medicinal plants, resins, gums, honey, and bamboo not only strengthen rural economies but also contribute significantly to international trade. Eco-tourism is also creating new employment opportunities. Thus, forests emerge as an economic resource that can balance development and conservation. The social and cultural significance of forests is also no less. For indigenous and tribal communities in particular, forests are an integral part of life. Their traditions, beliefs, and lifestyles are driven by forests. For them, forests are not just a resource, but the very foundation of their existence. Therefore, forest conserva-

tion is not just an environmental issue, but also a matter of social justice and cultural preservation. Events like Van Mahotsav bring together different sections of the society on one platform and make them realise the shared responsibility that protecting forests is not only the responsibility of the government but also the moral responsibility of every citizen. In the Indian context, the importance of forests is even more profound and multifaceted. Here, forests are not just natural resources, but also symbols of cultural and spiritual consciousness. In Indian tradition, trees are considered divine.

Editorial

On the ill-conceived war on Iran

Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump have brought death and destruction to Asia and economic havoc on the whole world by launching an ill-conceived, illegal war on Iran on February 28. Twenty days on, Iran continues to fire missiles and drones at Israel and neighbouring Persian Gulf countries hosting U.S. bases. Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz, along with retaliatory strikes on oil and gas facilities in the Gulf countries, have driven up energy prices, threatening the global economy. The irony is stark: Mr. Trump, who won the presidency twice, campaigning on opposing America's "forever wars", has now led the U.S., at Israel's behest, into another disastrous conflict. After the initial window for regime change closed, Mr. Trump sent mixed signals. He said he had authorised talks; when Iran refused, he ordered a strike on Kharg Island, the country's main energy export terminal. Israel then escalated the conflict further by assassinating Ali Larijani, Iran's Security Council Secretary and a key link between the Revolutionary Guards, who are leading the war effort, and the political establishment, as well as Iran's Intelligence Minister and the commander of the Basij paramilitary force. On Wednesday, Israel crossed another red line by attacking Iran's South Pars gas field, triggering Iranian strikes on energy sites in Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Many had warned even before the war began that an all-out attack on Iran could trigger a regional crisis. Mr. Trump, who until recently sought the Nobel Peace Prize, went ahead regardless. With over a dozen American soldiers killed, more than a hundred wounded, U.S. bases under attack, and rising oil, gas, and fertilizer prices, he now faces growing political backlash at home. On March 17, Joe Kent resigned as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, claiming that the U.S. entered the war "due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby". It is now clear that Mr. Trump did not anticipate such a prolonged conflict. Even if Mr. Trump wants to declare victory and end the bombing, he faces two hurdles: Iran can continue attacking targets in the Gulf and Israel; and the Strait of Hormuz remains shut.



Serious concern has been expressed in the Rajya Sabha over the impact of social media on children. MP Milind Deora stated in his statement that according to the National Crime Records Bureau, approximately 13,000 students committed suicide in India in 2022, nearly double the number in 2013. Furthermore, students account for approximately 10 percent of total suicides in India today. Remember, on February 4th, three sisters aged 12, 14, and 16 committed suicide in Ghaziabad.



The impact of social media on the natural development of children

Manoj Kumar Agarwal

It was reported that this incident was linked to addiction to online games.

You know that in this age of the Internet, with everything available on mobile phones, the importance of social media has increased significantly, and people are using it extensively. While it provides useful information, the inappropriate and obscene content available on it is also proving harmful to children. Whether at school or home, children use mobile phones everywhere. Excessive use of social media is having a negative impact on children's mental state and has also been associated with sleep deprivation. It is also causing depression, anxiety, and stress in children.

Teenagers make up about a third of social media platform users in India. The United States saw a sharp rise in teen depression and suicide cases after 2010, around the same time Facebook, a company, began aggressively courting young people.

Due to spending more time on social media platforms, the daily routine of children is getting affected and their distance from parents and violent nature is increasing along with decreasing concentration.

To protect children from social media addiction, Australia, England, Malaysia, Spain, Norway, Germany, Italy, China and some other countries have also imposed restrictions on the use of social media by children.

In this regard, the French government has

also begun efforts to keep children under the age of 15 away from social media. The country's National Assembly has approved a related bill. It will be implemented in the country starting with the next academic year, which begins on September 1, 2026.

Statistics show that approximately 27 percent of Indian adolescents show signs of addiction to social media platforms. This is accompanied by a decline in academic performance, anxiety, and a lack of self-confidence. He stated in the House that a survey shows that approximately 33 percent of children in metropolitan cities face cyberbullying. According to National Crime Records Bureau data, the share of violent crimes involving adolescents increased from 32 percent in 2016 to nearly 50 percent by 2022.

