

Increasing the Uptake of Eco-friendly Crematoriums

Final Report
May 2025





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Table of Contents

Executive summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Research Methodology and Design Process.....	7
2.1 Diagnostic Phase.....	8
Sample characteristics.....	9
2.2 Design Phase.....	10
3. Key Diagnostic Insights.....	11
3.1 Key Touchpoints in the Decision-Making Process.....	12
3.2 Behavioural Barriers:.....	13
3.3 Structural Barriers:.....	16
3.4 Key Enablers:.....	18
4. Overview of Interventions.....	20
4.1 Summary of Behavioural Pathways.....	21
4.2 Summary of Shortlisted Behavioural Interventions.....	22
4.3 Summary of Shortlisted Structural Interventions.....	25
4.4 Potential Implementation Roadmap.....	26
5. Detailed Intervention Briefs.....	28
Intervention 1: Campaign to encourage conversations around “last wishes”.....	29
Intervention 2: Prompt discussion of last rites preferences during critical life milestones.....	35
Intervention 3: Campaign highlighting the number of older people preferring electric pyres.....	40
Intervention 4: Digital pledges to pre-commit to using electric and CNG pyres.....	45
Intervention 5: Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the suffering or “bhoj” on families.....	50
Intervention 6: Campaign highlighting influential or famous people who have used electric or CNG pyres.....	55
Intervention 7: Simplified decision aids to positively frame electric and CNG pyres, and guide cremation choices.....	60
Intervention 8: Improving the aesthetics of electric and CNG crematoriums.....	65
Intervention 9: Include symbolic ways to perform rituals in electric and CNG crematoriums.....	67
Intervention 10: Redesign electric and CNG pyres to enable rituals like Kapal Kriya.....	69
Appendix.....	71

Executive summary

Traditional wood-based cremation remains the dominant practice in Delhi, contributing significantly to deforestation and air pollution. Despite the availability of eco-friendly alternatives like electric, CNG, and Mokshada pyres, their adoption remains limited. While structural factors play a role, behavioural and cultural barriers are equally significant. This project sought to identify and address these barriers using insights from behavioural science, with the goal of increasing the adoption of eco-friendly cremation options.

The Centre for Social and Behaviour Change at Ashoka University (CSBC), in partnership with Air Pollution Action Group (A-PAG) conducted a mixed-methods study to examine the barriers to the uptake of eco-friendly pyres, including a **comprehensive literature review, qualitative interviews with 42 participants, and a quantitative survey of 166 Delhi residents.**

The research surfaced **18 key behavioural insights**, including **12 key barriers** and **6 key enablers** that impact the take-up of eco-friendly pyres. Among other factors, crematorium layouts and pyre availability reinforce the use of traditional wood pyres. Deeply entrenched traditions further deter the adoption of alternative pyres. Moreover, misconceptions and stigma around electric and CNG pyres persist across various segments of the population.

Despite the barriers, our research uncovered several enablers: For instance, older adults, particularly those over 55, seem to prefer electric cremation at higher rates compared to younger individuals. Families also value honouring last wishes, even when they diverge from tradition, suggesting that pre-stated wishes can meaningfully shift cremation decisions.

Building on the diagnostic phase, CSBC conducted an ideation workshop with A-PAG to develop potential interventions. This process generated **20 intervention ideas**, which were subsequently prioritised based on impact and feasibility. From these, we identified **7 behavioural interventions** and **3 infrastructural interventions** to take forward.

These **10 interventions**, detailed in this report, represent a multifaceted approach to increase the voluntary uptake of electric and CNG cremation in Delhi, addressing both behavioural barriers and structural constraints.

To navigate directly to each intervention, please refer to the index below. We would recommend first pilot testing these intervention ideas before implementing them broadly:

[Intervention 1: Campaign to encourage conversations around “last wishes”](#)

[Intervention 2: Prompt discussion of last rites preferences during critical life milestones](#)

[Intervention 3: Campaign highlighting the number of older people preferring electric pyres](#)

[Intervention 4: Digital pledges to pre-commit to using electric and CNG pyres](#)

[Intervention 5: Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the suffering or “bhoj” on families](#)

[Intervention 6: Campaign highlighting influential or famous people who have used electric or CNG pyres](#)

[Intervention 7: Simplified decision aids to positively frame electric and CNG pyres, and guide cremation choices](#)

[Intervention 8: Improving the aesthetics of electric and CNG crematoriums](#)

[Intervention 9: Include symbolic ways to perform rituals in electric and CNG crematoriums](#)

[Intervention 10: Redesign electric and CNG pyres to enable rituals like Kapal Kriya](#)



1. Introduction

Introduction

Cremation is deeply rooted in religious and cultural traditions in India, where it is believed to aid the soul's journey toward moksha or liberation. These spiritual beliefs, along with centuries of practice, have made cremation the most common method of body disposal in the country. While religious and cultural motivations dominate in India, cremation is also gaining ground globally for its practicality. It is often seen as a logical, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable alternative to burial, and likely to become the dominant method of body disposal worldwide ([Slominski, 2023](#)). In urbanised regions where land scarcity and ecological concerns are growing, governments and environmental advocates are increasingly promoting cremation as a sustainable and viable option.

However, not all forms of cremation are beneficial for the environment. While electric and CNG cremation are environmentally sustainable methods, traditional, open pyre cremation practices have significant negative impacts, including deforestation, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and severe air pollution. In India, approximately 50–60 million trees are consumed for funeral pyres each year, contributing to 8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions ([Kermiliotis, 2011](#)). In Delhi specifically, cremations account for 4% of carbon monoxide emissions and a significant share of the city's PM 2.5 load, exacerbating air quality issues ([Vachasiddha et al., 2019](#)).

Given the negative environmental impacts of traditional cremation practices, certain crematoriums in Delhi have installed eco-friendly cremation options. However, take up of these alternatives has been extremely low due to deeply rooted cultural and religious beliefs, a lack of awareness, and operational inefficiencies. According to recent data sourced by A-PAG, at some crematoriums there are ~50 traditional cremations daily but there are only ~5 electric/CNG cremations per day on average.

While structural factors such as infrastructure and availability of pyres impact people's cremation choices, several behavioural barriers, including social, cultural, and especially religious norms, also shape decisions. This project, therefore, aimed to diagnose the barriers and enablers that impact the uptake of eco-friendly pyres, and design behaviourally-informed interventions to boost the adoption of these pyres.

2. Research Methodology and Design Process

Research Methodology and Design Process

2.1 Diagnostic Phase

CSBC, in partnership with A-PAG, conducted a mixed-methods study to examine the barriers to the uptake of eco-friendly pyres. Our study involved the following primary and secondary research methods:

1. **Literature review:** The team conducted a comprehensive literature review of 21 academic and policy articles to examine the current cremation landscape, as well as the religious, social, and environmental factors that surround the decision-making process for various cremation pyres.
2. **Qualitative study:** As part of the qualitative study, the team conducted field visits at 4 crematoriums, as well as 42 interviews with various stakeholders in order to gain a deep understanding of people's attitudes towards different pyres, as well as the religious, sociocultural, and infrastructural barriers that impact people's cremation decisions. Specific areas of inquiry included:
 - a. Pyre decision-making process and pyre awareness
 - b. Role of religious beliefs and traditions
 - c. Perceptions towards and usage of different cremation pyres
 - d. Myths and misconceptions surrounding alternative pyres
 - e. Operational and infrastructure challenges
 - f. Environmental risk perceptions
 - g. Change readiness and future outlook
3. **Quantitative survey:** The team conducted a quantitative survey of 166 Delhi residents using convenience sampling. The goal of this survey was to understand people's familiarity with, preferences for, and perceptions of various cremation pyres. Specific research areas included:
 - a. Pyre awareness, usage, and preferences
 - b. Influences on cremation decisions
 - c. Environmental concerns & risk perceptions
 - d. Ways to increase the adoption of eco-cremation options
 - e. Demographic influences on cremation choices

Sample characteristics

Qualitative study:

The CSBC and A-PAG team conducted field visits at 4 crematoriums across Delhi, including Nigambodh Ghat, Kalkaji, Green Park, and Sarai Kale Khan.

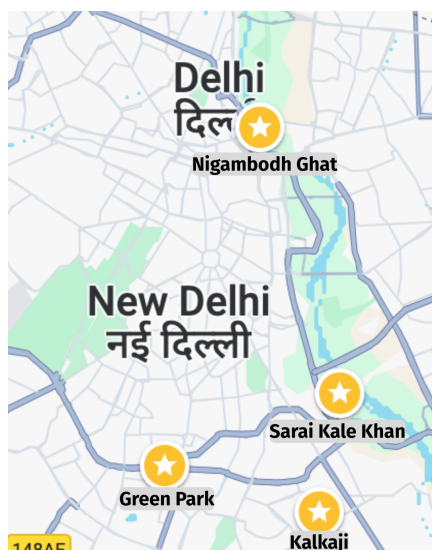


Figure 1: Map of crematoriums visited in Delhi

Additionally, the team conducted 42 interviews with various government and religious stakeholders, as well as with Delhi residents. The table below provides a summary of the types and number of stakeholders interviewed.

Group	Number
Government officials	2
Pandits	5
Crematorium manager	1
Electricians/Operators	2
Other crematorium staff	4

Citizens	18
Total	42

Quantitative survey:

Our sample consisted of 169 Delhi residents. Participants were recruited via convenience sampling, by sharing the survey in various Delhi-based WhatsApp groups such as RWA groups, family groups, and alumni groups, as well as by posting the survey on CSBC's LinkedIn page.

The analysis was restricted to 166 participants from families that practice cremation. Below is a summary of the sample characteristics.

Age	Age skewed younger, with 34.9% of the sample aged 25-34, and only 1.8% being aged 65 and above
Gender	Roughly 50-50 split (50.6% female, 47.6% male)
Education Level	The sample was highly educated, with 63.2% having a postgraduate degree or higher, and 34.9% having an undergraduate degree
Income Level	Household income skewed higher, with 46.4% having a household income of INR 2.5L or higher
Religion	88% of the sample was Hindu, and a small percentage of the sample followed Jainism and Sikhism

2.2 Design Phase

After gathering insights from the literature review as well as primary data through interviews and the survey, we synthesised the insights to identify key barriers and potential solutions. These findings were then presented in a design workshop aimed at ideating interventions. The workshop brought together 12 stakeholders from A-PAG and CSBC.

3. Key Diagnostic Insights

Key Diagnostic Insights

The diagnostic research uncovered several insights about the factors that drive people's cremation pyre decisions. Below, we will first outline the typical cremation decision-making process, followed by the key barriers and enablers that impact pyre decisions.

3.1 Key Touchpoints in the Decision-Making Process

Our research suggests that there are 3 key touchpoints in the pyre decision-making process, spanning the time from before a death occurs to arriving at a crematorium.

