

How to develop skills of FEATURE WRITING

- Dr. Subhash K. Desai



A Collection of Features on
Socio-political events
in Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara Districts,
published in **The Times of India.**



Dr. Subhash Desai presenting his new book to Hon'ble CM of Bihar Nitish Kumarji on 3rd-Nov-2013 at CM's residence



Dr. Subhash Desai presenting his new book to Dr. D Y Patil - Governor of Bihar at Rajbhavan Patna

Communication and feature writing or a story writing is a skill essential for students while they are learning. Their intellectual enquiries in to social happenings continue to inspire new and more interpretations of social life.

In print and electronic media, only a few seek to explore new material with objective attitude and make a value addition to the existing body of knowledge. Dr. Subhash Desai is such a name in print media. He is senior journalist and author of more than forty books.

There is something strikingly distinct about Dr. Desai's style. He invokes intellectual enquiry of his readers and then takes them on a roller-coaster ride in richly sourced complex of abstract ideas and analysis. He had worked with Indian Express, The Press Trust of India and The Times of India. He knows the difference between writing for news papers and news agencies; because of this deep understanding there is Varsity of subjects in his feature writing. This would certainly be useful to develop skill of feature writing. The students of journalism communication languages would be benefited. Last ten years Dr. Subhash Desai had contributed his knowledge to post graduates students in Journalism, Mass Communication, and Gandhi Study Centre in Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

This work would prove to be a reference book for teachers and students.

B. M. Kousal

Director, (Retd.)

Information & Public Relation.

Govt. of Maharashtra

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 **सिंहवणी**
Sinhavani Publishers

How to Develop Skill of
FEATURE
WRITING

By - Dr. Subhash K. Desai

M.A. Ph.D.

Senior Journalist, Accredited, Govt. of Maharashtra.

**How to Develop Skill of
FEATURE WRITING**

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2 \$

FORWARD

Feature writing is an art in the field of journalism. These features throw light on the various issues and topics of a particular region. Dr. Subhash K. Desai is a sincere journalist who has contributed to various newspapers and journals. These features are on various topics regarding, Education, Science, Medicine, Politics, Agriculture, Policing, Security Law and Order, Literature, Sports, Trade and Commerce and Art and Literature. If these features are taken together one can judge what sort of life is enjoyed, what sort of problems occur and how they are solved. In a way this becomes a realistic documentary of the society with all its features and problems. Such kind of collection of features is an excellent reference book for the ready reference of the students of journalism. They can study these features at different levels *e.g.* :

1) Content : Content of these features can be studied from the variety of subjects covered. How the feature writer takes up a problem and presents details of the issue which become easily accessible and understandable for the common reader. They also show the commitment of the feature writer towards societal problems and issues.

2) Language : These features can be studied at a linguistic level alongwith diction and the style of the author. The words and phrases and the terminology used in a particular feature must be suitable and appropriate to the topic. The style of the feature

writer gets improved and becomes mature when he reads good features as Dr. Desai has presented very good samples of features in this collection.

3) Education : The features are also meant for awakening and enlightening the common man about a particular problem or issue. Some of the misconceptions and myths are made clear and reality is kept open before the common man. These features in this regard are a kind of attempt in the direction of Mass Education. They also serve the purpose of sensitizing the society about a particular problem.

Dr. Desai is a versatile authority in the field of journalism. The range of his subjects is very wide, he himself is a very good researcher with inquisitive mind. He is voracious reader and a very studious traveler and at the same time a simple man, living a life of simplicity which is an advantage to him to move among the common people.

Spirituality and the study in depth of philosophy are also his specialties. He has a unbiased view of his own and hence without any prejudice he picks up any socially relevant problem and writes on it. Then it may be in praise for good that is happening in society or it may be a bitter criticism on any burning issue. These features reveal his vast knowledge and insights into the lives of people.

Dr. B. M. Hirdekar

M.A. M.Ed. LL.B. Ph.D.

Controller of Examinations
Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

PREFACE

If you want to generate some features, you could follow a tip from a famous and successful writer. He said, develop a simple habit of writing at least 500 words daily, whether you felt it like or not. Although inspiration can happen at any time, it's most likely to happen when you are actually writing.

Many writers have trouble getting ideas. The secret of finding ideas is this - they are every where. You just have to know how to tease them out of your memory.

If you want to learn how to write short story, then you will need to read a lot, hopefully, you like reading because doing so you learn how to write feature. One of the major challenges when setting out to write a features or another piece of writing is finding the time to write. So many people say that they do not have the time.

I have a big secret for you, you have to make time when it comes to think in about how to write a features. In the beginning writers usually have trouble getting ideas to write about. Some readers ask, "Where do you get your ideas?"

The good news is that ideas are every where.

Some Guidelines

I had worked with Indian Express, The Press Trust of India and The Times of India since 1982 to 2012. The news papers and News agencies have their own different style of writing. But in general these are some guidelines.

We begin a number of stories routinely with so and so said today and then report the news. It is time now we should change our style of end of the paragraph and instead focus on the news first.

Reporters should straightway start with the news and give the source of the story at the end of the paragraph, if necessary. for example, The election commission notification duly constituting the New Maharashtra Assembly was today constituted following the issue of a notification by the election commission for the purpose instead of opening with the name the chief electoral officer meeting the government and handling over the notification.

Likewise, a story or Feature need not start with the name of Chief Minister, Union Minister or a prominent personality just for the sake of it. Instead, you should look for the news aspect, Begin with it and give the name of the source at the end of the opening para. Of course, there will be exceptions when the news relates to famous personalities in situations when they are involved in an accident or death or are nominated for some awards for when they resign from their posts. There also exceptions like the Prime Minister whose position lends weight to his story and the views expressed by him.

