

NAMAZ ON ROADS

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in his characteristic style has asked Muslims to refrain from using roads for offering prayers and instead hold it inside the mosque premises in shifts, in case of a bigger congregation. A stickler for rules and a no-nonsense Administrator, Yogi is not known for mincing his words and does plain speaking. Sometimes, he sounds harsh but the tone cuts across communities. During his tenure, Uttar Pradesh once notorious for communal clashes and criminals ruling the roost, is growing well and peace prevails all over the state. His government has never discriminated against any community and in particular Muslims. There is data to suggest that Muslims received larger attention in the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme in which poor families were assisted in construction of houses. Eid is a pious festival for Muslims. It's time for Muslims to submit to the command of the Almighty and surely not for creating bad blood. Religion enjoins upon Muslims to share the meat of a sacrificial animal with neighbours and poor people to generate goodwill and brotherhood. The Eid must be celebrated in letter and spirit of the festival that it is.

NCW ON J&K

Since it's clear that the National Commission for Women has the jurisdiction over J&K and no separate body is required, it can be a game changer for women's rights in the UT. While the State commissions in the past were also, and lacked wherewithal, the NCW is an effective body. Women in J&K are facing problems like domestic violence and drug addiction among young girls as never before. The NCW can intervene and not only take up the case of violations but also organize sensitization and education workshops or sessions on these twin issues. The NGOs and activists working on gender must take advantage of this situation to give a fillip to women's rights campaign.

Deepak Gupta |
Dilip Kumar Khare

India's visible anxiety over LPG supplies amid the ongoing Iran conflict is not merely a temporary wartime supply-chain disruption. It is a deeper structural warning about the fragility of India's energy security architecture. While emergency measures may help the system absorb immediate shocks, the crisis has once again exposed India's overwhelming dependence on imported energy and the strategic vulnerabilities that accompany it.

In a world increasingly shaped by geopolitical instability, sanctions, conflicts and unpredictable leadership, energy dependence is no longer merely an economic concern; it directly affects national autonomy and strategic decision-making. As India charts its path towards a cleaner and more resilient energy future, national conversations are understandably dominated by solar and nuclear power. Yet, hidden in plain sight lies another transformative opportunity — one buried in our farms, landfills,

cattle sheds, sewage systems and urban waste mountains. Biogas, and its upgraded form compressed biogas (CBG), offers India a rare solution that simultaneously addresses energy security, waste management, climate resilience, rural livelihoods, public health and fiscal prudence.

India today faces two parallel crises — waste and energy. Urban garbage dumps are turning into environmental disasters, rural waste remains underutilised and untreated sewage pollutes rivers and groundwater. At the same time, the country spends enormous sums importing LNG, LPG and fertilisers while subsidising their domestic consumption. Yet the raw material for reducing this dependence already exists in abundance. India generates over 700 million tonnes of agricultural residue annually, nearly 150 million tonnes of municipal solid waste, over a billion tonnes of cattle dung and massive volumes of sewage every day. This enormous waste stream can produce millions of tonnes of biogas while simultaneously cleaning cities, reducing methane emissions, improving farmer incomes, creating jobs and lowering import bills. The economic

Satheesan's rise ends Congress rift in Kerala

Kalyani Shankar

The Congress party faced major challenges within its ranks while choosing Kerala's Chief Minister. The process lasted 11 days and proved crucial in resolving disagreements among various party factions, underscoring the importance of internal consensus in maintaining party unity.

VD was ultimately chosen despite stiff competition from KC Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithala. Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi reportedly took public sentiment into account while making their decision. Internal tensions surfaced throughout the selection process, but Venugopal eventually backed Satheesan's appointment in what was seen as a move in the larger interests of the party. The Congress high command itself appeared divided. Sonia Gandhi reportedly supported Chennithala, Rahul Gandhi favoured Venugopal, while Priyanka Gandhi backed Satheesan. These differing preferences revealed internal conflicts within the party leadership. At the same time, the Congress also faced pressure from its ally, the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), as well as from public opinion, both of which influenced the Gandhi family's political calculations.

Disagreements between Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi became visible through posters displayed outside Congress offices and Priyanka Gandhi's Wayanad office. One poster read: "Mr Rahul, KC may be your bag bearer, but the people of Kerala will never forgive you," reflecting grassroots opposition to Venugopal's possible elevation.

Rahul Gandhi played a key role in resolving the leadership deadlock by assessing public sentiment and coordinating discussions with Venugopal, Satheesan and Chennithala. He held extensive meetings in Delhi with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi to break the post-election stalemate within the United Democratic Front (UDF).

The IUML strongly backed Satheesan



because of his secular credentials. Venugopal, after meeting Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi for more than two hours, expressed his support for Satheesan's appointment despite being a leading contender himself. He emphasised that the party's interests should take precedence over personal ambition.

A six-term MLA and the face of the UDF campaign, Satheesan had pledged to resign if the alliance failed to win at least 100 of Kerala's 140 Assembly seats. The UDF eventually secured 102 seats, with the Congress emerging as the single largest party, reinforcing confidence in Satheesan's leadership.