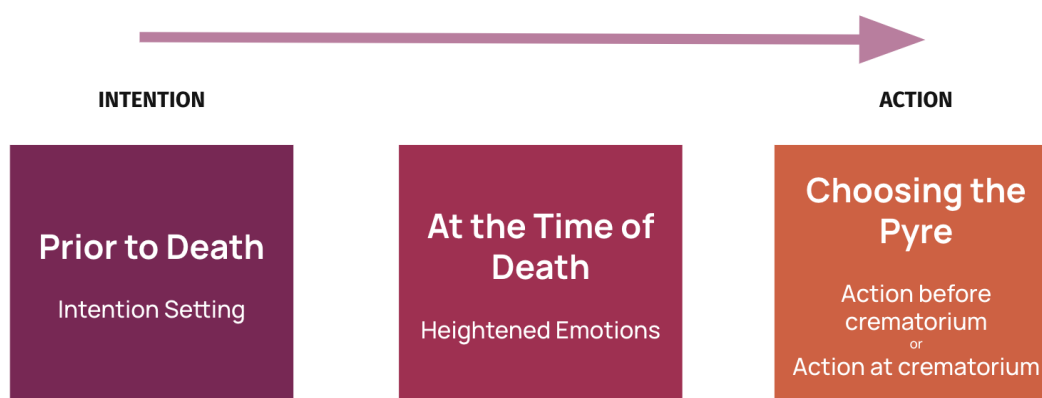


Figure 2: Key touchpoints in the cremation pyre decision-making process

3.1.1 Prior to death: Intention setting

During this stage, individuals may express wishes for how they would like to be cremated. This decision may occur any time before death, but it may be triggered by specific circumstances, such as experiencing a lung disease, leading to an aversion towards smoke. Moreover, if these wishes are communicated, they are typically relayed through informal conversations rather than through formal processes, although some individuals document their last wishes in their will. Additionally, immediate family members may also observe an individual's lifestyle during this time in order to understand their values (e.g. if the individual has conservative religious values), and consequently the type of pyre they may prefer.

3.1.2 Upon death: Heightened emotions

During this stage, the immediate family is overcome with grief and is in a state of heightened

emotions, making deliberative decision-making difficult, or nearly impossible. When planning last rites, this situation of grief results in defaulting to the type of pyre and the rituals that the family has always used, and what aligns with their religious beliefs.

3.1.3 Choosing the pyre

3.1.3.1 Action before the crematorium

During this stage, family members, typically elders, decide which pyre to use. This decision is made before arriving at the crematorium. If the deceased individual had previously expressed wishes for a specific type of pyre, then those last wishes are honoured, regardless of whether they align with tradition. Moreover, in some circumstances, factors such as time urgency for completing last rites (for instance, when the immediate family resides abroad) or a lack of immediate family members to perform the last rites, also shape pyre decisions.

3.1.3.2 Action at the crematorium

At the crematorium, the pyre choice is simply confirmed. This confirmation typically occurs during the registration process. The crematorium staff accept the pyre choice expressed by the family, although some still present all the available options. Moreover, crematoriums also have some signage on alternative pyres, but they are not typically read. In some cases, a lack of pyre availability at the crematorium might result in switching to a different pyre (e.g. switching from electric/CNG to traditional).

Given this process, it seems that the most appropriate time to intervene would be before a death occurs.

3.2 Behavioural Barriers:

Behavioural barriers refer to the social, emotional, cognitive, and cultural factors that influence decision-making in ways that may prevent the adoption of beneficial behaviours. In the context of cremation practices, these include deeply-rooted traditions, spiritual beliefs, emotional needs, prevailing social norms, and persistent misconceptions. Our research identified several such behavioural barriers that limit the uptake of eco-friendly pyres.

3.2.1 Entrenched traditions and religious rituals shape cremation preferences

Traditional wood-based cremation is widely seen as essential for spiritual outcomes like moksha or a favourable rebirth. Rituals such as *mukhagni* (lighting the pyre) and *kapal kriya* (breaking the skull) are believed to be crucial for this process. Fire is also spiritually important for cremation, but many believe that only wood can provide a “pure”/natural fire. Open flames and rising smoke, characteristic of wood pyres, are also symbolic of the soul's release and purification ([Prajapati & Bhaduri, 2019](#); [Ghosh & BK, 2022](#)). Additionally, performing last rites the way they have always been done is believed to help the soul reunite with ancestors. Many survey participants (58%) said that they use traditional wood pyres because that is what their family has always done and because it aligns with their religious values.

3.2.2 Emotional closure is tied to the visual and social experience of wood pyres

Cremation is not just about disposal; it is about getting closure. Watching the body burn, physically participating in rituals around the pyre, and being able to gather as a community around the pyre were highlighted as important for families to process their grief and get peace of mind. In contrast, electric and CNG pyres are often perceived as too quick, impersonal, and lacking the physical and symbolic space needed for a meaningful goodbye. The aesthetic experience in these pyre chambers is also seen as industrial, dim, and isolating, and not emotionally comforting or peaceful. Loud mechanical noises from electric cremation units were also mentioned as off-putting by an interviewee.



Figure 3: CNG pyre halls at Nigambodh Ghat

3.2.3 Stigma and misconceptions persist around alternative pyres

Electric and CNG cremations are stigmatised as being “only for unclaimed bodies” or for people who don’t have any immediate family. Families choosing these options are sometimes judged as not loving or honouring their parents, and as not caring about customs. There is also confusion about whether full rituals can be performed and whether ashes can be retrieved properly. Some fear that ashes may mix with those of people from other castes ([Kumari, 2021](#)). As a result, electric and CNG pyres are often seen as a last resort—used only during monsoons or under other exceptional circumstances.

3.2.4 Current trusted messengers endorse traditional pyres

Acharyas, or pandits, are looked to for guidance on performing various religious rituals. Although the interviewed Acharyas said they accept the family’s pyre choice and perform rituals for all types of cremations, most had a strong bias in favour of traditional pyres and believed it was the only one that aligned with important scriptures like the *Garud Puran*¹.

3.2.5 Misaligned incentives for crematorium managers

Crematorium managers also tend to have their own biases against electric and CNG pyres, and are consequently not motivated to promote these options. One crematorium manager looked down on electric and CNG pyres and said that they were for “people who don’t love their parents”. Financial disincentives also exist—such as with the Mokshada pyre, which reportedly requires more wood than stated and what customers are charged for—further reducing managers’ motivation to promote these alternatives.

3.2.6 Environmental concerns exist, but salience is low for many at the time of death

Although many are aware of the environmental impacts of traditional cremation, these concerns are often not top of mind during the emotionally charged time of death. Grief reduces the salience of longer-term issues like pollution and deforestation. Moreover, even though people may privately acknowledge the amount of smoke from a traditional cremation, they are reluctant to bring it up during this emotional and sensitive time. Furthermore, certain conservative religious individuals also have certain sacred beliefs (such as that the

¹ A religious scripture that is one of the eighteen Puranas of Hinduism, focused on the afterlife and the journey of the soul after death

Ganga is self-purifying, burning cow dung purifies the air, etc.) that further undermine environmental concerns about cremation ([Sachdeva, 2017](#)).

3.2.7 Limited attention/cognitive overload due to grief results in resorting to defaults

Participants described the cremation planning process as emotionally overwhelming. In such moments, they tend to follow default family practices rather than exploring alternative options and engaging in deliberative decision making.

3.2.8 Lack of awareness of alternative pyre types

Both interviewed and surveyed participants had low awareness of *Mokshada* pyres (35% were aware of Mokshada),, and crematorium staff reported that these pyres are rarely used. In some crematoriums, Mokshada pyres were used for storage, further reinforcing the perception that they are not used. Moreover, participants were less aware of CNG pyres compared to electric ones, though CNG pyres are more prevalent than electric ones in Delhi (18 of 21 MCD operated green furnaces are CNG pyres, and only 3 are electric ([Singh, 2024](#))). This discrepancy could be due to general confusion since the two pyres look very similar.

3.2.9 Social discomfort and reluctance to discuss cremation preferences with peers

Participants reported being hesitant to have conversations about pyre choices and last rites preferences among their social circle. They also reported that it is not their place to question, judge or influence any other family's decisions around cremation. Rather, they must simply respect each person's choice. Some view suggestions to adopt electric or CNG pyres as an attack on their traditions, making such conversations even more difficult and sensitive.

3.3 Structural Barriers:

Structural barriers are systemic and infrastructural factors that make it harder for a person to engage in the desired behaviour. Our research found 3 key structural barriers that can prevent people from using eco-friendly cremation pyres.

3.3.1 Crematorium layout and design reinforce defaults

Crematorium layouts often prioritise traditional pyres, both visually and spatially. Alternative pyres are off to the side and not as easy to access. The signage for these pyres is also text-heavy and consequently difficult to process. Moreover, the cremation halls for these pyres are poorly maintained at some crematoriums, creating the impression that these are not commonly used methods.



Figure 4: Signage for alternate pyres at Nigambodh Ghat

3.3.2 Lack of availability hinders the use of alternative pyres

Participants noted that the availability of alternative pyres is not sufficient, and in the event of long waits, even those who want to use these pyres end up using traditional wood-based pyres. Survey participants noted that they would be more willing to switch to electric/CNG pyres if they were more readily available (27% of participants not already preferring electric or CNG pyres said they would switch to them if they were more readily available).

3.3.3 Infrastructural and operational factors can further deter the use of alternative pyres

Technical issues, including electricity supply and inefficient energy use due to an unpredictable demand, cause electric pyres to be non-operational for large stretches of time, further reducing their availability. Moreover, depending on the infrastructure of the

gas-based/electric pyres, not all rituals can be performed, which makes people less willing to use these pyres. For instance, at Green Park, due to the direction of the pyre and the pyre opening, the ritual of *kapal kriya* can't be performed according to religious traditions.

3.4 Key Enablers:

Enablers are factors that make it easier for an individual to perform the desired behaviour. They may also represent target groups that are more open to change, or moments in life when people are more receptive to change. Our research uncovered several enablers that can increase the take-up of eco-friendly pyres.

3.4.1 Last wishes are powerful factors for shaping cremation decisions, even when they differ from tradition

The qualitative study revealed that last wishes carry a lot of weight. They are remembered and are respected at death, even if they differ from traditions. Consequently, last wishes are perhaps one of the most powerful factors in overriding traditional pyre preferences.

3.4.2 Time scarcity and efficiency needs drive the use of alternative pyres

The qualitative study revealed that many educated individuals prefer electric and CNG pyres because the cremation and ash collection process is much quicker. Often, individuals living abroad prefer these pyres for family members in India because they cannot return for an extended time, and electric/CNG pyres allow last rites to be completed quickly.