Another important issue is the need to treat with care stories relating to allegations against individuals and corporates. When not handled with care such stories can land in problems like defamation suits, which has to be avoided.

Care should always be taken to get the version of the other side before giving the story, though in very important story, we may not be able to wait indefinitely to get the other side's version, we should at least make considerable efforts to get it. In case, we fail to get it we should make a mention that we were not able to get the other side's version. This will help is considerably in later in case of legal proceedings.

Exceptions will also be there like when a very prominent political personality makes political allegations or when such charges are made against very prominent political leaders. In such cases efforts should be made to get the version from the affected leaders or their spokesmen and include them in the stories.

In case of doubt, you can always check with editor.



Acknowledgement

My sincere thanks to Diniar Patel. Shekhar Welankar from the Times of India for inspiring me to write on different topics continously.

- Dr. Subhash Desai

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DEDICATION

This Book is dedicated to those who were instrumental in my success in 23rd world philosophy congress held in Athens, Greece in August 2013.

His Excellency Dr. D. Y. Patil

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Shri. Madhav Ghatge

Chairman, Gurudatta Sugar Factory, Shirol.

Shri. Jaysingrao Powar

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Sunil Panditrao Patil

Vijay C. Helge

Prakash Jokhe

Bharat Kadam

Suhas Kadam

Dr. V. N. Magdum

Appasaheb Sutar

Anil Shiralkar

Kisan Bhosale

P. S. Muchandi

Dipak Sarnaik

Anant Khasbardar



STEADILY UPWARD

*Shivaji University is celebrating its golden jubilee in November. Vice chancellor **Dr. N. J. Pawar** talks to **Subhash Desai** about the journey so far and the road ahead.*

In February last year, Dr. N. J. Pawar assumed charge as vice chancellor of Shivaji University. With him at the helm, the varsity will be celebrating its golden jubilee. And ever since he took charge, Dr. Pawar has been preparing for the golden jubilee celebration.

His predecessor Dr. Manikrao Salunkhe paved the way towards global vision. As much as nine memoranda of understanding (MOU) were signed with the universities abroad and many research projects including, Biodiversity Park and Energy Park were conceived. These efforts are bearing fruit now.

Talking to **Kolhapur Plus** on its fourth anniversary, Dr. Pawar explains in detail activities, projects and schemes during his one-and-a-half-year tenure. He says after taking charge, he first wanted to get the feel of things.

Dr. Pawar conducted Ph.D. entrance examinations successfully and mechanical and civil engineering branches were approved at the varsity "Several new appointments at high positions were also done. Roster completion work was undertaken and semester system has been introduced."

One of the major developments is the introduction of 'Digital College-Digital University' concept. Shivaji University also got connectivity with the National Knowledge Network.

About future plans, the vice-chancellor says, "A cycle scheme for students in remote colleges would start soon." He is also thinking about introducing incentive grants to financially weaker colleges. The Vision Document 2025 is under preparation. For fund raising for the golden jubilee function, seven proposals have been submitted.

A soft-spoken person, Dr. Pawar says he has received wonderful results, thanks to cooperation from his colleagues and juniors. According to him, the three pillars of a vice chancellor's work are transparency, honesty and integrity.

Dr. Pawar wants university professors to be more forthcoming. "Many of them live in their own worlds. They need to look beyond.

They should also undertake research activities and keep abreast with the latest in their respective fields."

He asserts that seeds of research and development are sown at the college level only. "If we are able to do it, the future will be brighter for sure," he signs off.

Date : 6 September 2013



MAKING A MARK

Shivaji University is undertaking R&D activities with the support of the Centre's Department of Science and Technology

The Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has initiated a programme--Promotion of University Research and Scientific Excellence (PURSE)--in 2009 to encourage research and development (R&D) activities at the varsities. An R&D incentive grant was provided last year to 19 universities and Shivaji University (SU) in the city was one of them.

During the tenure of Manikrao Salunkhe, former vice chancellor, several scientific research works were undertaken. The quality of work was appreciated by experts, according to T. Ramsami, DST secretary.

Talking to **Kolhapur Plus**, N. J. Pawar, SU vice chancellor, says, "We are proud about the scientific research work that was hailed at the global level. We have received Rs 9 crone, thanks to it. DST-PURSE supports the university bear the cost of research manpower, equipment, computational facilities, research consumables and maintenance of facilities. Of course, no funding is provided for building construction and recruitment of permanent staff."

The varsity authorities say that for further research, they are trying to procure equipment and other items at to avoid cost escalation due to foreign exchange fluctuation. They also point out that the DST has cautioned all the universities that if the grant are not properly used

or appropriate progress is not made, it reserves the right to terminate the support at any stage.

Date : 21 December, 2013



SU STANDS OUT

A Shivaji University team has introduced a unique accounts code that will be used at all non-agriculture varsities across the country

A team of Shivaji University (SU's) accounts department has introduced a unique accounts code that has been appreciated in Mumbai and Delhi and would soon be applicable to all non-agriculture universities all over the country.

The account code pertains to all financial matters of a university. It is published and maintained by the university as part of the general responsibility for the university accounting policy.

It is interesting to note that there aren't unified rules for accounting procedures in all Indian universities. Since the varsities have computerised the accounts, a unique code to suit the system was needed. A team of experts from Shivaji University, led by B. S. Patil, finance and accounts officer, started working on the crucial task. The team has come up with a code, which has been approved by the National University of education planning and administration, New Delhi.