It should be noted that France has banned social media use for children under 15 and has also banned mobile phones in schools. Australia has taken the tough decision to ban social media for children under 16. Australia has limited it to those under 16. Recently, Indonesia also banned social media for teenagers, becoming the first country in Asia to do so. Spain and Germany are also moving in this direction. French President Emmanuel Macron says that the minds of our children are not for sale. The mental and emotional well-being of children cannot be left to the mercy of companies whose sole aim is to make a profit.

Meanwhile, Sweden's

Karolinska Institute, in collaboration with Oregon Health & Science University, conducted a study to assess the amount of time children spend engaging in various digital activities. The children participating in the study spent an average of 2.3 hours watching TV or online videos, 1.4 hours using social media, and 1.5 hours playing video games. These activities severely impact concentration.

India already has a digital personal data protection framework in place, with provisions such as verified parental consent for children under 18. But we need to go beyond this and hold social media companies more accountable.

It should be noted that in India, cases of minors committing crimes like rape after viewing pornographic and violent content on social media have been continuously emerging. On October 23, 2025, police arrested a teenager in Jodhpur (Rajasthan) for raping a 3-year-old girl. A search of the accused's mobile phone revealed that he had watched 15-20 pornographic videos before committing the crime.

On February 6, 2026, in Dataganj, Badaun (Uttar Pradesh), police arrested two boys, aged 8 and 14, for gang-raping a 6-year-old girl after watching pornographic videos on their mobile phones. On February 13, 2026, in Rewa (Madhya Pradesh), police detained a 14-year-old minor for raping his 6-year-old sister on the pretext of buying her crisps. On March 7, 2026, in

Hathras (Uttar Pradesh), a fourth-grade student who had gone to the forest to collect fodder was taken away by two boys addicted to watching pornographic content on their mobile phones, who took her with them to give her berries and raped her. Both boys have been apprehended by the police. In light of such incidents, on March 6, 2026, the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka banned the use of social media by children, becoming the first two states in the country to take such a step.

The bans imposed by the Andhra and Karnataka governments will help to prevent moral degradation in children to some extent. A government-commissioned study found that 96 percent of children aged 10-15 years used social media, and seven out of ten were exposed to harmful content. This included misogynistic and violent content, as well as content promoting eating disorders and suicide. So far, 10 social media platforms have been directed to implement the ban, including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X, YouTube, Kik, and Reddit. Considering the health of children, this step is highly commendable. Therefore, such laws need to be immediately implemented and enforced strictly in all states to protect children from the harmful effects of social media.

(The author is a senior journalist and has been associated with writing and journalism for the last 38 years.)

Gangaur festival is a unique tradition of Indian women's devotion and good fortune

Kantilal Mandot

India's cultural traditions present a wonderful confluence of diversity and faith. Gangaur is a very important festival deeply rooted in folk life. This festival is particularly recognized as a Rajasthani festival, but it is celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm in almost all the states of India, under different names and customs. Gangaur symbolizes a woman's good fortune, love, dedication, and the desire for family happiness and prosperity. It is not merely a religious ritual, but a living example of the faith, belief, and cultural values of Indian women.

The word Gangaur is made up of two parts—'Gan' meaning Lord Shiva and 'Gaur' meaning Parvati. Thus, this festival symbolizes the

sacred marital life of Shiva and Parvati. According to religious beliefs, this festival is celebrated on the third day of the bright fortnight of Chaitra month, also known as Gauri Tritiya. On this day, women especially worship Goddess Parvati and seek her blessings for eternal good fortune and a happy married life.

According to the scriptures and Puranas, Lord Shiva was once traveling the earth with Parvati and Narada. During their travels, they arrived in a village on the auspicious day of Chaitra Shukla Tritiya. When the village women learned that Shiva and Parvati themselves had arrived, they were overjoyed and began preparing to worship them. Ordinary women arrived without delay, carrying the puja materials with a simple heart, while the

women of the affluent class spent time making elaborate preparations.

Pleased with the sincere devotion of these ordinary women, Parvati blessed them with eternal good fortune. Later, when well-dressed women arrived for worship, Parvati also bestowed special blessings upon them. The essence of this story is that true faith and devotion are more important before God than outward show. This message lies at the core of the Gangaur festival.

According to another legend, Parvati bathed on this day on the river bank, fashioned a Shivalinga from sand, and worshipped it. She performed this ritual in solitude, hidden from Shiva, but the omniscient Shiva recognized her devotion and blessed her with eternal good fortune. For this reason, this fast is

observed exclusively by women, and all the rituals are performed by women.