3.4.3 Symbolic ways of performing rituals increase receptivity towards eco-pyres

The qualitative study revealed that at crematoriums such as Green Park, CNG halls had symbolic ways of performing the ritual of *mukhagni* (lighting the pyre). This helped families feel more involved in the cremation process. Similar symbolic ways of performing key rituals in electric and CNG pyres could therefore increase people's receptivity towards these pyres.

3.4.4 Older individuals seem to prefer electric pyres at higher rates

The quantitative survey revealed that older individuals (above 55 years of age), seem to prefer electric pyres at higher rates (43%) compared to younger individuals (26%). This group had nearly equal preferences for traditional and electric pyres, while younger groups showed stronger preferences for traditional ones. Consequently, older individuals may be an appropriate target group for interventions, and making their preferences for electric pyres more salient could help normalise these choices for others as well.

3.4.5 More educated and urban individuals may be more open to alternative pyres

According to crematorium staff, more educated, urban, and affluent individuals are more likely to opt for electric or CNG pyres. While interview data suggest that traditional preferences remain strong across all groups, urban, more educated and wealthier individuals may be more open to alternative pyres.

3.4.6 Exposure to electric/CNG pyres in one cremation can increase comfort in the next

The qualitative and quantitative study revealed that people are more open to electric and CNG pyres after a prior positive experience with these pyres. Consequently, repeated exposure may help establish these pyres as a new norm or tradition.

4. Overview of Interventions

Overview of Interventions

Building on insights from the diagnostic phase, CSBC conducted a co-creation workshop with A-PAG to generate ideas for increasing the uptake of electric and CNG cremation. To guide intervention ideation, we identified four key behavioural pathways from the diagnostic research, highlighting potential mechanisms to shift cremation choices.

The ideation process yielded 20 intervention ideas. Based on feasibility, potential impact, and alignment with the pathways, we shortlisted 10 interventions, 7 behavioural and 3 structural, for further development. While the behavioural interventions are mapped directly to the pathways, the structural interventions address critical infrastructural and operational gaps identified during fieldwork. Together, these ten interventions represent a multifaceted approach to increasing the adoption of eco-friendly cremation. The following sections detail the shortlisted interventions; the remaining ideas are included in Appendix B. We recommend pilot testing the shortlisted intervention ideas prior to broader implementation.

4.1 Summary of Behavioural Pathways

To inform intervention development, we distilled insights from the diagnostic research into four key behavioural pathways. These pathways highlight potential behavioural mechanisms to shift cremation preferences.

Pathway	Description
Make “last wishes” and cremation preferences more salient	Many families value honouring a loved one’s last wishes, but such preferences are often not communicated. Moreover, it seems that many older individuals prefer electric pyres, though these preferences are not salient. Increasing the salience of these choices—through prompts, discussions, or documentation tools—can help influence family decisions at the time of death.
Reframe electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the emotional burden on families	Grief is overwhelming, and logistical stress adds to the toll. Positioning alternative pyres as simpler, peaceful, and more manageable options can appeal to people’s (and particularly, parents’) desires to ease the burden or “bhoj” on their loved ones.
Use influential figures to	Influential or respected individuals who have chosen or endorsed

normalise electric and CNG pyres	alternative pyres can help counter stigma and signal that these choices are thoughtful, respectable, and aligned with values.
Provide simplified information about different pyre options while positively framing electric and CNG pyres to help guide informed choices.	Many people are unaware of alternative pyres, such as Mokshada. They also lack clarity on what electric and CNG pyres involve, particularly whether rituals can be performed fully. Providing timely, clear, and emotionally sensitive information can support informed and confident choices. Moreover, positively framing electric and CNG pyres (e.g. more peaceful), can encourage families to consider these options.

4.2 Summary of Shortlisted Behavioural Interventions

Title	Core Idea	Target Audience	Key Insights Leveraged	Channel
Pathway: Make “last wishes” and cremation preferences more salient				
Campaign to encourage conversations around “last wishes”	Encourage open conversations about last rites preferences within families to ensure that these wishes are known and honoured.	Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi’s urban, educated households, and their children or immediate family members	Enablers Leveraged: - Older individuals prefer electric pyres - Last wishes are respected at death Barriers Targeted: - Social discomfort/ reluctance to discuss cremation preferences - Grief results in default decision making	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook), local radio/TV, crematorium signage
Prompt discussion of last	Use key life milestones—like	Individuals (40+) in urban,	Enablers Leveraged:	During estate and will

rites preferences during critical life milestones	buying life insurance or writing a will—as timely, natural moments to prompt older adults to reflect on and record their last rites preferences.	educated Delhi households engaging in life planning activities	- Last wishes are respected at death Barriers Targeted: - Social discomfort/ reluctance to discuss cremation preferences, - Grief results in default decision making	planning, during life insurance purchasing, during admission to old age homes and hospices
Campaign highlighting the number of older people preferring electric pyres	Highlight the growing preference for electric cremation among older adults to normalise the choice and make end-of-life decisions easier for families.	Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households, and their families; cremation attendees	Enablers Leveraged: - Older individuals prefer electric pyres, - Last wishes are respected at death Barriers Targeted: - Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook), crematorium signage
Digital pledges to pre-commit to using electric and CNG pyres	Encourage individuals to pre-commit to their cremation preferences through a digital pledge, easing decision-making for families during emotionally	Individuals, with an emphasis on senior citizens (60+), in Delhi's urban, educated households	Enablers Leveraged: - Older individuals prefer electric pyres, - Last wishes are respected at death	Social media (WhatsApp groups, Instagram, Facebook)

	difficult times.		Barriers Targeted: Grief results in default decision making	
Pathway: Reframe electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the emotional burden on families				
Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the suffering or "bhoj" on families	Reframe electric and CNG cremation as thoughtful choices that ease the emotional and logistical burden on one's family, while still offering a dignified farewell.	Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households	Enablers Leveraged: - Parental instinct to protect and to reduce suffering for loved ones, - Last wishes are respected at death Barriers Targeted: - Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook), YouTube, Old age homes and hospices
Pathway: Use influential figures to normalise electric and CNG pyres				
Campaign highlighting influential or famous people who have used electric or CNG pyres	Use respected public figures and influencers who chose electric or CNG cremation to normalise these options, reducing stigma and framing them as socially respected choices.	General public in Delhi; cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook), crematorium signage
Pathway: Provide simplified information about different pyre options while positively framing electric and CNG pyres to help guide informed choices.				

Simplified decision aids to positively frame electric and CNG pyres, and guide cremation choices	A simplified guide that explains all cremation pyre options and highlights the benefits of electric/CNG pyres	Families making last rites decisions; cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: - Lack of awareness about alternatives - Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres - Crematorium layouts prioritise traditional pyres	Distribution of decision aids during hospital discharge, in ambulances, on the last rites organisation's website, on will/estate planners' websites, at crematoriums
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4.3 Summary of Shortlisted Structural Interventions

Title	Core Idea	Target Audience	Key Insights Leveraged	Key Agents
Improving the aesthetics of electric and CNG crematoriums	Enhance the emotional and spiritual environment of electric and CNG crematoriums by improving their aesthetics (e.g. improve lighting, add plants, include excerpts from scriptures), making them more comforting for grieving families.	Families of the deceased and cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: Emotional closure is important, but CNG and electric pyre halls are perceived to be industrial, dim, isolating, and not emotionally comforting	Government stakeholders, crematorium managers
Include symbolic ways to perform rituals in	Introduce a symbolic way to conduct key rituals within electric and CNG crematoriums to help	Families of the deceased and	Barriers Targeted: Religious beliefs and traditions shape cremation preferences, and the	Government stakeholders, crematorium managers

electric and CNG crematoriums	families feel spiritually fulfilled and actively involved in the cremation process.	cremation attendees	inability to perform certain rituals reduces the spiritual legitimacy of pyres, Emotional closure is important but CNG and electric pyre halls are seen as impersonal	
Redesign electric and CNG pyres to enable rituals like kapal kriya	Redesign electric and CNG cremation pyres to enable families to perform essential rituals like <i>kapal kriya</i> , preserving spiritual traditions while promoting the adoption of eco-friendly pyres.	Families of the deceased and cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: Religious beliefs and traditions shape cremation preferences, and the inability to perform certain rituals reduces the spiritual legitimacy of pyres	Governmental stakeholders, crematorium managers

4.4 Potential Implementation Roadmap

Below is a potential roadmap for implementing the shortlisted interventions.

Phase	Interventions	Rationale
1. Strengthening infrastructure and ritual compatibility	- Improving the aesthetics of electric and CNG crematoriums - Include symbolic ways to perform rituals in electric and CNG crematoriums - Redesign electric and CNG pyres to enable rituals like kapal kriya	Improve the infrastructure of electric and CNG crematoriums early on to address key barriers related to the emotional experience and the perceived spiritual legitimacy. Strengthening these foundations can enhance the effectiveness of subsequent behavioural interventions.
2. Enhancing decision support at key	Simplified decision aids to positively frame electric and CNG pyres, and guide cremation	Along with infrastructure improvements, strengthen processes by introducing simplified

touchpoints	choices Prompt discussion of last rites preferences during critical life milestones	decision aids and timely planning prompts at key life moments (e.g., will-making, insurance) to support informed cremation choices and set up a system for documenting preferences.
3. Shifting perceptions and documenting intent	Wave 1: Normalize the conversation - Campaign to encourage conversations around “last wishes” Wave 2: Reframe perceptions - Campaign highlighting influential or famous people who have used electric or CNG pyres - Campaign highlighting the number of older people preferring electric pyres - Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the suffering or “bhoj” on families Wave 3: Enable action - Digital pledges to pre-commit to using electric and CNG pyres	Facilitating open discussion of cremation preferences helps normalize these conversations. Once these discussions are more normalized, presenting electric and CNG pyres as respectful and value-aligned choices can increase acceptance. The final wave is to make it easy for individuals to document their wishes so that they are honoured at death.

Note: This roadmap is intended as an indicative sequence. We recommend that the shortlisted interventions first be piloted to assess which individual interventions or combinations are most effective in the field. Findings from these pilots should then inform the development of the most effective intervention bundle for broader implementation.

5. Detailed Intervention Briefs

Intervention 1: Campaign to encourage conversations around “last wishes”

1.1 Description

A communications campaign to encourage families, especially older individuals and their children, to **talk openly about preferences for last rites**. Our diagnostic research indicates that last wishes hold significant weight in families’ decision-making processes: they are remembered, respected, and are prioritised even when they diverge from traditional practices. This intervention, therefore, seeks to encourage conversation and make these preferences more salient in advance, thereby easing decision-making at the time of death.