Manikrao Salunkhe, SU's former vice chancellor who is now V. C. of a Rajasthan University, guided the group. He says the code would prove to be one of the main keys in university administration. Sanjay Kumar, principle secretary, Higher and technical education, has also lauded the team. He says a salient feature of the account code is its compatibility with the computerised system. "This will bring transparency in the accounting procedure. It would be convenient for the state government and the audit authorities to exercise effective financial control."

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, B. S. Patil says all finance officers

had approved the draft at a meeting held in Nagpur way back in September 2009. "We are now waiting for a GR. We are happy that we at SU could provide the code that is going to be applicable to all non-agriculture universities all over the country.

Patil attributes the success to team members A. D. Patil, T. V. Swami, Dilip Jokhe, A. B. Rajge and V. V. Mule, registrar.



IT'S ROLLING...

The wheels of progress are moving at a steady pace in the region. Thanks to Shivaji University, needy students in Kolhapur, Sangli / and Satara districts will get bicycles for education.

Poor students at 261 colleges affiliated to the Shivaji University (SU) in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts have heaved a sigh of relief with the varsity providing them with bicycles for educational purpose under a scheme.

Many students from remote parts of these districts were facing problems while attending colleges. Poor students had to travel in overcrowded private vehicles or State Transport buses. Some of them, who couldn't afford the expenditure, had no option but to walk the distance from their homes to educational institutes.

With a view to helping B.Sc. / B. Com. / B.A. students, SU has decided to give bicycles to those hailing from remote, hilly and draught-prone areas. So far 250 bicycles have been handed over to 500 students including 250 girls. Maintenance of the cycles will be responsibility of the beneficiaries. After completion of his / her course, the cycle will be returned to the college to be given to another student.

In the 2011-12 academic year, cycles have been distributed in colleges at Gadhinglaj, Vaduj. Warnanagar, Kotoli, Halkarni and 82 other colleges.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Pandu Sutar, parent of a student, said his family was not in a position to buy a bicycle. "This scheme has helped my son regularly attend college. We are happy and wish the scheme continues."

B. M. Hirdekar, controller of examinations and in-charge of the scheme, told us that it was satisfying to see joy and relief on the faces of students and parents at the time of cycle distribution.

Tanaji Channe, former high school teacher, said in 1999, a similar scheme was implemented at Pare village in Sangli district. Results were wonderful that time. 'Now the scheme has been launched on a larger scale and I am sure it will be successful,' he concludes.

Date : 13 September 2011



GOING DIGITAL

With a view to bettering coordination with colleges and providing e-suvidha to students, Shivaji University has launched a special scheme

Following the state government directives, Shivaji University has launched 'Digital University Digital College' scheme for effective and speedy communication between it and affiliated college and providing e-suvidha to students. The scheme is being implemented through the Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd (MKCL).

Special software has been developed to keep track of a student right from one's admission to getting a degree and even of job opportunities and placement. All efforts are meant for helping the student at every stage of academic progress.

Through this, students will have access to personalised examination time table, bonafide certificate, identity card, library card and other such documents. The system can provide over 125 different reports, which will be useful for a college and the varsity. The difficulties and problems of the students often face would be reduced

to a great extent.

Communication between colleges and the university will also improve. Besides, stress will be on effective management of human resources. These steps would result into cost-effective and time saving operations.

Shivaji University has taken initiative to increase the coverage of the scheme and conducted district-wise workshops for administrative staff, teachers and college principals so as to provide them with the scheme details.

Experts from MKCL Sachin Satpute, Uttam Unawane, S. S. Kharade, M. J. Joshi, Ashish Ghate, Shashikant Hukkeri and others are striving to make the scheme successful under the guidance of B. M. Hirdekar, controller of examinations.

Date : 7 September 2010



BHOJE BACKS NUKE DEAL

Eminent scientist Shivaram Bhoje who is responsible for designing, constructing and operating the nuclear reactor at Kalpakkam, has urged political parties to rally behind the Prime Minister

India's senior nuclear scientist Padma Shri Shivaram Bhoje has the nuclear supported policy of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and appealed to all political parties to support signing of the nuclear pact with the USA.

Bhoje is responsible for designing, constructing and operating a Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) at Kalpakkam in 1985. In January 2003, the then President of India A. P. J. Kalam awarded him Padma Shri in recognition of his service to the nation.

Bhoje said, India should be energy independent and there was no alternative to nuclear energy. The country has already become stronger and built the best of nuclear reactors. Sixteen nuclear reactors are operating and producing 4,200 MW of electricity. Explaining the

logic behind his support to the Prime Minister, Bhoje said, "Our population is growing all the time and it would be 720 crore in 2050. Since we have become an industrialised nation, our living standard has increased. We are witnessing economic progress. Our long-term goal is to provide good standard of living to a large population. This requires considerable amount of energy."

In 1950/60, India was using non-conventional forms of energy like cow dung and agricultural waste. Today, most people use coal, gas and oil. Compared to the North America, our per capita electricity consumption is less. To improve our economic condition, we need a number of energy sources scientist added. Bhoje further said, India's coal is of poor quality. "We require 26 lakh tonnes of coal every year. By 2050, we would require 5,00,000 MW electricity for a modest living standard. Our coal will last for another around 60 years. What next?" he asked.

He pointed out that coal is a heavy polluting resource. It created carbon, sulphur-oxide, nitrogen-oxide and a huge quantity of ash containing poisons material like arsenic.

"Another options of energy are oil and gas. Our oil is mostly used for transport and 70 per cent of it is and gas prices increasing at a rapid rate. No country could afford to pay such high prices," he said. India's hydraulic potential is limited. Construction of dams submerges a large area of land and forest. Besides, rehabilitation of the affected people becomes a major issue. If rains play a truant, we are not only high and dry but have to go with less electricity. Solar energy is slow to get and therefore, there is no alternative to nuclear energy not only for our generation but also for our sustainable growth in the energy sector, Bhoje concluded.