On the day of Gangaur, women typically adorn themselves with sixteen adornments and wear beautiful clothes and jewelry. A square altar is created in a sacred place in the home and decorated with turmeric, sandalwood, saffron, and other sacred materials. An idol of Gauri, or Parvati, is then fashioned from sand or clay. This idol is adorned with items of marital bliss, such as glass bangles, vermilion, roli, and mehendi, and fruits, flowers, and naivedya are offered. During the puja, women sing hymns and kirtans and remain engrossed in the worship of Goddess Parvati. It is customary to eat only once a day on this day, which reflects the purity and discipline of the fast. After the

puja, women apply vermilion offered to Gauri to their foreheads, which is considered a symbol of good fortune and marital happiness. The Gangaur festival also has a very important social aspect. After marriage, a newlywed woman celebrates her first Gangaur at her parents' home and sends sweets, clothes, and wedding items to her in-laws as a gift called "Vaina." She then celebrates the festival at her in-laws' home every year, presenting gifts to her mother-in-law as a mark of respect. This tradition maintains love, respect, and sweet relationships between families. A sweet called "Gune" is specially prepared for this occasion, which has a long shelf life. Additionally, feeding sixteen married women and providing them with cosmetics and alms is an important part of this festival.

Govt mulls new bridge over Yamuna Gandhi Nagar market redevelopment

New Delhi, (GNS) : Delhi gov't is planning a set of infrastructure projects aimed at easing congestion and boosting development in the Trans-Yamuna region, with proposals likely to be placed and financial allocations sought in the budget session next week. At the centre of the plan is a bridge across the Yamuna intended to improve connectivity between east Delhi and central parts of the city. Officials said discussions are still at a preliminary stage, with Trans Yamuna Area Development Board asked to study the bridge's possible location and feasibility.

One option involves replacing the ageing Old Iron Bridge, known as Loha Pul, or constructing a new one near Signature Bridge. The study will cover the entire stretch from Wazirabad to Kalindi Kunj, focusing on traffic flow, congestion points and technical challenges.



Arvinder Singh Lovely, chairperson of the board, said that Loha Pul is outdated and a new bridge could help distribute traffic more evenly and strengthen links between northeast, north and central Delhi. Railway authorities constructing a parallel structure to Loha Pul and potentially diverting train traffic from it further opens up possibilities for the Pul's redevelopment or replacement.

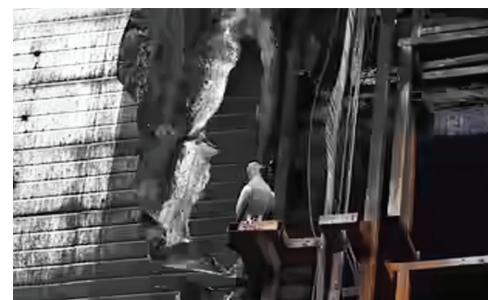
The board also plans to build a four-kilometre-long elevated corridor along Trunk Drain 1 to decongest the crucial Swami Dayanand Marg, which connects Anand Vihar to Shadara and is one of east Delhi's most congested stretches, officials aware of the matter said on Thursday. The elevated road is set to originate from near Shyam Lal College and Bihari Colony, close to

Shadara flyover on GT Road, and end near Karkari Mor flyover. The project was recently reviewed during a site inspection by Public Works Department (PWD), irrigation and flood control minister Parvesh Verma, Lovely and local MLAs. These projects are set to be taken up along with PWD, one of the officials said.

Delhi gov't is also reviving efforts to upgrade civic infrastructure in east Delhi's commercial hubs. The board is preparing a redevelopment plan for Gandhi Nagar Market, said to be Asia's largest wholesale garment market. A consultant has been appointed to conduct a survey and draw up a blueprint. Despite its economic importance, the market currently struggles with inadequate basic facilities like proper roads, drainage systems, sanitation and drinking water.

Haunted by cries, traders in area fear a fire repeat

New Delhi, (GNS) : The Sadhnagar market in southwest Delhi's Palam Village observed a day of mourning on Thursday by keeping the shutters down. Shopkeepers gathered in silence outside the charred remains of Pravesh Moderate Fashion.



The narrow lane, usually abuzz with customers, was lined with police barricades. Intermittently, it echoed with the cries of grieving relatives of the Kashyap family, nine of whose members perished in the blaze that gutted their shop and home on Wednesday.

The once thriving store stood with a shattered glass facade and broken lights amid a forest of snaking, dark wires. A portion of the adjacent building, too, had got scalded in the blaze. Its outer walls had blackened and a banner had partially torn after being burnt.