1.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
The quantitative survey revealed that older individuals prefer electric pyres at higher rates compared to younger individuals (Key enabler)	If prompted to voice their preferences, more elders might convey their choices for non-traditional pyres	Short-term behavioural change: Increased expression of preferences for pyres
Last wishes carry a lot of weight, and they are remembered and respected at death, even if they differ from traditions (Key enabler)	If older individuals express a preference for non-wood pyres, families are likely to honour it at the time of death.	Medium-long term normative outcome: Last wishes as opposed to traditions shape preferences
There is social discomfort and reluctance to discuss cremation preferences openly (Key barrier)	Without cultural permission to have these conversations, people tend to avoid them entirely. Normalising these conversations can encourage people to express their preferences, and it also gives them a clear moment to set their intentions.	Short- to medium-term behavioural outcome: - Families feel more comfortable discussing cremation preferences Short- to medium-term behavioural outcome: - Families begin to have more open conversations around cremation preferences
Limited attention and cognitive overload due to grief results in	Making older people's preferences more salient in	Medium-term behavioural outcome:

people resorting to defaults (Key barrier).	advance can reduce the reliance on default decisions in moments of stress.	Pre-expressed wishes as opposed to traditions drive cremation choices.
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1.3 Target Audience

Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households, and their children/immediate family members

1.4 Intervention Design

This intervention will consist of a communications campaign delivered through various social and mass media channels, as well as at crematoriums, in order to encourage conversations around last rites wishes.

1.4.1 Core Messaging Components

Target	Key Message	Underlying Theme	Tone	Potential Channel
Senior citizens	Life may be uncertain, but your wishes don't have to be. Sharing your last rites wishes today can bring clarity and peace to your loved ones in the future. There are many respectful pyre options. Start the conversation with your family today.	Anticipated regret: Encourages action today to avoid confusion or distress later Agency and control: Emphasises the value of having a say in one's final rites Relief through preparation: Reassures that planning brings peace	- Reassuring - Calm - Thoughtful - Gently reflective	Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook etc) Crematorium signage

Families	Some conversations are hard to start—but they mean a lot. Talk to your loved one about their last rites wishes. It's a simple way to show you care by listening to what matters to them.	• Listening as an act of care: Shifts focus from “talking about death” to “understanding a loved one's wishes”	• Warm • Empathetic • Supportive • Gently reflective but not heavy	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram reels, Facebook etc) Crematorium signage
Families	Potential testimonials: Example: “We'd never talked about it—until Dad brought it up. Knowing his last rites wishes made everything so much easier when the time came.” There are many respectful pyre options. Talk to your loved ones about what they would want when the time comes.	• Social proof: Normalises having the conversation by showing others have done it • Retrospective appreciation: Shows the emotional and practical value in hindsight • Ease of action: Implies the conversation wasn't difficult once it happened	• Conversational • Honest • Relatable • Lightly emotional	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram reels, Facebook etc) Mass media (radio, TV)
Families and senior citizens	Potential testimonials (from individuals or families):	• Social proof: Highlights that elders themselves are choosing electric, not just	• Conversational • Warm • Reassuring • Gently surprising	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram reels, Facebook etc)

	Example: "When my mother told us she wanted an electric pyre, we were surprised—but it actually made things simpler. She'd thought it through, and we were glad we could do what she wanted." More and more older people are preferring electric cremation today. Start the conversation with your loved ones - knowing what matters makes a big difference.	younger generations • Relief through clarity: Emphasises emotional and logistical ease when preferences are known early		Mass media (radio, TV)
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1.4.2 Visual and Language Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

- Include **respectful imagery** of elders with their families, including visuals that suggest togetherness, trust, and open conversation (e.g., walking together, seated side-by-side, sharing tea, writing something down)
- Avoid imagery of death, cremations, or mourning

Language guidelines:

- Language should be **respectful, gentle, warm, and non-urgent**
- Avoid words or phrases that imply finality and that death is imminent, such as: "final goodbye", "no longer with us", "before it's too late"

1.4.3 Illustrative Examples

The following images are examples of shareable graphics and quote cards that can be distributed via social media. Note that these are for illustrative purposes only.



1.5 Implementation Plan

1.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels and Assets (where and how)

- Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook) can be via relevant partner accounts such as senior citizen care organisations, funeral service providers, cultural/spiritual organisations:
 - Short form videos (e.g. testimonials, reels)
 - Shareable graphics or quote cards
- Mass media (local radio or TV):
 - Short audio ads or video testimonials
- Crematorium signage
 - Posters or print materials with reflective questions for cremation attendees ("Have you spoken to your loved ones about what you'd want?")

1.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Around Pitru Paksha/Shradh season (2 weeks)**: 16 day period in Hindu calendar that is a time of natural reflection and remembrance of ancestors
- **Throughout the year** via low-intensity, evergreen channels like WhatsApp/social



media, and crematorium signage

1.5.3 Implementation Note

We recommend beginning with a small set of creatives and testing their reception through 1-2 channels (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram). Based on feedback, additional materials can be adapted, refined, or scaled.

Intervention 2: Prompt discussion of last rites preferences during critical life milestones

2.1 Description

This intervention **leverages key life milestones**, such as purchasing life insurance, drafting a will, entering an old age home, etc., as **timely and natural moments to prompt older individuals to think about their last rites preferences**. These transitions already involve reflection on the future, making them emotionally and practically aligned with end-of-life decision-making. By providing subtle prompts or opt-in questions during these moments, this intervention aims to normalise conversations around cremation preferences and gives people a clear moment to state their wishes.

2.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
There is significant social discomfort around discussing last rites or death preferences. (Key barrier)	While people may not normally be ready for these discussions, life milestones offer contextually appropriate moments to bring up the topic, reducing perceived awkwardness or inappropriateness.	Short- to medium-term behavioural outcome: - Families begin to have conversations about cremation preferences. - More people begin documenting their own wishes. Medium- to long-term normative outcome: - People see documenting last wishes as a normal and important activity
Last wishes carry a lot of weight, and they are remembered and respected at death, even if they differ from traditions (Key enabler)	Prompting people to record or share these wishes ensures their influence on actual decision-making at the time of death.	Medium-term outcome: Greater alignment between stated preferences and actual cremation choices
Cognitive overload at the time	Making older people's	Medium-term behavioural

of death results in people resorting to defaults (Key barrier).	preferences more salient in advance can reduce the reliance on default decisions in moments of stress.	outcome: Pre-expressed wishes as opposed to traditions drive cremation choices.
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2.3 Target Audience

Individuals (40+) in urban, educated Delhi households engaging in life planning activities (e.g., insurance, wills, eldercare)

2.4 Intervention Design

This intervention inserts low-friction, well-framed prompts into natural life planning moments to encourage conversation and recording of last rites preferences.

2.4.1 Core Messaging Components

Touchpoint	Key Message	Underlying Theme	Tone	Potential Format
Life insurance sign-up, will planning, and estate planning	You've planned for your family's future. Have you shared what kind of farewell you'd want? Many clients choose to include their last rites preferences in will/life insurance documents/estate documents.. Would you like to do the same?	Normalises last rites planning: Highlights that this is a regular activity that many do. Respectful neutrality wherein individuals are not pushed towards any pyre option but are given space to express their preferences	- Calm - Thoughtful - Practical - Respectful	Script for the agent/lawyer to go through during the planning process

Life insurance sign-up, will planning, and estate planning	A checklist of tasks that can be provided to people who are planning their will. This would include a form to document one's last rites wishes. For example: Here are all the steps you need to take to complete your will: ☐ Inventory of assets and liabilities ☐ Select a beneficiary ☐ Choose an executor ☐ Determine guardianship (if applicable) ☐ Complete the last rites preferences form Writing down last rites and end-of-life care preferences is a simple way to bring peace to your family later. As you prepare your will, take a moment to note down your preferences.	• Normalises last rites planning and presents it as part of the process • Highlights that preparation brings relief	• Respectful • Clear • Practical	Checkboxes in the planning process and documents
Old age	"Many people	• Normalises last	• Warm	Script for old

home and hospice admission	choose to note down their preferences for what they want to accomplish while staying here, as well as how they want to be taken care of at a later stage. Would you like us to help you document any preferences, including for last rites?"	rites planning as a part of the intake process • Respectful neutrality wherein individuals are not pushed towards any pyre option but are given space to express their preferences	• Sensitive • Respectful	age home/hospice managers to use during the intake process Checkbox/place to document wishes in the intake form
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2.4.2 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes only to depict what potential posters, cue cards, and shareable content could look like.

Here are all the steps you need to take to complete your will

- ☒ Inventory of assets and liabilities
- ☐ Select a beneficiary
- ☐ Choose an executor
- ☐ Determine guardianship (if applicable)
- ☐ Complete last rites preferences form

Writing down last rites and end-of-life care preferences is a simple way to bring peace to your family later. As you prepare your will, take a moment to note down your preferences.

2.5 Implementation Plan

2.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels, Assets, and Timing (where and how)

- **Estate planning, will planning, and legal services:**
 - Add cremation preference as an optional line in will templates
 - Training or talking points for lawyers and notaries
- **Insurance agents and portals:**

- Include a checkbox or optional question in online/offline insurance forms:
“Would you like to document your last rites preference?”
- **Old age homes and hospices:**
 - Include a preference prompt in admission paperwork or during welcome sessions
 - Use flyers or posters in common areas that normalise end-of-life planning
 - Printed brochures or pamphlets can be provided at the time of admission, along with other relevant information

2.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Evergreen:** Embedded in processes throughout the year

2.5.3 Expected Implementation Partners

- Private life insurance providers
- Estate planning platforms
- Old age homes and palliative care centers
- Individual lawyers, financial advisors, and notaries

Intervention 3: Campaign highlighting the number of older people preferring electric pyres

3.1 Description

This communications campaign **highlights the trend that more and more older individuals prefer electric cremation**. Diagnostic research shows that older individuals are more open to this option than younger generations. This campaign leverages this insight to both normalise electric cremation and possibly nudge older individuals to express their wishes, helping families make confident decisions at the time of death.

3.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
The quantitative survey revealed that older individuals prefer electric pyres at higher rates compared to younger individuals (Key enabler)	Sharing this trend can prompt elders to express their wishes and feel affirmed in doing so.	Short- to medium-term behavioural outcome: More elders express preferences for electric/CNG cremation.
Last wishes carry a lot of weight, and they are remembered and respected at death, even if they differ from traditions (Key enabler)	If older individuals express a preference for non-wood pyres, families are likely to honour it at the time of death.	Medium-long term normative outcome: Electric cremation becomes more common among families.
There is a stigma against alternative pyres, which makes people hesitant to use electric and CNG pyres (Key barrier).	By highlighting the growing adoption of electric pyres, these pyres may be more top of mind for families at the time of death, and can shift what feels expected or acceptable.	Medium-term normative outcome: Electric cremation is seen as increasingly common, acceptable, and even more preferred.

3.3 Target Audience

- Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households, and their children/immediate family members involved in end-of-life decision-making

- Cremation attendees

3.4 Intervention Design

A communications campaign using norms-based messaging and data-backed statements to gently shift perceptions.