Date : 1 July 2008



MEET MR. ALIEN !

*Can extra terrestrial beings attack our planet as is Claimed? Do they exist in the first place? **Subhash Desai** sought views from **R. V. Bhosale**, Space Scientist. Read on to*

know more.

It was flash news on certain television channels that arrested attention of the viewers. The extra terrestrial beings might attack the earth as human beings entered their domain ! Some claimed that aliens had entered the earth's atmosphere.

Can this ever happen? In the first place, do the extra terrestrial beings exist? Is there any substantial evidence to prove that they do? Meet R. V. Bhosale, an eminent space scientist, and you will get your answers.

Bhosale, who has worked with the great scientist like of Vikram Sarabhai and Prof. Rangnathan, says "The channel viewers need not be afraid. They should not believe in such unauthentic and imaginative stories."

The words came from the man who worked at the physical research laboratory in Ahmedabad for 30 years and after retirement, was instrumentally in starting space science, a new subject, for postgraduate students at the Shivaji University here. One of his projects regarding Mars expedition accepted in principle by the NASA.

Recently, an American space discovery commander, Merck Kerry, went on record saying, "There are living beings in the space but they are so far that they cannot reach the earth."

Commenting on his statement, Bosale said, "It's a hypothesis. Such imagination sometimes leads to discoveries. These reports are isolated." Why the UFOs are identified in America only? Bhosale asked and explained, "In a marshy land, methane gas exists and some inexplicable shapes are seen in the atmosphere. The scientific analysis is high-energy particles from the sun entering the earth's atmosphere in the high latitude fields, sometimes, can come down to 30 to 40 latitude.

"In Florida, magnetic field is disturbed by this energy particle and due to pollution in America, some shapes are visible."

Is there anyone in Maharashtra who claims to having seen aliens? "Yes. A postgraduate medical couple from Karvar claimed they had seen extra terrestrial beings. They wrote a hook. They have written to National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). This could be an isolated experience," he said.

According to Bhosale, there are hundreds of solar systems but not necessary, they are like ours. However, the imagination may become reality as it happens in science.



TAKING GIANT STRIDES

Kolhapur is a melting pot of culture. The city has also seen a huge growth in fields like Agriculture, Education, Literature and Sports

Any history of culture gives you a glorious picture of the past, when you read it you are impressed - but when the question of analysis with the present day comes into play one tends to become confused. The picture is no different in Kolhapur.

The culture of Kolhapur has many facets. Fields like agriculture, education, industry, literature and sports are growing. Kolhapur district has picturesque locales on the borders of Goa and Karnataka. Naturally the effect of Kannad and Konkani culture is vivid in the border districts. But what Kolhapur district lacks in is political support.

In spite of this drawback people are hard working and have developed wonderful skills and techniques.

During 1952 to 55, community development programmes were started here. Development of the cane crop became systematic. It was known as Fad padhat'. Forty to fifty farmers used to come together to cultivate land.

Kolhapur is an important jaggery centre. At present the town has 17 sugar factories producing the maximum sugar output in the country. Jaysingpur Township, the market place for tobacco was established a few decades ago. The Shahu Textile Mill became a centre for the cotton weaving industry.

Other crops like wheat, groundnut and rice also found place here. Kolhapur produced iron anchors, oil pump-set diesel engines, crushers and spare parts of Mahendra, Bajaj and Escorts. Now three industrial zones have come up - Shirol, Gokulshirgao and the five star

MIDC at Kagal.

Milk

On the basis of operation flood, a co-operative milk federation developed in district. Gokul, Warna Mayur Morna, Gopal and Mahalakshmi are the big milk collectors. They supply milk to Goa, Maharashtra and Karnataka. Many families are financially supported by these milk productions.

Education

Rajaram College was the first college in Kolhapur and established in 1880. Sikex Law College was started in 1933 while Teacher's Training College was started in 1934.

Two rural universities, Mouni Vidyapeeth and Tararani Women's Vidyapeeth are present here. Shivaji University has now signed a MoU with universities abroad. A few engineering colleges and two medical colleges also exist in Kolhapur.

Literature

Many literary figures are born and brought up in Kolhapur from Pandit Moropant to V. S. Khandekar. The novelists born here include Baba Kadam Shivaji Savant, Dattabal, N. S. Phadke and M. R. Desai.

Sports

Wrestling and football are very popular games in Kolhapur. Youngsters from Punjab and Pakistan come and get trained here. Mandar Divse and Veerdhaval Khade have excelled in swimming. Shailaja Salokhe, Tengshe and Shirodker are famous table tennis players.

Music Drama and Films

Melody queen Lata Mangeshkar hails from Kolhapur Alladiya Khan, Haider Khan, Bhurji Khan besides Govindrao Tembe were products of Kolhapur. Baburao Painter, Bhalji Pendharker and Rajsheker, Bhalchandra are renowned in the film world.

Date : 2 September 2008



NAARI SHAKTI

Run by women for women, the institute founded by Princess Indumati in the city is celebrating its golden jubilee this year

It's an institute run by the women for the women. Since its inception five decades ago, the institute has been working for women uplift and progress through education, thanks to Late Princess Indumati, daughter-in-law of late Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur.

Remembered by women cutting across castes and religions for her social contribution, the princess established an educational institute in the name of Maharani Shantadevi Gaikwad of Baroda in 1961. The institute, run by women for all-round development and empowerment of women, is celebrating its golden jubilee this year.

Princess Indumati was wife of Prince Shivaji, who died while riding a horse in a forest. She was just 13 then. She completed her education and devoted her life for women's emancipation and development.