Shopkeepers stood huddled, consoling Rajender Kashyap,

the two-time market association president and patriarch, whose losses were too large to count. The grief was also tinged with the lingering anxiety that a repeat can happen. Most buildings in the market are of mixed usage - residential and commercial - like the ones the Kashyaps built. The shops operate on the lower floor, and the owner's family lives upstairs.

Khushwan Singh Sodhi, who owns a garment shop nearby, pointed out the risks. His shop was stacked with garments, like the store that the Kashyaps ran. The fabrics, some said, had fuelled the fire.

New rail bridge alongside Loha Pul ready for train ops

New Delhi, (GNS) : Following a decade-long delay marked by missed deadlines and multiple challenges, the new rail bridge built alongside Delhi's historic Loha Pul is now ready for train operations.

A senior Northern Railway official said, "We recently conducted a trial run, and received clearance from the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS)." He added that the train operations have already begun in one direction - from Delhi towards the Delhi-Shadara section - and services for trains coming into Delhi will commence soon. Officials said full operations on both sides are likely to begin soon, with only final technical formalities remaining. "Non-interlocking work is currently underway in some sections, which involves connecting the bridge to signalling systems. Once this is completed, the inauguration will follow," the official said. The inauguration is likely to take place later this month or early next month.

The CRS inspection was carried out, after which authorisation was granted for the cut-and-connection process to begin traffic movement.

The 865-metre-long bridge, built at a cost of Rs 227 crore, is expected to significantly ease rail traffic. Unlike the old Loha Pul, the new structure imposes no speed restrictions on electric multiple unit (EMU) trains. It has been constructed at a higher elevation over the Yamuna to ensure uninterrupted operations even during high floods.

Designed with modern steel girders and bolted connections, the bridge features a double rail line and has been built to a 25-tonne loading standard. It has undergone static load testing and "performed satisfactorily", officials said.

The existing Yamuna bridge, popularly known as Loha Pul, dates back to 1867 and has far exceeded its intended lifespan. It is a two-deck structure, with road traffic passing through the lower deck and trains operating on the upper deck. Due to its age, trains crossing the bridge are subject to a speed restriction of 30 kmph. The new bridge has been developed exclusively for train movement, while the old bridge will continue to be used for road traffic.

The new bridge's construction has been fraught with delays. The project was originally approved in 1997-98, with construction beginning in 2003. It was initially scheduled for completion by 2007, but faced hurdles. One of the challenges was its proximity to Salimgarh Fort, a protected monument. According to a senior railway official, the alignment of the bridge had to be altered as part of the construction required land within the fort premises.

'Don't be lax': Delhi high court asks cops to ensure peace on Eid in Uttam Nagar

New Delhi, (GNS) : Police must be "extra cautious" to ensure a conducive atmosphere for Eid so that the "situation doesn't take an ugly turn", the high court said Thursday while reviewing steps taken to secure Uttam Nagar, where a 26-year-old youth was killed in a clash on Holi.

"Whatever happens in Delhi has a ripple effect, please don't be lax," a bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia told the counsel for police, stressing that the bandobast in the area should be such that it instils a sense of safety and security in all. It directed the authorities to ensure no one plays any mischief that has the potential to create any "untoward situation" while making it clear that heavy police arrangements in the area shall continue till Ram Navami.

HC pointed out that Eid is meant for celebration, and it is



the duty of all authorities to ensure that on such a "pious occasion", public life is not disrupted by any untoward incident of vandalism or hooliganism by any individual or any section of society. It was dealing with a PIL filed by a civil rights group, Association for Protection of Civil Rights, seeking court's intervention as it feared "imminent communal violence" on Eid in Uttam Nagar.

HC noted that the apprehensions in the petition arose from the incident of the death of a youth in the area on March

4, and, therefore, the police must be "extra cautious" and ensure that "all sections of society maintain restraint considering the past incident".

The court added that if, upon assessment of the situation, a need is felt to strengthen the arrangements, such measures shall be forthwith taken by the authorities.

"The situation as described in the petition not only calls upon authorities to be at constant strict vigil but it also calls upon members of different sections of society to maintain restraint and conduct them-

selves in a manner which may promote peace and harmony and not cause any situation which may turn ugly," the bench underlined.

Standing counsel for Delhi Police, Sanjay Lao, assured HC that adequate police personnel from Dwarka district, 400 additional armed force personnel from Delhi Police, and 400 central armed police forces have been deployed to ensure Eid passes without incident in the area.

Since March 5, adequate police arrangements have been made round-the-clock in Uttam Nagar JJ colony as well as the neighbouring areas, and several preventive actions have been taken, Lao told the court, adding that companies of armed police personnel are present in all 11 areas under police stations in Dwarka district and hundreds of police personnel are on vigil. He further said that 50 inflammable posts were taken

down from social media platforms following monitoring of online platforms, and requests have been made to take down about 170 such posts to date.

