



TODAY'S PAPER

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GUJARAT HIGH COURT

Gujarat lawyers to stay away from courts for two days over Rent Bill dispute

BY SHEIKH RAYEES

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The Gujarat High Court Advocates' Association (GHCAA) has decided to abstain from court proceedings for two days in protest against provisions of the Gujarat Rent Bill, 2026. The association resolved to stay away from court work on October 5 and 6 after an Extraordinary General Body meeting held at the Gujarat High Court on Monday. The meeting was chaired by GHCAA President and Senior

Advocate Yatin Oza. The move comes in support of advocates practising before the City Civil Court and Small Causes Court, who have been opposing the proposed changes under the Bill. The decision also follows a resolution adopted by the Bar Council of Gujarat (BCG) backing the lawyers' protest. At the centre of the dispute is the

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DELHI HIGH COURT

Section 164 Statement Cannot Replace Substantive Trial Evidence

BY EDITORIAL TEAM

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The Delhi High Court has dismissed the State's appeal against the acquittal of a man prosecuted for rape, holding that a statement recorded under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure cannot replace substantive testimony at trial.

The complainant died before she could depose and face cross-examination. The prosecution relied on her police complaint, magistrate-recorded statement, medical findings and a suicide note. Justice Vimal Kumar Yadav said those materials created a strong possibility supporting the allegation, but criminal liability requires

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Bill's proposal to move the adjudication of rent-related disputes away from courts and place it in the hands of revenue authorities. The legislation, which has cleared the Gujarat Legislative Assembly, is awaiting the Governor's approval. Under the proposed framework, officials including Deputy Collectors and Additional Collectors would be empowered to hear and decide rent disputes. Lawyers in Ahmedabad had already begun demonstrations against the proposal. Advocates at the City Civil and Small Causes Courts had earlier abstained from work and restricted access to the Bhadra court complex as part of their protest. The Bar Council of Gujarat subsequently held an extraordinary general body meeting on October 3 and extended its support to the agitation. It called for lawyers across the State to abstain from proceedings before courts, tribunals, judicial and quasi-judicial bodies and revenue authorities from October 5 until the dispute is resolved. The Council has raised concerns over the proposed transfer of adjudicatory powers from judicial forums to administrative officials. It has argued that the move could affect lawyers and litigants while

also placing an additional burden on an already stretched administrative machinery. Questions have also been raised about how evidence would be recorded and assessed in rent disputes once the matters are shifted to revenue authorities. The Bar Council has sought a meeting with Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and the State Law Minister, seeking amendments to the legislation and restoration of rent-dispute adjudication to judicial authorities. The GHCAA's two-day abstention is intended to reinforce the demand and demonstrate solidarity with advocates appearing before the City Civil and Small Causes Courts.

DELHI HIGH COURT

Section 164 Statement Cannot Replace Substantive Trial Evidence

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admissible evidence proving guilt beyond reasonable doubt. The court explained that a Section 164 statement ordinarily serves to corroborate or contradict a witness; it does not itself become substantive evidence when the maker is unavailable for examination. Medical evidence, including recorded injuries, could have supported testimony had it been given, but could not independently cure that evidentiary gap. Finding no perversity in the trial court's acquittal, the High Court dismissed the appeal and discharged the bail bonds.