Initially she started a home science school, which later grew into several branches. One of her British friends, Ms Cambric, helped her learn English. She later studied movements for social and economic independence of women in the European countries.

In 1954, she founded the All India Women Sangh in 1954. The first school for women, Model High School for Girls, began in 1960. Gradually, membership of the organisation swelled to 100. Educational experts Principal Bal and Principal Dhekne became their advisers. On November 30, 1971, the princess passed away her work was carried forward by a host of others including Matti Thakur, Ushadevi Kumbhar, Sharada Hiremath, Nanda Zope, Anuradha Samant, Arti Mane, Shakuntala Jadhav, Nilambari Kulkarni and Manik Jadhav.

The institute has produced bright girl students like Shiv Chhatrapati award winner Daya Kavare, Madhavi Patil, national-level

weight-lifter, Shweta Patil, Pragati Mangalekar, Nilam Ghatge, Rani Dhisal, Ranjana Savekar, Nirupama Ghatge and Manik Nigade to name a few. Besides, weightlifting and kabaddi, the girl students have also excelled in judo, shooting, kho-ko, swimming, badminton and rope malkhamb.

Date : 7 September 2010



PROGRESSIVE THINKING

Symposium at Shivaji University throws light on role of industry-academia partnership in development of western region of the country

Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). New Delhi, Association of Indian Uni-versities (AIU) New Delhi and Shivaji University, Kolhapur recently hosted a two day symposium on 'Industry academia collaboration for development of western region of India'.

Noted scientist Vijay Bhatkar inaugurated the symposium which focussed on development of four states Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa and Karnataka. Bhatkar said that there is an urgent need for synergy between education and industry requirements. "This could increase the standard of industrial products in the country," Bhatkar said.

K. B. Pawar, former vice-chancellor of Shivaji University said that industries should not neglect research methodology A panel discussion was held divided into four different sessions. The subjects discussed were industry-academia partnership, pitfalls, problems, environmental concerns and solutions for mining industry in western India, IT/ITC Industry's role in increasing the reach and quality of higher education in India.

The minutes of the discussions would be sent to the central government to help in policy making. The science and technology department has taken this initiative in bringing the universities and

industries together for development of the country.

Around 200 noted people participated in the symposium.

Date : 7 September 2010



AUTONOMY THE KEY WORD

Colleges with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have credibility. University grants commission has launched a scheme to grant autonomy to eligible colleges

The University Grants Commission (UGC) is implementing a scheme for autonomous colleges in Plan X. The status initially for a period of six years is granted to a college following no objection certificate issued to the college by the affiliating university with the concurrence of the respective state government and approval of the UGC. In this regard, UGC has constituted an experts' committee headed by K. L. Johar from Haryana. Bhalba Vibhute, director and head of adult and continuing education department Shivaji University, is also on the panel. The other members are J. V. Prabhakar Rao from Andhra Pradesh, Rai Senani from Delhi and V. S. Karsija of UGC. The task before them is to submit findings and recommendations regarding autonomous status to colleges. During their visits, they will interact separately with the principal, faculty members and students and inspect the infrastructure facilities like library, hostel and computers available. Based on this observation and interaction, the committee will submit its report to the UGC.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Bhalba Vibhute said, the only safe and fool proof way to improve the quality of undergraduate education is to delink most of the colleges from the affiliating structure. Colleges with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have more credibility. Financial support to such colleges boosts the concept of autonomy hence it is proposed to increase the number of such colleges and target is to make 10 per cent eligible colleges autonomous by the

end of the Plan X.

The affiliating system of colleges was originally designed when their number in a university was small. The varsity could then effectively oversee working of, here colleges, act as an examining body and award degrees on their behalf. Now it is becoming increasingly difficult for a university to cater to the needs of individual colleges. They have no freedom to modernise their curricula or make it locally relevant. It has adversely affected the academic development of colleges. Hence the Education Commission recommended college autonomy, which, in essence, is the instrument for promoting academic excellence.

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Date : 4 Feb. 2008



INVESTORS LOSE RS. 52 CR.

Share investors in district lost an estimated Rs 52 crore on the Black Monday when share market, crashed. Hundreds of investors are still to recover from the blow. In fact, some of them had to be hospitalised after they complained of uneasiness.

Prakash Sanghavi, President of Kolhapur Investors' Association that is recognised by SEBI, told the Kolhapur Plus small investors need not panic. But simultaneously, one needs to evaluate as to why such a major dip happened.

It is the need the hour to see whether the finance ministry and SEBI are acting genuinely in the interest of small investors or all the policies are for the ultimate benefit of the broking houses and the big fish, he added Some experts in the city, who also have been investors!

for the last 25 years and have keenly observed numerous ups and downs, smelled something fishy in the incident. They charged that the government brought shares at the crashed rates but the same opportunity was not given to retail investors as brokers, in their own interest, did not allow them to buy.

Date : 4 Feb. 2008



LET'S STRIKE A BALANCE

This former MLA from Kolhapur is now Governor of Bihar. Congratulating Kolhapur Plus on its 3rd anniversary, Padmashri Dr. D. Y. Patil says development should have a humane angle. While moving on road to progress, the city should retain its old charm and originality

City's face is changing as it's taking giant strides on the progress path. However, amid all-round development, Kolhapur should retain its originality. Any development should have a humane angle, opines Padmashri Dr. D. Y. Patil, former MLA from Kolhapur and Governor of Tripura and now of Bihar.

While congratulating Kolhapur Plus on its 3rd anniversary, Patil speaks about developmental activities in the city. "Lack of connectivity to the world outside is one of the major hurdles in the development process. Improving railway and air connectivity should be given priority because that would automatically expedite development."