3.4.1 Core Messaging Components

Target	Key Message	Underlying Theme	Tone	Channel
Senior citizens	More and more older adults are choosing electric cremation. It's simple, peaceful, and respectful. A thoughtful choice—for you, and for those you love.	• Descriptive norms/social proof: Communicates that this is not an unusual or fringe decision – it's something others like you are already doing, which reduces hesitation and builds comfort. • Agency: Empowers the older adult to see themselves as someone who makes deliberate, value-aligned decisions, reinforcing autonomy and control.	• Calm • Warm • Reassuring • Respectful • Affirming but non-preachy	Social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, etc) At crematoriums
Families	They might already have a preference. Listening is how we show we care. More and more older adults today are	• Descriptive norms: Signals that this choice is becoming common and socially accepted, helping to shift the perception that it is fringe or unconventional. • Reassurance about	• Warm • Empathetic • Respectful • Calm • Non-preachy • Reassuring	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook etc) At crematoriums

	choosing electric cremation. It's simple, peaceful, and allows all the rituals to be performed.	ritual compatibility: Addresses one of the common concerns by affirming that electric pyres are ritual compatible		
Families and senior citizens	In our recent survey, 43% (<i>or nearly half</i>) of people ages 55 and older said that they prefer electric cremation. Many say it feels simpler, more peaceful, and easier for their families. Electric cremation is a growing personal preference rooted in care.	• Descriptive norms/social proof: Communicates that this is not an unusual or fringe decision – it's something others like you are already doing, reducing hesitation and building comfort. • Respect for autonomy: Affirms that this is not a second-best option, but a thoughtful, deliberate decision	• Calm • Gentle • Reassuring • Respectful • Sensitive • Non-preachy	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook etc) At crematoriums

3.4.2 Visual and Language Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

- Use **warm, muted colours** such as marigold, beige, and cream to evoke tradition and calm
- Use **simple, everyday visuals** of older adults – e.g., sitting peacefully, spending time with family.
- Avoid cremation or mourning visuals (fires, machinery, ashes)
- Avoid stylised, decorative fonts that distract from tone

Language guidelines:

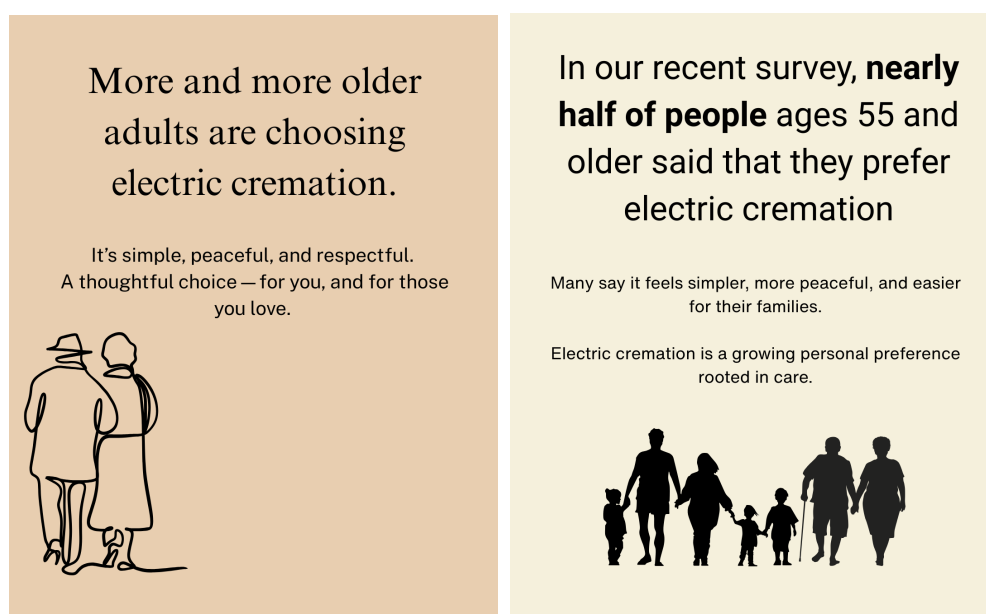
- Language should be **respectful, gentle and warm, and not pushy or directive**
- Avoid strong language and instead use softer framing like “many say” and “growing

preference”

- Avoid words like “should,” “must,” “better,” or anything that sounds evaluative
- Avoid words or phrases that suggest urgency, guilt or moral superiority
- Avoid words that imply finality like “last goodbye”

3.4.3 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes only to depict what potential posters, cue cards, and shareable content could look like.



3.5 Implementation Plan

3.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels and Assets (where and how)

- Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook) can be via relevant partner accounts such as senior citizen care organisations, funeral service providers, cultural/spiritual organisations, and through organic sharing on WhatsApp groups:
 - Shareable graphics and carousel posts
 - Short form reels
- Crematorium signage
 - Posters or print materials displayed near information desks, CNG and electric cremation halls, or waiting areas and entryways

3.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Ideal launch window around Pitru Paksha/Shradh season (2 weeks):** 16 day period in Hindu calendar that is a time of natural reflection and remembrance of ancestors
- **Monthly reposts** or resharing via partners following the campaign launch period
- Encourage regular resharing via community WhatsApp groups
- Have **posters displayed year-round** at crematoriums.

3.5.3 Implementation Note

We recommend beginning with a small set of creatives and testing their reception through 1-2 channels (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram). Based on feedback, additional materials can be adapted, refined, or scaled.

For the statistics on the percentage of older people preferring electric cremation, we would also recommend surveying additional individuals if possible to bolster the numbers.

Intervention 4: Digital pledges to pre-commit to using electric and CNG pyres

4.1 Description

This intervention **invites individuals, especially senior citizens, to make a digital pledge** stating their preference for electric or CNG cremation. These pledges can be private (shared only with family) or public (displayed on a website or social feed). By externalizing their preference, individuals increase the likelihood that their wishes will be honoured at death.

4.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
Last wishes carry a lot of weight, and they are remembered and are respected at death, even if they differ from traditions (Key enabler)	Creating a formal or visible way for elders to express preferences helps families follow through.	Short- to medium term behavioural outcome: - More elders voice their preferences. - Families are more likely to choose electric/CNG.
The quantitative survey revealed that older individuals (55+) prefer electric pyres at higher rates compared to younger individuals (Key enabler)	A pledge tool makes the preference explicit and easier to act on.	Short-term behavioural outcome: - More individuals express their preferences. Medium-term normative outcome: - Pre-stating wishes becomes more culturally acceptable and a part of regular planning.
Limited attention and cognitive overload due to grief results in people resorting to defaults (Key barrier).	Pre-commitments act as salient reminders, helping interrupt automatic decisions.	Medium-term behavioural outcome: Pre-expressed wishes start to increase uptake of alternative pyres.

4.3 Target Audience

Individuals with an emphasis on senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households.

4.4 Intervention Design

This intervention involves a simple digital form or a WhatsApp based tool through which individuals can read a brief message about electric and CNG cremation, choose and record their preferences, and optionally share their preferences with family, and join the anonymous count of individuals choosing electric and CNG pyres.

4.4.1 Core Messaging Components

This table contains key content for various components of the pledge form.

Pledge component	Key Message	Underlying Theme	Tone
Header	Documenting your preferences for an electric or CNG pyre can bring you and your family peace of mind.	Anticipated regret and emotional relief: Emphasises that planning ahead—even for something difficult—can ease emotional burden later.	- Calm - Warm - Reassuring - Respectful - Non-intrusive - Supportive
Text	Many adults are now preferring electric or CNG cremation—a peaceful, respectful, and complete farewell. If this feels right for you, you can record your preference here.	Descriptive norms: Signals that this choice is becoming common and accepted. Respectful autonomy: Emphasises personal agency. No pressure, just invitation.	- Calm - Inviting - Respectful - Sensitive - Non-preachy
Pledge	My preferences for last rights: ☐ I'd prefer an electric pyre (A	Respect for choice: By offering multiple options—including “I’m still considering”—it honours the	- Calm - Reassuring - Respectful - Sensitive

	<i>simple, peaceful option that allows for all rituals)</i> ☐ I'd prefer a CNG pyre (<i>A calm flame-based option that allows for all rituals)</i> ☐ I'm still considering my options Name: _____ Date: _____ Note that you can come back and update your preferences at any time.	individual's autonomy without pressure. • Cultural reassurance: Each option affirms that <i>all rituals can be performed</i>, directly addressing the barrier of ritual compatibility. • Flexibility: Reinforces that this isn't a binding or final decision, but an expression of intent—removing emotional weight or fear of “getting it wrong.”	• Non-preachy • Non-final
Closing	If you haven't already, try talking to your family about your preferences. Sharing your wishes today can bring clarity and peace to your loved ones in the future. [provide an option to share the preferences directly with family]	• Proactive communication as care: Encourages conversation as an act of love, not morbidity. • Anticipated relief for family: Gently communicates that pre-sharing preferences prevents confusion and stress	• Warm • Supportive • Gently motivating • Respectful • Sensitive

As more and more individuals take the pledge, display the number of individuals who prefer an electric or CNG pyre. If possible, dynamically vary how this number is displayed. Below a certain threshold (e.g. 5000-7000 people), display the number of people who have taken this pledge in the last 24 hours. After 5000-7000 people have taken the pledge, display the total number of people who are preferring electric and CNG pyres.

4.4.2 Visual and Language Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

- Use **warm, muted colours** such as marigold, beige, and cream to evoke tradition and calm
- Avoid visuals of cremation pyres, fire, and people mourning
- Avoid stylised, decorative fonts that distract from tone

Language guidelines:

- Language should be **respectful, gentle and warm, and not pushy or directive**
- Ensure language conveys agency
- Avoid phrases like “green,” “sustainable,” “urgent,” or “before it’s too late”
- Avoid words like “should,” “must,” “better,” or anything that sounds evaluative
- Avoid words or phrases that suggest finality, guilt or moral superiority

4.4.3 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes only to depict what a potential pledge could look like.

7586 people have taken the pledge

Documenting your preferences for an electric or CNG pyre can bring you and your family peace of mind.

Many adults are now preferring electric or CNG cremation—a peaceful, respectful, and complete farewell.

If this feels right for you, you can record your preference here.

My preferences for last rites:

☐ I'd prefer an electric pyre
(A simple, peaceful option that allows all rituals to be performed.)

☐ I'd prefer a CNG pyre
(A calm flame-based option that allows all rituals to be performed.)

☐ I'm still considering my options

Name: _____ Date: _____

Note that you can come back and update your preference at any time.

