

# Darya Ganj book market shut, vendors seek revised time

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**VENDORS** AT Darya Ganj's Sunday Book Bazaar refused to open their stalls at Mahila Haat on Sunday to demand changing the market timing to 7 am to 5 pm from the current 4 pm to 10 pm. Since the pandemic, weekly markets have been directed to open from 4 pm to 10 pm.

The Darya Ganj Sunday Book Bazaar, which was evicted from the pavements and relocated to the Mahila Haat near Delhi Gate in 2019, has been similarly following the latest timings.

The vendors have been appealing to change their timings to 7 am to 5 pm, like it was before the pandemic, and have approached and written to the district administration many times, most recently on February 4.

Qamar Sayeed, the president of the Bazaar's vendor welfare association, said, "These timings are not good for us or our customers, who are largely students coming from far-off places at times. Not only are they not allowing poor people like us to conduct our business properly when the cases are going down, but this is also affecting the education of these students, who don't have the money to shop at expensive places."

Asharfilal Verma, the association's Vice President, said, "We have approached the administration many times.. We follow all social distancing and sanitation



**Many were unaware of the strike.** *Ananya Tiwari*

protocols."

Around 30 customers, largely young students, were left stranded after they reached Mahila Haat in the early afternoon. Navin Malik (21), who hails from Sonapat and is preparing for the UPSC exam, said, "It took me 2-3 hours to just get here. I have come here often and I tend to get a wide variety of books at affordable prices here."

Geetanjali (21), a masters student at Delhi university who had come from Shahdara, said, "It took around 2 hours to get here using public transport. I get good quality books here and at good prices. Afternoon-evening times are not very feasible for me as my family puts restrictions."

Sub-divisional magistrate of Kotwali Arvind Rana told *The Indian Express*: "A joint inspection was done by a team Sunday to assess if a change of timing is feasible. They will submit a report and a decision shall be taken then."