Rahul Gandhi's backing for Venugopal was complicated by the constitutional requirement that Venugopal resign from his MP post and contest an Assembly seat to become Chief Minister. Meanwhile, grassroots protests increasingly favoured Satheesan, who had emerged as a powerful opposition voice against the Pinarayi Vijayan-led government. He played a central role in bringing the UDF back to power after a decade in opposition.

The protests against the possible appointment of Venugopal highlighted the depth of internal divisions within the Congress. Satheesan himself acknowl-

edged that these demonstrations shaped public opinion. The party now sees an opportunity to present itself as a strong national alternative to the BJP.

However, Satheesan's ability to reshape Kerala's political landscape will depend on several factors. While he enjoys broad public support, the Congress power structure and internal hierarchy remain significant considerations. During the 2021 Assembly elections, divisions between Christian and Muslim communities weakened the Congress and helped Pinarayi Vijayan secure a second consecutive term.

As Kerala's newly sworn-in Chief Minister, Satheesan faces immediate administrative and economic challenges, including a severe financial crisis, mounting debt and a widening revenue deficit. His ability to tackle these issues will define public confidence in his leadership.

His first major political test will be cabinet formation, which requires balancing competing Congress factions, satisfying alliance partners such as the IUML and preventing resentment within the party. He has already announced ten Congress ministers and later inducted five IUML ministers.

Satheesan must also focus on eco-

nomie revival, job creation and fiscal management while carefully navigating minority community politics. At the same time, he will have to counter BJP criticism regarding the Congress party's ties with the IUML and Jamaat-e-Islami, while maintaining internal unity and preventing sabotage from rival factions.

Emphasising inclusiveness, Satheesan stated that dissent is an essential part of democracy. "Those who dislike me, those who opposed me, and those who criticised me all have the right to express their views," he said.

Jamaat-e-Islami reportedly played a role in consolidating Muslim support for Satheesan. Maintaining his secular image while managing relationships with such allies will remain a delicate balancing act. He must also navigate the competing interests of Jamaat-e-Islami and Samastha, the influential Sunni organisation that quietly backed him.

Satheesan now leads a legislative party that still includes several members who did not support his elevation. At the same time, he risks alienating sections of Hindu voters concerned about the perceived growing influence of Muslim organisations in Kerala politics. This concern also extends to moderate and reformist Muslims uneasy about increasing communal polarisation.

Upon assuming office, Satheesan described the electoral mandate as a collective achievement. His success in building a cohesive administration and managing Kerala's political and financial challenges will determine whether his journey from Cantonment House to Cliff House becomes a defining chapter in his political career.

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The author is a popular columnist; Views presented are personal.

DISCIPLINE: THE FOUNDATION OF A STRONG SOCIETY

Rajyogi Brahma Kumar Nikunj Ji

Discipline is essential for every living being, but for human beings, who are social by nature, it becomes even more important. Without discipline, society would descend into chaos, making peaceful coexistence impossible. Discipline is not something that can simply be learnt from books or imposed by others; it must become a natural part of daily life. From the moment a person wakes up until the time they go to sleep, discipline guides behaviour, thoughts and responsibilities.

The dictionary defines discipline as training oneself to act according to rules and maintaining a routine that develops skills and character. In reality, discipline acts as a control over emotions, actions and impulses. It helps individuals lead a balanced and organised life. Simple habits such as waking up on time, maintaining a healthy diet, exercising regularly and managing time properly are all reflections of discipline. However, discipline is not limited to routines alone. It also involves inner control — the ability to manage anger, speech, desires and reactions. A disciplined person may not be flawless, but such a person is dependable, calm and trustworthy. These qualities earn respect and create stability in both personal and social life.

In today's world, indiscipline and the erosion of human values are becoming major



concerns. Many social problems arise because people fail to exercise self-control and responsibility. No nation can progress without disciplined citizens. Lack of discipline often reflects frustration, dissatisfaction and a weakening of moral values. It leads to unrest, aggression and disrespect for social norms. What is often mistaken for freedom may actually be uncontrolled behaviour driven by the desire for attention and recognition. Such attitudes disturb peace within society and weaken the collective spirit of progress. The younger generation, in particular, requires proper guidance and constructive engagement. Youth possess im-

mense energy, creativity and ambition, but without direction these qualities can turn into frustration and rebellion. Parents play a crucial role in shaping the character of their children. If they lead by example through honesty, sacrifice, understanding and integrity, children naturally learn to respect discipline.

At the same time, children themselves must also take responsibility for their actions. Peer pressure and misguided influences often encourage negative behaviour and indiscipline among youngsters. One of the biggest reasons behind growing indiscipline is the decline of moral and spiritual

education in schools, colleges and homes. Modern education focuses heavily on academic success and career growth, but often neglects values such as patience, humility, tolerance and respect for elders. Spiritual and moral teachings help individuals develop self-control and emotional balance. They transform restless minds into responsible and compassionate personalities dedicated to society. Another concern is the blind imitation of foreign lifestyles and cultures at the cost of traditional values. Modernisation itself is not harmful, but abandoning one's cultural roots entirely creates confusion and weakens social identity. Indian culture has always emphasised respect, discipline, family values and harmony. These principles were carefully nurtured by previous generations, but many of them are gradually fading in today's fast-changing world.