Extensive verification has also been undertaken of over 8,000 persons in the area, "peace committees" have been formed at every police station, and 30 meetings have been held with the heads of religious places in the last two weeks, the police counsel further said. Additional solicitor general Chetan Sharma, appearing for the Centre, said the area is "saturated with security" and police have done commendable work.

Senior advocate Nitya Ramkrishnan, who appeared for the petitioner, submitted that on March 15, certain people openly called for violence against the members of the Muslim community in Uttam Nagar, but no action was taken for hate speech by police.

Delhi shocker: Gang shoots 30-year-old man dead, 3 injured including minor

New Delhi, (GNS) : Gunmen entered a grocery shop attached to a house in Bawana and fired around a dozen rounds, killing a 30-year-old man and wounding his 55-year-old father on Thursday. A passerby and an eight-year-old boy were also injured by stray bullets.

The deceased has been identified as Ravi. Police suspect he had links to the Gogi gang and was targeted by the rival Tillu Tajpuria gang.

His father Anil, and the passerby, 46-year-old Rajkumar, suffered gunshot wounds in their legs. The boy had a bullet-graze wound on the leg. Sources said the injured victims are out of danger.

A senior police officer said Ravi was arrested in an Arms Act case in 2022. Police had allegedly recovered four pistols from him. They are con-



ducting raids in Delhi and Haryana to nab the shooters.

Both Tillu and Gogi gangs have been locked in a bloody feud for over a decade and over two dozen people have been killed in this rivalry. In 2021, Gogi gang's kingpin

Jitender Gogi was shot dead in Rohini court. A year later, his rival Tillu Tajpuria, was killed in Tihar Jail. Last month, too, a man allegedly linked to the Gogi gang, Sahil Solanki, was shot in the head while walking near his house in Delhi.

Excessive heat starts second blaze in charred building

New Delhi, (GNS) : A second fire started on Wednesday night in the same building in southwest Delhi's Palam Village where nine people of a family died in a massive blaze that gutted their home and shop.

Police suspect the residual heat in the building could have been a reason for the flare-up, which was quickly brought under control.

The second fire has raised serious concerns about the potential for another hazard within the structure in a crowded and heavily populated area. Authorities remained on high alert to prevent more flare-ups. A senior police officer said that combustible materials on the premises, aided by strong winds, started the fire at night. "The residual heat in the building is likely to have caused the fire," he said.

The officer said the intensity of the first blaze also



delayed inspection and investigation into what caused the fire on Wednesday morning in the shop that Rajender Kashyap and his family ran.

On Thursday, a forensic science laboratory (FSL) team went to the site to collect samples of burnt debris, particularly from the ground floor, which is suspected to be the point of origin of the blaze.

Preliminary findings suggest a possible short circuit condition near a switchboard; however, the final report will provide clarity," an FSL official said.

Bitter pill: Delhi's MAMC junior doctors say forced to pay for seniors' meals, undergo 'murga' punishment

New Delhi, (GNS) : A long-standing "tradition" of junior resident doctors paying for meals and snacks for their seniors allegedly continues at Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC), despite the administration having earlier issued directives to curb such practices, multiple residents have told Media.



The issue came to light after a post on X flagged various coercive practices on campus and sought help against them. Media visited the college and spoke to several junior and senior residents, who said the practice has been continuing for years.

postgraduate residents are allegedly coerced into bearing food expenses of second- and third-year residents and senior residents during duty hours, often running into thousands each month, placing a financial burden on them. "We rotate payments

among ourselves to manage the cost. I come from a lower-income family and have to borrow money from friends to pay my share," a resident said. The practice does not stop at that, residents said.

"We are given 'murga' punishment, reprimanded

in front of patients and humiliated for mistakes," a resident said, adding that those who refuse risk being boycotted in a system where juniors heavily depend on seniors for clinical learning, especially in fields like surgery. "You can't afford to be on the wrong side of them," the resident said.

"It's called personality development here - a form of bonding with seniors. We comply to avoid getting targeted or falling into their bad books," he said.

At MAMC, what would amount to ragging in plain terms is often passed off as "tradition", residents said. A junior resident, on condition of anonymity,

described his experience: "They (the senior) called us inside the duty doctor's room and asked us to stand in anatomical position in a line. 'Aankhen third button se upar nahi uthani chahiye. Speak only when asked,' we were told."

Another resident alleged that juniors are sometimes asked to perform acts meant to amuse seniors during such sessions. He said such practices are often normalised, with some viewing them as part of assimilation while others feel pressured to comply.