4.5 Implementation Plan

4.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels and Assets (where and how)

- Social media (WhatsApp groups, Instagram, Facebook), can be via relevant partner accounts such as senior citizen care organisations, funeral service providers, cultural/spiritual organisations, and through organic sharing on WhatsApp groups:
 - Simple pledge forms

4.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Ideal launch window around Pitru Paksha/Shradh season (2 weeks):** 16 day period in Hindu calendar that is a time of natural reflection and remembrance of ancestors
- **Monthly reposts** or resharing via partners following campaign launch period
- Encourage regular resharing via community WhatsApp groups

4.5.3 Implementation Note

We recommend pilot testing the pledge with a small group of people first, and then refining and scaling based on responses.

Intervention 5: Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the suffering or “bhoj” on families

5.1 Description

This communications campaign aims to encourage older individuals to consider electric and CNG pyres for themselves by **framing them as thoughtful choices that reduce the emotional and logistical burden (or *bhoj*) on their families**. Parents have a strong evolutionary desire to protect their children from various threats and forms of suffering. Therefore, the campaign taps into this parental instinct and reframes electric and CNG pyres as an act of care: methods that eases pressure on the family while still allowing for a dignified and complete farewell.

5.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
There is a stigma against alternative pyres which make people hesitant to use electric and CNG pyres (Key barrier).	If these methods are positioned as thoughtful and considerate, people may view them as a compassionate choice rather than a compromise or a less legitimate option.	Medium-term perceptual outcome: Electric and CNG pyres gain legitimacy as respectful, compassionate, family-minded decisions.
Parents have a strong instinct to protect their children and mitigate their suffering, and consequently want to reduce their distress during difficult times (Key enabler).	Framing electric/CNG cremation as a lighter, simpler option for families aligns with this caregiving instinct.	Short- to medium-term behavioural outcome: More older individuals consider and express preferences for electric or CNG cremation.
Last wishes carry a lot of weight, and they are remembered and are respected at death, even if they differ from traditions (Key enabler)	If older individuals see electric and CNG pyres as being compassionate choices for their family, and if they express these preferences, families are likely to honour it at the time of death.	Medium- to long term behavioural outcome: More older people are preferring electric and CNG pyres, and families are honouring these wishes

5.3 Target Audience

Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households

5.4 Intervention Design

This communication campaign focuses on positioning electric and CNG cremation as a dignified, caring choice that lightens the load on one's family. The intervention will use emotionally resonant storytelling and messaging across trusted channels such as social and mass media. The campaign could also leverage certain targeted channels as well including old age homes and hospices.

5.4.1 Core Messaging Components

Key Messages	Underlying Theme	Tone	Potential Channel
A thoughtful decision can offer your family peace and reduce their burden during the hardest hour. Choosing an electric pyre means fewer steps and less suffering for your loved ones—and a respectful farewell for you. The rituals still happen. But the stress and suffering doesn't have to.	• Reducing burden: Frames the choice as a way to care for family even after death • Assurance + emotional relief: Addresses fears of ritual loss and burden together.	• Calm • Respectful • Reassuring • Gently persuasive • Compassionate	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram etc.) Hospices/old age homes
Some choices bring peace now—and later. More and more older individuals are choosing electric cremation—to keep things simple for their families and to	• Social proof and parental care: Aligns choice with norms and also taps into the parental design to protect their children from suffering.	• Warm • Thoughtful • Non-preachy • Compassionate	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram etc.) Hospices/old age homes

reduce their suffering during a difficult time. Grief is heavy, but your choice can make it lighter. Start the conversation today with your family.			
Video testimonial: Opening of video (taps into emotion and values to protect one's family): "We spend our whole lives making sure our families are okay and that they are protected from the suffering in the world". Middle of video (highlights the choice): "That's why I've chosen electric cremation. It's simpler for my family, dignified, and everything still gets done. Grief is heavy. If there's a way to make it easier for the people I love, I'd choose that." Closing (provides reassurance): "I know they'll have enough to carry and worry about. This is one thing I can do to make things easier for them."	• Parental care and responsibility: Choosing electric cremation is an act of love and protection that lightens the emotional and logistical load for loved ones during a difficult time. • Relief through preparation: Taking one thoughtful step now can reduce confusion and distress later. • Simplicity as compassion: Choosing something simpler isn't selfish—it's generous.	• Conversational • Calm • Warm • Non-preachy • Respectful • Compassionate • Gently persuasive	Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram etc.) YouTube

5.4.2 Language, Tone and Style Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

- Imagery of older individuals in peaceful, dignified settings with their adult children
- Visual cues of care (e.g., folded hands, sitting together)
- Avoid imagery of cremation or fire

Language guidelines:

- Use a **warm, respectful, and affirming tone**
- Avoid urgent or overly rational language – focus on care, dignity, and simplicity
- Avoid phrases like “last act” “final act” etc that imply finality and imminent death

5.4.3 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes to depict what potential posters, cue cards, and shareable content could look like.



5.5 Implementation Plan

5.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels, Assets, and Timing (where and how)

- Social Media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook) can be via relevant partner accounts such as senior citizen care organisations, funeral service providers, cultural/spiritual organisations:
 - Short reels (30–60 seconds): Featuring older individuals speaking calmly about why they chose electric cremation

- Quote cards and carousel posts: Simple 3–5 slide explanations of how electric/CNG cremation reduces steps and stress for families.
- YouTube:
 - 1–2 minute video testimonials: Stories of older individuals explaining their decision and the values behind it
- Old age homes and hospices:
 - Poster displayed in these locations
 - Printed brochures or pamphlets that can be provided at time of admission along with other relevant information

5.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Around Pitru Paksha/Shradh season (2 weeks)**: 16 day period in Hindu calendar that is a time of natural reflection and remembrance of ancestors
- **Throughout the year** via low-intensity, evergreen channels like WhatsApp and social media
- **At hospices and old age homes** during other planning sessions/activities

5.5.3 Implementation Note

We recommend beginning with a small set of creatives and testing their reception through 1–2 channels (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram). Based on feedback, additional materials can be adapted, refined, or scaled.

Intervention 6: Campaign highlighting influential or famous people who have used electric or CNG pyres

6.1 Description

This communications campaign highlights respected public figures, celebrities, spiritual leaders, and other influential individuals who were cremated using electric or CNG pyres. In the diagnostic research, electric and CNG cremations were often seen as “lesser,” or only for the poor or those without family. This campaign leverages **social proof** and **aspirational influence** to normalise electric/CNG cremation and reframe it as a dignified, and even prestigious choice. By associating these options with widely respected individuals, the campaign aims to reduce the stigma and increase the social legitimacy of these options.

6.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
There is a stigma against alternative pyres which makes people hesitant to use electric and CNG pyres (Key barrier).	Featuring respected individuals who chose or were honoured through electric and CNG pyres helps reframe them as dignified and meaningful options.	Short- to medium-term perceptual outcome: - Electric/CNG cremation becomes seen as a respectable and a socially acceptable choice Medium- to long-term behavioural outcome: - As these pyres gain more acceptability, more people will use them.

6.3 Target Audience

- General public in Delhi, especially senior citizens (60+) and families involved in end-of-life decision-making
- Cremation attendees

6.4 Intervention Design

A communications campaign using social proof to normalise electric and CNG cremation by showcasing respected individuals who were cremated in these pyres.

6.4.1 Core Messaging Components

Channel	Key Message	Underlying Theme	Tone
Social Media (e.g. Instagram, WhatsApp etc) The content here is for a carousel post but it can be adapted for a reel as well.	Slide 1 (Hook): Text: "What do these three have in common? Swipe to find out." Visuals: Include portraits of Pranab Mukherjee, Ratan Tata, and Sridevi (no labels for the photos). Slide 2: Text: "Pranab Mukherjee – Former President of India Ratan Tata – Eminent Industrialist and Philanthropist Sridevi – Legendary Actress, Timeless Icon" Slide 3 (Reveal): Text: "They were all cremated using electric pyres. A farewell that was simple, respectful, and complete." Visual: Diya, and warm marigold for the background to subtly evoke alignment with tradition Slide 4 (Reframing the narrative): Text: "Electric and CNG cremation are no longer just alternatives. They are	• Normalises electric and CNG cremation: Uses familiar and admired public figures to show that these choices are legitimate, respected, and increasingly common. • Builds social legitimacy through admired figures: Highlights that thoughtful and influential individuals from different walks of life have chosen electric pyres, thereby elevating the perceived status of the choice. • Reframes electric/CNG as thoughtful and complete: Challenges perceptions that these methods are inferior or lacking in ritual, and instead presents them as dignified, intentional, and spiritually acceptable. • Gentle norm shifting without instruction: Does not push or prescribe behaviour; instead, invites	• Calm • Curious • Respectful • Confident, but not preachy • Gently persuasive

	thoughtful choices, embraced by the people we respect. Let's start seeing them that way." Slide 5 (Closing): Text: "Electric and CNG Cremation. A conscious, caring, and respectful decision. @campaignhandle"	reflection.	
Crematoriums The content here is for posters that can be put up at crematoriums near information boards	Headline: "Electric cremation: a thoughtful choice made by those we respect." Visuals: Portraits of Pranab Mukherjee, Ratan Tata and Sridevi against a marigold background to evoke the alignment with tradition. Text: "Pranab Mukherjee, Ratan Tata, Sridevi – and many others we admire – were cremated using electric pyres. A farewell that was dignified, intentional, and complete." Tagline: "Electric and CNG cremation - a conscious, caring and respectful decision."	• Normalising of Electric/CNG cremation: Frames electric and CNG cremation not as exceptions, but as established, acceptable, and increasingly common decisions that align with dignity and care. • Social legitimacy through admired figures: Uses respected public personalities to shift perceptions – electric cremation isn't fringe or inferior; it's a choice made by people admired for their values, and legacy. • Dignity and completeness: Counters the misconception that electric or CNG pyres are incomplete or less spiritual by affirming that these farewells are complete.	• Calm • Warm • Respectful • Non-preachy • Culturally sensitive

6.4.2 Visual and Language Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

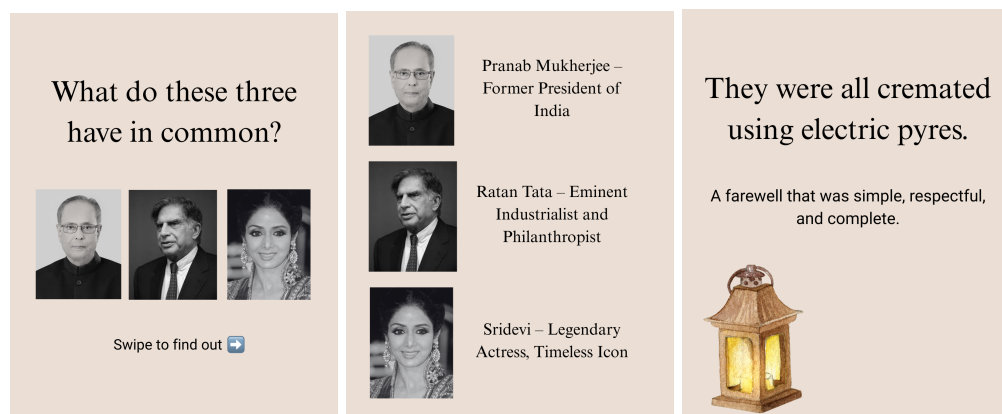
- Use **warm, muted tones** such as marigold, soft saffron, beige, and cream to evoke tradition and calm.
- Use portrait-style photographs of featured individuals.
- Do not use visuals of flames, cremation scenes, ash, or mourning.
- Avoid overly stylised fonts.
- Carousel designs should maintain visual unity across slides: consistent background, text placement, and photo treatment.
- For posters, ensure good print readability: large text, high contrast, and appropriate font size for viewing from a few feet away.