Therefore, the need of the hour is to revive strong moral foundations and cultural values among the younger generation. Discipline must begin at home and continue through education and society. Only by combining modern progress with strong ethical values can India create responsible citizens and a peaceful society. Discipline is the foundation of growth, harmony and success.

The writer is a spiritual teacher and a popular columnist; Views presented are personal.

India's crisis of imported gas and how to resolve it

Deepak Gupta |
Dilip Kumar Khare

India's visible anxiety over LPG supplies amid the ongoing Iran conflict is not merely a temporary wartime supply-chain disruption. It is a deeper structural warning about the fragility of India's energy security architecture. While emergency measures may help the system absorb immediate shocks, the crisis has once again exposed India's overwhelming dependence on imported energy and the strategic vulnerabilities that accompany it.

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India today faces two parallel crises — waste and energy. Urban garbage dumps are turning into environmental disasters, rural waste remains underutilised and untreated sewage pollutes rivers and groundwater. At the same time, the country spends enormous sums importing LNG, LPG and fertilisers while subsidising their domestic consumption. Yet the raw material for reducing this dependence already exists in abundance. India generates over 700 million tonnes of agricultural residue annually, nearly 150 million tonnes of municipal solid waste, over a billion tonnes of cattle dung and massive volumes of sewage every day. This enormous waste stream can produce millions of tonnes of biogas while simultaneously cleaning cities, reducing methane emissions, improving farmer incomes, creating jobs and lowering import bills. The economic

implications are staggering. A large-scale biogas revolution could potentially save India Rs 30,000-40,000 crore annually in gas imports and fertiliser subsidies. It would support India's broader developmental objectives, from Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047 to the country's net-zero commitments. The challenge is no longer technological feasibility. It is one of policy urgency, institutional coordination, financing models and implementation capacity.

Urban India represents perhaps the biggest untapped opportunity. Indian cities generate nearly 1.7 lakh tonnes of municipal waste every day, yet barely half is scientifically processed. If even half of the organic component of urban waste were processed through decentralised biogas plants, India could generate over 15 million tonnes of CBG annually. However, this requires systemic reform. Wet waste from vegetable markets, cattle yards and households should be separately processed. Crucially, cities need financially sustainable models that compensate waste

collectors, aggregators and processors while integrating produced biogas into city gas distribution networks. Equally neglected is the massive biogas potential hidden in India's sewage infrastructure. Hundreds of sewage treatment plants have been constructed under missions such as Namami Gange and AMRUT, yet most lack effective anaerobic digesters for gas recovery. Optimised sewage treatment systems could produce millions of tonnes of CBG while simultaneously recycling water at a time when Indian cities are approaching severe water stress. Every large sewage treatment plant should therefore be mandated to include anaerobic digestion and gas utilisation systems, supported by clear incentives and integration with urban gas grids. In rural India, the opportunities are even more transformative.

Millions of households possessing cattle can potentially shift from LPG dependence to household biogas systems. Earlier biogas programmes saw limited success due to weak maintenance structures and poor business models. However, innovative models are now emerging. In parts of Gujarat,

private developers install and maintain household biogas units while collecting slurry to convert it into bio-fertiliser through cluster-based processing systems. The financial benefits are extraordinary. Under current LPG subsidy structures, the government bears a substantial subsidy burden annually for rural households. If millions of households transition to biogas, subsidy savings alone could run into over Rs 1 lakh crore annually, apart from reducing imports. Rural families themselves would save thousands of rupees each year in cooking fuel expenses. Meanwhile, processed slurry can replace a significant portion of chemical fertilisers, reducing urea subsidies and improving soil health, water retention and long-term agricultural sustainability. Agricultural residue management represents another major frontier. India burns over 50 million tonnes of crop stubble annually, contributing heavily to air pollution and environmental degradation.

Yet this residue can generate substantial quantities of CBG. The SATAT initiative, launched in 2018, aimed to establish thousands of CBG plants,

but progress has remained disappointing due to pricing uncertainty, poor evacuation infrastructure and weak commercial viability. The lesson is clear: biogas cannot succeed without integrated policy support. Biogas also has a crucial role in India's evolving renewable energy landscape. What India therefore requires is not another isolated scheme, but a unified National Biogas Mission. The next great energy revolution may not lie only in the sunlight above us. It lies equally in the waste beneath our feet, the sewage flowing through our drains and the agricultural residue currently going up in smoke. Every untreated litre of sewage, every burning field of stubble, every overflowing landfill and every unused cattle shed represents lost energy, lost wealth and lost opportunity. The clock is ticking. India cannot afford to waste its waste any longer.

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