"It has been reported that some residents are being compelled by their seniors to pay for their

snacks/meals in the name of tradition in MAMC. You are requested to enquire into any such practice in your respective departments and take appropriate steps," a 2023 circular from the dean read, asking for a report to be submitted.

Media reached out to MAMC dean Munisha Agarwal, but there was no response. Despite the circular, the residents said the practices continue informally.

Some senior residents, however, defended the system. "It's a harmless tradition, humne bhi kiya hai. We paid when we were in first year. It's voluntary - they can refuse. Waise bhi,

kya ye bachche mana karenge jab ye second year mein aayenge?" one said. "Some discipline is required. If they make mistakes, they will be reprimanded. Physical harm should not be there, bas," said another. The Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) president, Neeraj Azad Yadav, said, "We strongly condemn any form of harassment or intimidation and remain committed to ensuring a safe working environment for residents." He added that no incident of physical abuse has been formally or informally reported so far. RDA said such practices are not unique to MAMC

and exist, in varying forms, across medical institutes, often normalised as part of senior-junior dynamics.

WESTERN RAILWAY
VARIOUS WORK

Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer, (Construction) Western Railway, Prainagar, Vadodra, invites E-tender Notice No. TR-C-02-2026-F-R1, dt. 18.03.2026. Work & Location: Design, Drawing, Fabrication, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of Passenger Elevator (Lift) G+1, carrying 20 Passenger / 1360 kg capacity MRLS Elevator at Kundhela, Tilakwada and Moriya Rly station in connection with conversion from D class to B class Rly station of Dabhoi-Chandod Gauge conversion with extension upto Kevadiya. Approx. cost of work: ₹1,33,82,110.52. Bid Security: ₹ 2,16,900/-. Date & Time of bidding start: on 25.03.2026. Date & Time of closing tender: on 08.04.2026 till 15:00 hrs. For further details please visit our website www.ireps.gov.in 1243

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By replacing, not repairing Delhiites fuel e-waste crisis

New Delhi, (GNS) : High repair costs, limited access to original spare parts and persistent service barriers are pushing Delhi's consumers away from repairing their electronics goods, thus accelerating the city's growing e-waste crisis, a new study by Toxics Link has found.

The report, 'Stitch in Time: Evaluating Consumer Behaviour & Electronics Repair Accessibility', highlights how Delhi, along with Hyderabad, is witnessing a strong shift towards replacing devices, across income groups, reflecting a fast-paced



consumption pattern and weakening repair culture. The study conducted by the environmental NGO finds that while Delhi, one of India's largest electronics mar-

kets and a major e-waste generator, still has thriving repair hubs like Karol Bagh and Mohan Singh Market, systemic challenges are making repair less viable for

both consumers and technicians.

The report states that consumers increasingly opt to buy new devices because of high repair costs, lack of original components and low trust in unauthorised service providers. Most independent repair shops rely on cheaper, non-original components sourced from informal markets due to restricted access to manufacturer-approved parts.

This not only affects the quality of repair but also reduces consumer trust, often leading customers to opt for replacements instead.

Delhi govt to engage third-party experts for fire audits: Sood

New Delhi, (GNS) : Delhi govt will involve third-party experts for fire audits of every establishment in the city to ensure that there are no safety gaps. The decision was announced by home minister Ashish Sood on Thursday, a day after a massive fire in a residential-cum-commercial building in Palam killed nine people, including three children, of the same family.

"Moving beyond standard protocol, we have mandated that every single establishment - including those located away in residential areas - must strictly be in pursuit of standard safety rules. To get this done with speed and precision, we have ordered that third-party



experts map and audit every establishment in the city. Every worker and every family deserves to feel safe, no matter where they are. We are finishing the era of blind spots in our city's safety," Sood said.

The inspections would look at preparedness to prevent fires and respond to emergencies.

Priyadarshini Mattoo Case: HC orders convict Santosh Singh to surrender on Monday

New Delhi, (GNS) : In a significant development in the 1996 Priyadarshini Mattoo murder case, Delhi High Court on Thursday directed convict Santosh Singh to surrender on Monday, after the victim's brother strongly opposed his plea for premature release. Justice Anup J Bhambhani issued the order after taking note of submissions by Hemant Mattoo, Priyadarshini's elder brother and the last surviving member of the family. The court said it would consider Singh's plea for remission only after he surrenders.

Earlier in Jan, the court had issued notice to Hemant, noting that the "next of kin of the deceased/victim have not been intimated of the pendency of the present petition seeking premature release."

Singh, who was granted parole last year, has remained out of prison after securing extensions from the high court while his plea for remission is pending.