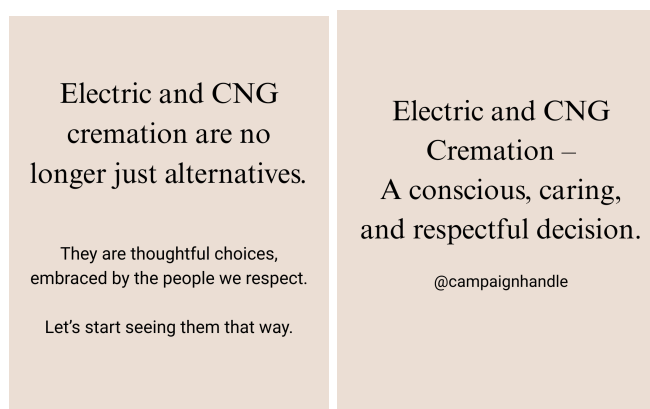
Language guidelines:

- Language should be **respectful, gentle, warm, and non-urgent**
- Avoid words or phrases that suggest urgency, guilt, finality, or moral superiority

6.4.3 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes only to depict what potential posters, cue cards, and shareable content could look like.





6.5 Implementation Plan

6.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels and Assets (where and how)

- Social media (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook), can be via relevant partner accounts such as senior citizen care organisations, funeral service providers, cultural/spiritual organisations, and through organic sharing on WhatsApp groups:
 - Short form reels
 - Shareable graphics and carousel posts
 - Shareable WhatsApp in static image or short video
- Crematorium signage
 - Posters or print materials displayed near information desks, CNG and electric cremation halls, or waiting areas and entryways

6.5.2 Timing/Frequency

- **Ideal launch window around Pitru Paksha/Shradh season (2 weeks):** 16 day period in Hindu calendar that is a time of natural reflection and remembrance of ancestors
- Use **commemorative moments** (e.g., death anniversaries) to reintroduce respected figures who chose electric pyres
- **Monthly reposts** via partners and through community WhatsApp groups
- Have **posters displayed year-round** at crematoriums.

6.5.3 Implementation Note

We recommend beginning with a small set of creatives and testing their reception through 1-2 channels (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram). Based on feedback, additional materials can be adapted, refined, or scaled.

Intervention 7: Simplified decision aids to positively frame electric and CNG pyres, and guide cremation choices

7.1 Description

A simplified decision aid that outlines all cremation pyre options (wood, Mokshada, electric, and CNG) in a respectful, non-judgmental way—but that **subtly highlights the benefits** of electric and CNG methods. These information guides are intended to increase awareness of alternative pyre options, address myths about the ability to perform rituals in electric and CNG pyres, and help people make more informed choices.

7.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
There is a stigma and there are misconceptions around alternative pyres, especially regarding the ability to perform key rituals and collect ashes (Key barrier).	Without clear, trusted information, families may avoid these options out of fear or misinformation.	Short- to medium-term cognitive outcome: Well-designed decision aids clarify and reduce misconceptions about alternative pyres.
There is a lack of awareness of alternatives, especially Mokshada (Key barrier).	Lack of basic awareness limits the range of options families consider, especially during emotionally charged decisions.	Short- to medium-term cognitive outcome: The decision aid increases awareness of all available options and their features and benefits
Crematorium layouts and designs prioritise traditional pyres (Key barrier)	Even when other options exist, families may not see or consider them unless guided by timely, visible information.	Short-term cognitive and behavioural outcomes: Decision aids placed at key touchpoints help families compare options, make a more informed choice, and nudge undecided individuals toward electric or CNG choices.

7.3 Target Audience

- Families or individuals making last rites and other end-of-life decisions, or those seeking cremation services
- Cremation attendees

7.4 Intervention Design

Through this intervention, individuals making last rites/end-of-life decisions, or individuals visiting crematoriums, will be given decision aids on the various pyre options available.

7.4.1 Core Messaging Components

The decision aid can compare all four pyre types side by side and contain the following key messages. (Note: Given that costs vary significantly between crematoriums, the decision aid does not mention cremation costs)

Decision Aid Component	Key Message	Underlying Theme
Title	All pyres honour your loved one. Take a moment to understand your options.	Respectful neutrality: Affirms that all choices are valid, encouraging open-minded comparison without judgment. Reduces defensiveness.
Labels for each pyre	• Wood Pyre: Conventional • Mokshada Pyre: Mindful • Electric Pyre: Respectful • CNG Pyre: Evolved	Framing effect: Uses positive, non-hierarchical language to subtly reframe newer options as thoughtful progressions of tradition.
Wood pyre description	A wood-based pyre rooted in conventions, with all rituals and an open flame. The open pyre nature extends the time taken for cremation.	Describes this as traditional but gently notes a logistical downside (time).
Mokshada pyre	A wood-based pyre that is a thoughtful refinement of traditional methods,	Appeals to tradition while suggesting an improved

description	preserving rituals while using a simplified system.	process—bridging familiarity and efficiency.
Electric pyre description	A dignified and peaceful choice, offering a calm and streamlined farewell while honouring all rituals.* This option also makes it possible for ashes to be collected on the same day as the cremation. *Depending on the infrastructure at specific crematoriums, all rituals can be performed or can be performed with certain modifications.	Emphasises emotional comfort and highlights that all rituals can be performed. Reframes the feature of same-day ash collection as a benefit.
CNG pyre description	An efficient and flame-based choice, offering a calm and streamlined farewell while honouring all rituals.* This option also makes it possible for ashes to be collected on the same day as the cremation. *Depending on infrastructure at specific crematoriums, all rituals can be performed or can be performed with certain modifications.	Emphasises emotional comfort and highlights that all rituals can be performed. Reframes the feature of same-day ash collection as a benefit. Highlights the flame-based nature of the pyre to reassure families who believe that fire is essential for cremation.
Cremation time	• Wood Pyre: Approximately 4-6 hours • Mokshada Pyre: Approximately 3 hours • Electric Pyre: Approximately 1.5-2 hours • CNG Pyre: Approximately 2-2.5 hours	Makes differences in time taken for cremation salient and easily comparable across pyre types.

7.4.2 Visual and Language Guidelines

Visual guidelines:

- **Simple and clean:** Quick readability with generous white space for overwhelmed families.
- Use **soft, warm tones** to convey dignity, respect, and calm.
- Avoid decorative fonts or overly stylised script (they can feel too emotional or insincere).
- Pyre visuals should also present all pyres favourably. For instance, avoid visuals of electric or CNG pyres that are not well-maintained.

Language guidelines:

- **Non-judgmental:** All options are valid and honourable. Present options with equal respect and avoid language that suggests one option is “correct” or “better”.
- **Sensitive and Respectful:** When presenting electric and CNG pyres, avoid language that might feel dismissive of spiritual beliefs or rituals.
- Supportive, not persuasive: Let users feel empowered to decide, not nudged.

7.4.3 Illustrative Example

The following example is for illustrative purposes only to depict what the potential layout could look like.

A Conscious Choice: *Honouring the Journey with Intention*

CONVENTIONAL	MINDFUL	RESPECTFUL	EVOLVED
Wood Pyre A wood-based pyre rooted in conventions, with all rituals and an open-flame. The open-pyre nature extends the time taken for cremation. Time taken: Approximately 4 - 6 Hours 	Mokshada Pyre A wood-based pyre that is a thoughtful refinement of traditional methods, preserving rituals while using a simplified system. Time taken: Approximately 3 Hours 	Electric Pyre A dignified and efficient choice, offering a calm and streamlined farewell while honouring key rituals.* Time taken: 1.5-2 Hours <i>Makes it possible for ashes to be collected on the same day as the cremation.</i> 	CNG Pyre An efficient & flame-based choice, offering a calm and streamlined farewell while honouring key rituals.* Time taken: 2-2.5 Hours <i>Makes it possible for ashes to be collected on the same day as the cremation.</i> 

* Depending on infrastructure at specific crematoriums, all rituals can be performed or can be performed with certain modifications

7.5 Implementation Plan

7.5.1 Potential Touchpoints/Channels, Assets, and Timing (where and how)

Deployment can be year-round through the following channels:

- During hospital discharge
 - Simple pamphlets to provide along with the paperwork
- In ambulances transporting individuals to the crematoriums
 - Poster displayed in the ambulance

- Simple pamphlets made available in the ambulance
- On last rites websites (and depending on feasibility, on estate planning websites)
 - Simple infographic
- Will planners
 - A simple pamphlet provided during the will planning session
- At crematoriums (here, ensure that the options presented align with the options available at the crematorium)
 - Prominently displayed signage
 - A simple pamphlet to be provided during registration

Intervention 8: Improving the aesthetics of electric and CNG crematoriums

8.1 Description

This intervention aims to **improve the aesthetic and emotional experience** of electric and CNG crematoriums. Our diagnostic research revealed that many families found CNG and electric pyre halls to be industrial, dim, isolating, and emotionally sterile - especially in contrast to the open and socially immersive experience of traditional wood pyres. These negative perceptions create a barrier to adoption. Hence, this intervention aims to improve the aesthetics, spiritual, and emotional experience of electric and CNG crematoriums, in order to make them more comforting to grieving families.

8.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
The qualitative study revealed that emotional closure is extremely important to people when a death occurs, and it is also tied closely to the visual and social experience of wood pyres. CNG and electric pyre halls are perceived to be industrial, dim, isolating, and not emotionally comforting. (Key barrier)	People may be less willing to use CNG and electric crematoriums due to the negative aesthetic experience. However, if these crematoriums were to be beautified, and if spiritual elements are incorporated, then people might find electric and CNG crematoriums to be more emotionally appealing.	Medium to long-term perceptual outcome: - More families perceive electric/CNG crematoriums as dignified and spiritually valid Medium to long-term behavioural outcome: - Aesthetic improvements make these pyres more emotionally acceptable and comforting, increasing willingness to consider them.