About the field of education, he says youth are the true asset of a country and when they are well educated and become self-reliant, the pace of progress moves up. Concerted efforts should be made to take education to the last man. At the same time, the standard of education must improve, especially in rural parts. "We have to go step-by-step. With systematic efforts, the goal can be achieved."

Progress and development are continuous processes and there cannot be a fixed timeframe or a definite method for results, he adds. "We should remember this always. Things cannot improve overnight but nothing is impossible if we persevere and determined to get our goals."

Underscoring the importance of vision and foresight, he narrates his experience in Tripura. During floods, he did an aerial survey of the flood affected parts there. Several villages were surrounded by floodwater but the extent of damage was restricted due to the fact that the gram panchayats had ensured that the levels of houses were elevated. They had foreseen the situation and taken necessary steps. As a result, "We flood-hit villagers suffered less. We can learn our lessons from this. Long-term remedies should be worked out. Our solutions should not be such that they give rise to newer problems. Vision and fore-sight are extremely important."

Regarding industrial growth, he suggests that industrialists in the region should become more ambitious and studious. "All of us know that around 1,00,000 students from the North East states are studying in Pune. Why not start medical and engineering colleges there ?"

On being pointed out that 19 innocent lives were lost in accidents on developing city roads, Patil feels sorry "It's very unfortunate. According to me, every development should have humane angle. Progress doesn't mean disturbing humanity While moving on the road to progress, Kolhapur should retain its old charm and originality," he concludes.

Date : 7 September 2010



MLA BAN GAYA HERO

Raju Shetty, an independent MLA, now M.P. has featured in a Marathi Movie, 'Sasuchi Waraat Sunechya Daaraat'

Bollywood actors turning politicians is no big news but a politician becoming a film actor certainly is. Raju Shetty, an independent MLA, has done it. He has featured in a Marathi film 'Sasuchi Waraat Sunechya Daaraat' (Marriage procession of mother-in-law to daughter-in-law's door).

The MLA and founder President of Swabhimani Shetakari Sanghatana is popular among farmers in Shirol, Hatkangale and Karveer Tehsils of Kolhapur district. His agitations for sugarcane growers and dairy farmers and the **Nirdhar Yatra**, he took out last year got good response from the ryots.

Shetty's political journey is quite dramatic. On September 29, 2007 he was injured in the cane-charge while he was leading a morcha at a cooperative sugar mill. He had six stitches on his head then. This drama in his real life, probably, arrested attention of the film producer. The film, released a few months ago, was received warmly in rural parts.

'Sasuchi Waraat Sunechya Daaraat' is based on a conflict between farmers and the head of a sugar factory. The hero in the film (Raju Shetty), who is a social leader, has to make a choice between his duty towards the society and welfare of his family. Obviously, the call of duty comes first. Even as he is discharging his duty, there's another twist to the tale. His daughter falls in love with the chairman's son. The chairman tries to blackmail him emotionally. What happens next? Well, see it on the screen.

Before the shooting, Shetty had put forward two conditions. He would not shave his beard off and he would wear his regular dress without any makeup. The shots of his rallies and his speech in real life are included in the reel.

When asked if he would like to play a role in Marathi film again, Shetty said, "If my message reaches people through films, why shouldn't I?"

Date : 15 July 2008



HAMIAARI MAANGE...

A high court bench in Kolhapur, regular water supply and reduced load-shedding - people expect two newly elected MPs from the region to address these issues on priority.

Parliamentary elections are over and it is now time for elected representatives of people to act. People in the region have a lot of expectations from the new MPs - Sadashivrao Mandlik and Raju Shetty.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, many of them raised the issues including setting up of a High Court bench in the city, regular supply of water and reduction in load-shedding hours. They also expect the due to fulfill all their pre-poll promises.

Common man, top priority : Talking to Kolhapur Plus, both Sadashivrao Mandlik and Raju Shetty say that issues of common man are their top priority. "I am a son of a poor farmer. I am aware of layman's problems. In fact, I owe my victory to the poor. I will whole heartedly strive to live up to their expectations," says Raju Shetty. Sadashivrao Mandlik says, "Voters have shown confidence in me. I will try my best to solve the problems of common man and farmers." Both say that they will raise in the Parliament the issues of farmers in the region.

P. M. Hilge, former President of the Kolhapur district bar association, says, "The demand for High Court bench here has been long-pending. Currently, we have to go to Mumbai for the cases and that consumes a lot of time and money. We hope our new MPs would follow up the matter."

Sambhajirao Desai Mhasvekar, retired irrigation officer, says, "The MPs should work to ensure regular supply of drinking water in rural parts. There is also an urgent need to address the issue of load-shedding. People would be happy if the hours of power cuts are reduced."

Anand V. Desai, former director of Shri. Mouni Vidyapeeth at Gargoti, says another major issue is of capitation fee and donations. "People's representatives should work to ensure higher education for promising students from poor background," he adds.

Several people feel that regular water supply, uninterrupted electric supply and good roads are the areas they would like to the

region improve on. Of course, prices of essential commodities are also important for that. Life of a common man should change for better, they add.

The reaction of Hindurao Patil, who runs a tea stall near Shivaji stadium, is symptomatic of the general mood. "All I expect from these leaders is making sure that we get liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders on time and sugar at reasonable rates. I have voted for them hoping that this would happen," he says.

Date : 26 May 2009



KOLHAPUR PAINTINGS

An artists' group from Sangli recently organised an expo of rare old paintings in the city. Demonstrations in painting and sculpting were held for art-lovers in Kolhapur, Sangli and Belgaum districts.