Appearing in the matter for the first time after being asked by the court, Hemant-represented by advocate Urvika Suri-opposed the plea and said he wished to assist the court in explaining why the Sentence Review Board (SRB) was right in rejecting Singh's request for premature release. Last year, a different high court bench had set aside the SRB's decision, observing that Singh had shown signs of reform. The court noted that the SRB had relied only on the gravity, cruelty and perversity of the crime, and on objections raised by Delhi Police and the CBI.

The bench had also noted that Singh was lodged in an open prison, allowing him to leave the prison complex daily between 8 am and 8 pm for work as a legal consultant-an indication, it said, of positive reformatory conduct. Priyadarshini Mattoo, 25, was raped and murdered in Jan 1996. Singh, then a law student at Delhi University, was acquitted by a trial court in 1999. However, on Oct 27, 2006, Delhi High Court overturned the verdict, convicted him of rape and murder, and sentenced him to death. In Oct 2010, Supreme Court upheld the conviction but commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment.

Asha and Anganwadi workers to be trained as para legal volunteers

New Delhi, (GNS) : Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA) is set to roll out a series of initiatives aimed at strengthening access to justice at the grassroots, including the launch of 'Community Legal Empowerment through Health and Childcare Platforms' on March 23.

The programme seeks to integrate legal awareness into existing health and childcare systems by leveraging the extensive reach of ASHA and Anganwadi workers under the National Health Mission and the Integrated Child Development Services.

As part of the initiative, selected ASHA and Anganwadi workers will be trained as para legal volunteers. They will function as a bridge between legal services institutions and local communities, disseminating legal information, identifying vulnerable individuals and helping people access legal aid.

DSLISA will also release a new resource, 'Handbook-cum-Field Diary for Para Legal Volunteers - 2026', designed as a practical guide to promote legal awareness and support community-level access to justice. The handbook outlines the legal services framework under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, explains the structure of the system at national, state and district levels. Another key initiative is the setting up of hospital facilitation centres in govt hospitals across Delhi to provide legal assistance alongside free medical care. These centres will prioritise support for victims of offences against women and children, ensuring they receive timely, sensitive and dignified assistance.

'Feels like Independence Day': Elvish Yadav questions media trial in 'fake' snake venom case

New Delhi, (GNS) : Elvish Yadav, YouTuber and Bigg Boss OTT winner has reacted after the Supreme Court on Thursday has quashed an FIR and criminal proceedings against him in a case linked to the alleged use of snake venom at a rave party in UP's Noida, saying he now felt "free" and calling it his "Independence Day".

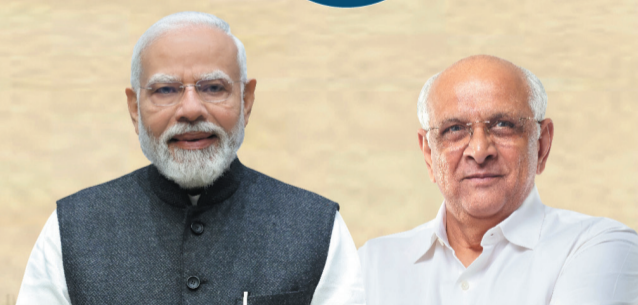
Following the verdict, Yadav said he always trusted the judicial system but questioned who would compensate him and his family for the distress they endured.


Elvish Yadav was booked by the Uttar Pradesh Police in November 2023 and later arrested on March 17, 2024, as part of an investigation into the suspected use of snake venom as a recreational drug. He was among six people named in an FIR registered at Sector 49 police station in Noida.

A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kotiswar Singh ruled that the case could not stand in law, noting that the complaint under the Wildlife (Protection) Act had not been filed by an authorised person. In a video shared on X, Yadav expressed relief after the ruling and said he felt vindicated. "I am very happy today. The Supreme Court has quashed the snake-related case against me. I always had faith in our judicial system that justice would prevail. Those who have done wrong will be punished, and those who are innocent will be saved," he said.