8.3 Target Audience

Families of the deceased and cremation attendees

8.4 Intervention Design

This intervention will aim to improve the aesthetic, emotional and spiritual experience of electric and CNG crematoriums through the following components:

8.4.1 Aesthetic Elements:

- **Enhanced lighting:** Install natural or soft warm lighting to replace harsh industrial fixtures and reduce dimness.
- **Ventilation and openness:** Improve airflow and reduce the claustrophobic feel of closed halls through architectural adjustments (e.g., windows, open arches, skylights).
- **Natural elements:** Introduce plants and floral arrangements to make the environment more natural and to evoke a sense of peace.
- **Improved cleanliness:** Ensure that crematoriums are well maintained and that pyres are cleaned regularly to avoid excessive soot build up, and to signal care and reverence.

8.4.2 Spiritual Elements:

- **Spiritual symbols:** Integrate culturally appropriate symbols (e.g., Om, diya motifs, sacred texts) in the design of the crematorium hall walls, or entryways.

8.5 Implementation Plan

Implementation will begin with identifying pilot crematoriums, followed by securing funding and onboarding an architectural team to redesign the cremation halls. A-PAG and government partners will jointly finalize timelines, oversee execution, and monitor the impact of the redesign.

Intervention 9: Include symbolic ways to perform rituals in electric and CNG crematoriums

9.1 Description

This intervention aims to integrate symbolic ways of performing key rituals within electric and CNG crematoriums. Diagnostic research revealed that many families worry that electric and CNG pyres do not allow for essential rituals such as mukhagni. These perceived limitations weaken the spiritual legitimacy of these pyres, since many religious rituals are believed to be important for achieving moksha. This intervention therefore seeks to provide symbolic ways for families to perform essential last rites, and to feel more involved in the cremation ceremony.

9.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
The qualitative study revealed that religious beliefs and traditions shape cremation preferences, and that certain religious rituals are perceived to be integral for achieving moksha. Moreover, many people believe that electric and CNG pyres do not allow for many of these religious rituals to be performed, thereby reducing their spiritual legitimacy and appeal (Key barrier)	When rituals feel "missing" or "incomplete," families reject electric/CNG pyres even if other features are attractive. However, if there were symbolic ways of performing rituals within these pyres, families may be more willing to use them.	Medium-term cognitive outcome: - Ritual compatibility reduces resistance, especially among more tradition-oriented families. Medium-term behavioural outcome: - Greater willingness to choose electric/CNG pyres when ritual components are meaningfully incorporated.
The qualitative study revealed that families value experiences that provide them emotional closure when a death occurs, and that electric and CNG pyres are seen as impersonal (Key barrier)	If families do not feel involved in the cremation process, they might find it less emotionally satisfying, and might be less willing to use electric and CNG pyres. By including symbolic ways of performing rituals,	Medium to long-term behavioural outcome: Ritual compatibility makes these pyres more acceptable and increases willingness to consider them.

	families might feel more involved in the cremation ceremony and might in turn find these pyres to be more emotionally appealing.	
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9.3 Target Audience

Families of the deceased and cremation attendees, particularly those performing the last rites rituals.

9.4 Intervention Design

This intervention will enable families to perform meaningful last rites within electric and CNG crematoriums by offering symbolic ritual elements and spaces for participation. Components could include:

- **Symbolic ways of lighting the pyre/mukhagni:** Install a button that families can press to initiate the cremation and “light the pyre”, similar to performing mukhagni in traditional pyres.
- **Ash collection rituals:** Offer families a structured way of collecting ashes to liken it to the phool chugna process. E.g. in addition to the container with the ashes, provide families with an empty urn/container and allow them to pick out the bones to make it an interactive process.

9.5 Implementation Plan

Implementation will begin with identifying pilot crematorium sites and establishing funding. Following this, onboard vendors, train staff to guide families, and monitor implementation impact.

Intervention 10: Redesign electric and CNG pyres to enable rituals like *Kapal Kriya*

10.1 Description

This intervention focuses on making structural modifications to electric and CNG cremation platforms so that key rituals such as *kapal kriya* (ritual skull-breaking) can be performed. In traditional wood pyres, these rituals play a critical role in achieving spiritual closure and honoring the deceased. However, the inability to perform these rites is often cited by families as a reason for rejecting electric or CNG pyres. By modifying the design of cremation chambers and equipment to safely accommodate these rituals, this intervention aims to bridge the gap between tradition and electric and CNG pyres.

10.2 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

Key insights addressed	Implication	Anticipated outcome
The qualitative study revealed that religious beliefs and traditions shape cremation preferences, and that certain religious rituals, such as kapal kriya, are perceived to be integral for achieving moksha. However, due to the infrastructure, many electric and CNG pyres do not allow for kapal kriya to be performed in accordance with religious traditions, thereby reducing their spiritual legitimacy and appeal, and deterring people from using these pyres (Key barrier)	When key rituals such as kapal kriya feel "missing" or "incomplete," families reject electric/CNG pyres due the fear that the deceased won't achieve moksha. However, if pyres could be modified to allow for kapal kriya, then families may be more willing to use them.	Medium-term behavioural outcome: - Greater willingness to choose electric/CNG pyres when kapal kriya can be performed in accordance with religious traditions. Medium-term cognitive outcome: - Ritual compatibility reduces resistance, especially among more tradition-oriented families.

10.3 Target Audience

Families of the deceased and cremation attendees.

10.4 Intervention Design

This intervention will involve physical modifications to electric and CNG cremation pyres to safely allow for rituals like kapal kriya. Key components include:

- **Adding an additional opening to the pyre:** Many CNG and electric pyres are designed such that the pyre opening is towards the south. However, according to religious rituals, the body's head must be placed towards the north so that when the skull is broken, the soul can escape in the right direction. By modifying the infrastructure of existing pyres to include an additional opening on the north side (or by ensuring that in new crematoriums, the cremation halls are designed such that the pyre opening is towards the north), families/Acharyas will be able to perform the essential ritual of kapal kriya in accordance with religious guidances.

10.5 Implementation Plan

Implementation will begin with identifying pilot crematoriums and onboarding relevant officials and technical stakeholders to design ritual elements. Following this, install redesigned features with clear guidance, train staff, and monitor implementation impact.



Appendix

Appendix A

This section contains an overview of the different types of cremation pyres available in Delhi, including their associated costs and the time taken for cremation.

Pyre type	Traditional Wood	Mokshada/ Improved Wood	Electric	CNG	Cow dung
Time	~4-5 hours	~3 hours	~1.5-2 hours	~2-2.5 hours	~5-6 hours
Same day ash collection	×	×	✓	✓	×
Base cost	2800 for wood	1400 for wood	500 in MCD facilities	1500	
Pandit + ash collection + maintenance	900	900	900	900	
Other materials	~2000 (ranges from 1100-3000)	~2000 (ranges from 1100-3000)	500-700	500-700	
Total Cost	~Rs. 5700	~Rs. 4300	~Rs. 2000	~Rs. 3000	~Rs. 3500

Appendix B

This section outlines the remaining interventions that were not shortlisted.

Summary of Behavioural Interventions

Title	Core Idea	Target Audience	Key Insights Leveraged	Channel
Pathway: Reframe electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the emotional and financial burden on families				
Campaign to frame electric and CNG pyres as ways to reduce the financial burden on families	Reframe electric and CNG cremation as thoughtful choices that ease the financial burden on one's family/enable parents to leave more for their families.	Senior citizens (60+) in Delhi's urban, educated households	Enablers Leveraged: - Parental instinct to protect and to reduce suffering for loved ones, - Last wishes are respected at death	During estate and will planning, during life insurance purchasing, social media
Pathway: Use influential figures to normalize electric and CNG pyres				
Leverage spiritual and religious leaders to endorse eco-friendly pyres	Engage trusted spiritual leaders to publicly endorse electric and CNG cremation, dispel ritual-related myths, and enhance the religious legitimacy of eco-friendly pyres.	General public in Delhi	Barriers Targeted: - Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres, - Religious beliefs and traditions shape cremation preferences	Spiritual leaders, pandits, astrologers, religious messengers (e.g. Isha foundation, Sikh gurus)
Use of entertainment,	Leverage popular culture—through	General public in Delhi	Barriers Targeted: Stigma and	Edutainment films/videos,

celebrities and films to depict the use of eco-friendly pyres	celebrities, films, and entertainment media—to popularise and normalise the use of eco-friendly pyres.		misinformation around eco-friendly pyres	mass media campaigns
Pathway: Provide simplified information about different pyre options in order to guide choices				
Neutral decision aids to guide cremation choices	A simplified guide that explains all cremation pyre options and their characteristics	Families making last rites decisions; cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: - Lack of awareness about alternatives, - Stigma and misinformation around eco-friendly pyres, - Crematorium layouts prioritize traditional pyres	Distribution of decision aids during hospital discharge, in ambulances, on last rite organisation's website, on will/estate planner's websites, at crematoriums
Other pathways				
Campaign highlighting the deforestation effects of traditional pyres	A communications campaign that highlights the environmental cost of traditional wood cremation – especially trees lost and the associated health impacts – to build awareness and nudge families and older	Families in Delhi's urban, educated households	Barriers Targeted: Environment concerns exists but are not salient at the time of death	Social media (Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook), mass media

	individuals toward choosing eco-friendly pyres.			
Tally of number of trees saved through electric/CNG cremations	Displaying a dynamic tally of the number of trees saved through electric and CNG cremation at each crematorium in order to highlight the positive environmental effects of these pyres	Cremation attendees	Barriers Targeted: Environment concerns exists but are not salient at the time of death	At crematoriums
Green cremation certificates and rewards	Providing families who opt for electric or CNG cremations “green cremation certificates”, as well as planting a tree in memory of the deceased individual to provide an immediate, positive benefit to using an electric or CNG pyre	Families arranging cremations	Barriers Targeted: Environment concerns exists but are not salient at the time of death	At crematoriums
Highlighting the process involved in <i>kapal kriya</i> as a way to deter individuals from traditional pyres	Prompt conversations about the <i>kapal kriya</i> ritual with elders or terminal patients, as the	Senior citizens and terminal patients	Enablers Leveraged: People want to avoid situations of pain, and	During estate planning, will planning, end-of-life care planning, at old age homes and

	visceral discomfort associated with thinking about skull-breaking may lead them to prefer alternative cremation methods that avoid this practice.		explaining the violent nature of <i>kapal kriya</i> might deter people from wanting that ritual for themselves	at hospices
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Summary of Structural Interventions

Title	Core Idea	Target Audience	Key Insights Leveraged	Key Agents
Monetary incentives for electric and CNG cremations	Provide monetary incentives to crematorium staff for every electric or CNG cremation conducted at their crematorium	Crematorium staff	Barriers Targeted: Misaligned incentives for crematorium managers	Governmental stakeholders
Government mandated targets for electric and CNG cremations	Provide monthly, government mandated targets for electric and CNG cremations at each crematorium, and have representatives stationed at each crematorium to ensure compliance.	Crematorium staff	Barriers Targeted: Misaligned incentives for crematorium managers	Governmental stakeholders