Artists often live in their own world. Even art-lovers seldom have access to the world of an artist engrossed in work. With a view to providing a platform for budding talent to present their works before art connoisseurs and bringing about interaction between artists and art-lovers, some painters from Sangli formed a group in 1993. The Kalapushp Group - founded on the Independence Day - has been working to treasure and popularise the art in the region.

As part of their mission, the group called upon people in the state to join hands with them not by donating money but by making contributions through rare old paintings in their private collections. The group received good response and soon they had a collection of 150 paintings drawn by master artists from all Maharashtra. All these paintings were carefully preserved. There was a demand from art-lovers that the paintings should come out of the cupboards and be displayed for them.

Kalapushp Group found a suitable occasion last month (August, 20), birth centenary of eminent artist G. R. Wadangekar. The founder of Kala Mandir Art School in Kolhapur, Wadangekar had received the President's gold medal for his contribution in the field of art. To mark the occasion, the group organised an exhibition of paintings in the city.

Collector Luxmikant Deshmukh inaugurated the expo. In his inaugural address, Deshmukh lauded the effort of the group in holding the exhibition and also praised it for its various art-related projects.

Artists whose paintings were exhibited included G. R. Wadangekar, C. N. Jadhav, K. B. Kulkarni, G. S. Majgaonker, John Fernandes. Milind Mulik and Achyut Palav. A demonstration in painting and sculpture was also held and it was attended by a large number of art-lovers from Kolhapur, Sangli and Belgaum districts.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sanjay Tadserker, Kala Mandir Art School principle, said they were successful in their objective, namely, drawing new generation to see the rare paintings. Balasaheb Patil from ,Sangli said the same experiment would soon be conducted in Pune, Mumbai, Nasik and Aurangabad.

Date : 7 September 2010



HE MEANS BUSINESS

Here's new superintendent of police, Vijaysinh Jadhav. On our fourth anniversary of Kolhapur Plus Subhash Desai talks to him about his plans for the district. Curbing corruption and bringing transparency in work are his top priorities.

His ideas are pretty clear. For Vijaysinh Jadhav, who recently assumed charge as district superintendent of police (DSP), Curbing corruption and bringing transparency are among top priorities. "My priority is to fight corruption," he avers.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus on its fourth anniversary, this IPS officer of 1995 batch is aware that his department has responsibility of maintaining law and order and serving common man with courtesy "I will pursue all programmes launched by earlier officers and strive for welfare of around 2,500 police force in district," says Jadhav.

About challenges, he says increasing cyber crime is a matter of concern. "It's difficult to control it unless one is made to obtain license, maintain register having details of customers and email IDs."

The DSP, who has worked in different parts of the state, says he has liked Kolhapur and its people. He also praises police here for their good show overall. "The number of police personnel in the district is inadequate considering heavy workload. Besides maintaining law and order, they have to ensure security of religious places, safety of VIPs and VVIPs and monitor morchas and agitations. In spite of the hectic schedules, they have been doing their jobs efficiently.

Jadhav points out that the district police excelled at the state-level sports meet. "Their health standards are high. "The only thing needed is to motivate them properly"

Referring to usual expectations people have from police, he says cops are part of society and they cannot be looked at in isolation. Corruption is deep-rooted in social life and hardly any sphere is untouched. However, it remains a fact there are honest people everywhere and they should be motivated.

He is concerned about the health of his staff. He says health camps would be arranged for them on a regular basis. About welfare scheme, he says under the Maharashtra police family scheme, cashless treatment is available for cops.

In reply to a question about increasing crime rate in district, he says the district has population of 40 lakh in 12 tehsils. Per capita income is very high and that also is a cause of growing crime. Criminals from neighboring state also operate here. "Thefts can be checked with people's cooperation. They need to be a little more careful and cautious. Houses in flat schemes are often burgled. If people there are more alert, such incidents can be curbed."

Jadhav informs that a proposal, pertaining to installation of 50 CCTV cameras, has been submitted to the DPDC. "We need 100 CCTV cameras to cover the whole city. It may cost around Rs 1.75 crores. However, they help in checking crime and also cracking cases."

The DSP has also demanded 10 more police stations in the city. With ever-growing number of two and four-wheelers on the city roads,

traffic control is becoming increasingly important. Certain roads need to be earmarked as one-ways, he adds.

This recipient of DG's award is resolved to take the district police to a new high.



DONNING GRACE

Tying it is an art. Here's Altaf who has helped eminent persons wear famous the Kolhapuri pheta. Prime Ministers of India late Rajiv Gandhi and late Chandra Shekhar, Marathi poet Kusumagraj, Bollywood actor Randhir Kapoor, Hollywood star Jackie Chan; the list goes on

No auspicious occasion is complete without it. From being a princely state to a bustling city that it is, people in Kolhapur and also in Sangali and Satara feel proud and honoured when they don the Kolhapuri pheta. Amid myriad styles - shepherd-style pheta, Jodhapuri pheta, Rajasthan i pheta, Tukaram maharaj pheta, Vivekananda pheta et al - Kolhapur's Shahu Maharaj style has it own charm.

Perfectly tying a pheta is an art in itself. Here one artist who is expert at it, Altaf Allbaksh Amirbaksh Rangarej. Altaf, who migrated from Jaipur to Kolhapur via Mumbai, inherited the art from his grandfather. His grandpa would help Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj wear the Kolhapuri pheta. Altaf is so expert that he can put the pheta in place in just one and-a-half minute.

Talking to us, Altaf recalls how he has helped some eminent persons sport the Kolhapuri pheta. Kusumagraj, renowned Marathi poet, was one of them. Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhi once praised him for his wonderful work. "I put turban on Rajiv's head thrice, twice at Kolhapur and once at Baramati during Sharad Pawar's daughter's marriage."