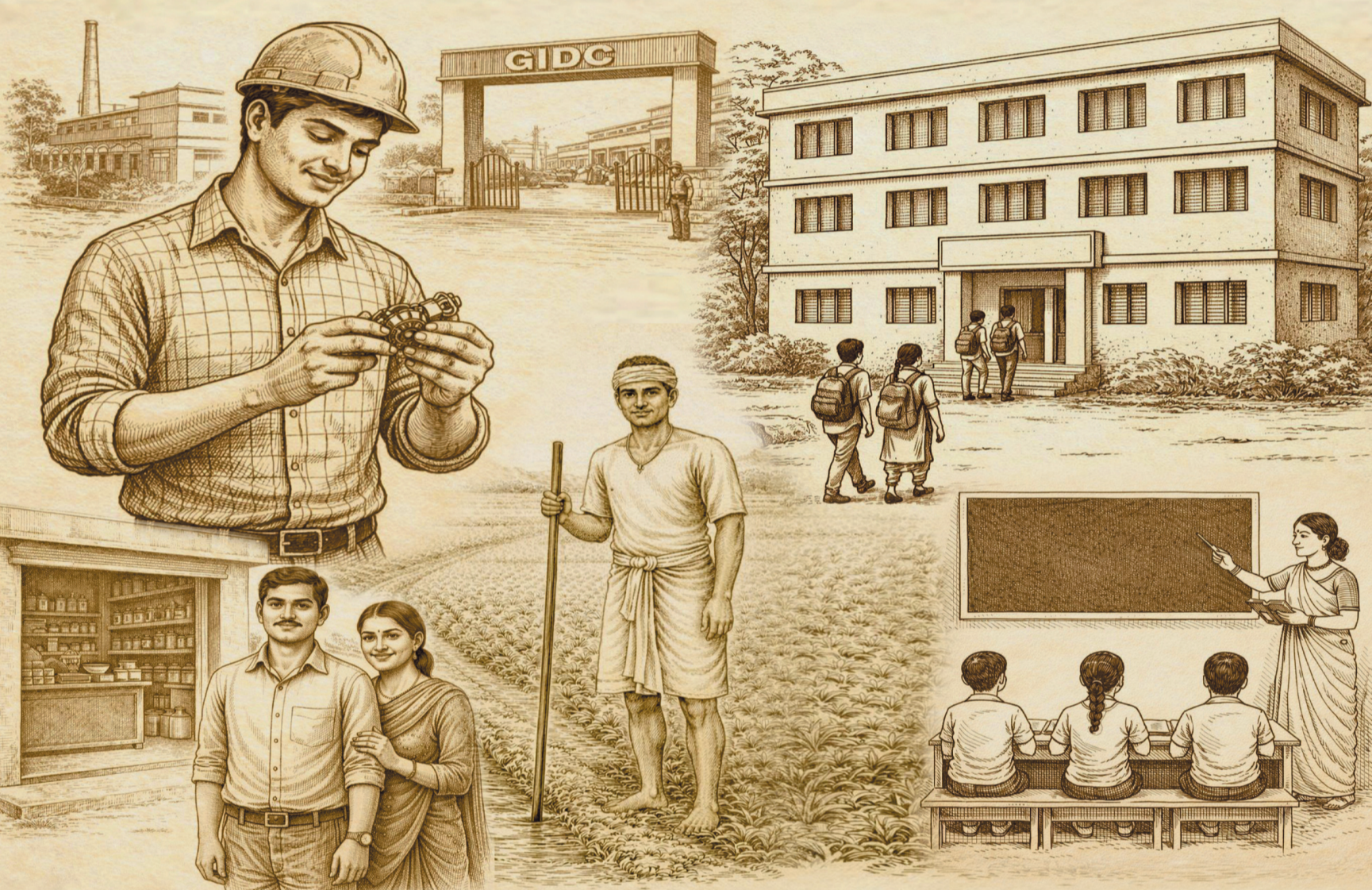
He thanked the judiciary and said he now felt "free" after the case was dismissed. Recalling his arrest, he said, "Exactly two years ago, on March 17, 2024, I was arrested in this false case. Since November 2023, when the case was registered, I have been saying that I had done nothing wrong." Yadav also alleged that media coverage caused significant hardship for him and his family.

"The media ran continuous reports claiming I was guilty. My family faced immense harassment. For over two-and-a-half years, there was a stigma attached to my name and my family suffered greatly," he said.







Development Reaches Every Tribal Area



Provision of ₹5425 Crore for Tribal Development Department





- ◆ ₹909 crore to extend post-matric scholarship benefits to about 2.35 lakh students
- ◆ ₹595 crore for over 1 lakh students across 665 Ashram Schools
- ◆ ₹679 crore for the construction of Government Hostels, Adarsh Nivasi Shalas, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, and Girls Literacy Schools
- ◆ ₹485 crore for the lift irrigation scheme in tribal areas
- ◆ Provision of ₹280 crore for 26 Juth Pani Purvatha Yojana, covering 651 villages across 14 tribal districts
- ◆ Establishment of 5 GIDCs to promote entrepreneurship and generate employment in tribal areas
- ◆ Provision of ₹22 crore for a health assistance scheme to support tribal doctors in establishing speciality/multi-speciality hospitals/general nursing homes/dispensaries in tribal areas

"Prioritizing the education, health, and employment of our tribal communities, this budget truly brings the boundless benefits of development directly to their doorsteps. Through the holistic empowerment of our 'Adijati bandhu', we are building a stronger and developed Gujarat."

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