Altaf and his friend Balsingh Ubale have put the pheta on the heads of at least 200 VIPs and VVIPs like Prime Minister late Chandrashekhar, Hollywood star Jackie Chan and Randhir Kapoor.

Altaf says since 1986, the Kolhapuri pheta is back in fashion.

He is invited in public functions and mega marriages. On an average, Altaf gets 200 assignments a year, which is enough to keep his stove burning.

Altaf married Faizaijmal. She was an NCC cadet and continued education. She did it against odds and today. She is working as midwife Zilla Parishad's National & Health Mission. She is famous in Mudshingi village as 'Burkhavali Bhabhi'. Any needy women can give her call even night and Bhabhi is there to be present.



AN EYE OPENER

Activists of Andhashraddha Nirmulan Samiti assisted villagers infighting superstitions

Superstitions galore in rural parts of the country even in this science age. In their bid to weed out wrong beliefs and false notions, activists of Andhashraddha Nirmulan Samiti (ANS) have helped residents of Pohale village in the district in fighting superstitions.

Guided by the activists, people, including around 300 primary school kids, from the small village nestled in the Sahyadri ranges overcame the superstition pertaining to 'Mariaaicha Gada', a chariot believed to bring epidemics and divine wrath on villagers.

It all began around four months ago when some villagers saw a wooden chariot carrying two wooden idols. Some unidentified persons had placed the chariot laden with coconuts, lemons and sweets on the village outskirts. A superstition prevails in rural parts that such a chariot is a curse on a village. The calamity might come in form of epidemics or drought-like situation, it is believed.

After the chariot was noticed, shivers ran down many spines at the village as a few feared worst. Surprising as it may sound, cowboys were reluctant to take cattle for grazing on side where the chariot was kept.

Alarmed by the situation, someone alerted the ANS workers. Two of them, Shivaji Shinde and Sunilkumar Lavate, visited Pohale.

They conducted a meeting where they convinced the villagers that the chariot didn't mean any curse. The duo took lead and encouraged people including 300 students to set the wooden chariot ablaze.

Sarpanch of the village, Borchate, later feted Shinde and Lavate for showing them the right way. To mark the function, students and villagers vowed eradicate superstitions and develop scientific temper.

Rahul Kadam said flowers offered to Lord Ganesha should not be thrown into rivers and lakes. Following this, people also decided to keep Panchganga river and lakes clean during the forthcoming Ganesh idol immersion ceremony. Vishwanath Katarak, chairman , of Bhairav Nath Society announced that loud music would not be played during the Ganesh Utsav to curb sound pollution.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Lavate said, "ANS wants to create a society based on rational thinking. We will now have a branch at Pohale."

Date : 9 August 2011



'COP'ING RIGHTLY

Ashok G. Dhiware, Special Inspector General of Police, Kolhapur Region, has started improving police image and increasing people's faith in the system, he feels an interaction -police darbar - among people and police. It will go a long way in

The former state Police Chief Dr. D. S. Pasaricha had introduced a novel idea to improve the negative image of police. He had suggested on more interaction' among the people and police to bridge the communication gap.

Ashok G. Dhiware, Special Inspector General of Police Kolhapur Region, took it as a challenge. He had faith in his soft methods of interaction between people and police. Dhiware does not appreciate the word '**Darbar**' that is linked with aristocracy and divides the society into two different sections - rich and poor.

Dhiware believes in equality and classless society. He held a 'Police Darbar' in his region comprising six districts - Baramati, Satara, Pune rural, Sangli, Solapur and Kolhapur - and received an overwhelming response from local media and public. Around 400 people including social luminaries, people's representatives, doctors, professors and common people were present at the darbar. Dhiware interacted whole-heartedly with the people.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Dhiware says that people need protection. "They want more police force in their vicinity. They had complains regarding their neighbours. They spoke about traffic accidents, rowdism in society and so on," he adds.

What are the solutions ? Dhiware says, "We have recorded the grievances, informed them about the follow-up and the steps we are going to take. Regarding more number of police, we do realise that we are short in strength but recruiting more personnel is a government decision."

The special IGP though has one complaint regarding the witnesses of any crime. He says, "Nobody is willing to stand as a strong witness in the court. Even the parents tell their children not tell any thing or confess to police. In such circumstances, the case becomes weak and we become helpless."

Dhiware feels people have positively reacted to this experiment held in Baramati, Malashiras, Gadahinglaj, Kolhapur, Sholapur, Phalatan, Sangli and Satara. The IGP now wants these meetings at tehsil level. "People feel they are neglected by the police. I want them to realise that police are their friend, protector of good people and eliminator of evils in the society," he concludes.

Date : 1 September 2009



WILL IT BE SWEET?

Even as production of sugar is expected to go up this year, producers are exploring possibilities of exporting the surplus produce

Kolhapur is easily the district with highest number of sugar factories in the country: In fact, it's known for its sugar and jaggery production. This time around, production of sugar is set to go up. Obviously producers are exploring the possibilities of exporting it.

It is pertinent to note that K. V. Thomas, Union Food Minister, has said that the government may consider allowing further exports of sugar after assessing impact on retail prices due to shipment of one million tonnes of the sweetener. The minister observed this after Prithviraj Chavan, Maharashtra Chief Minister, met him demanding that the centre should allow sugar export of an extra two million tonnes. The domestic sugar demand is around 21.5 million tonnes annually. This leaves extra sugar of around 3 to 3.5 million tonnes.

Sugar producers in the region have now pinned their hopes on the outcome in this regard. Permission to export more sugar would help them in case of surplus production.

The sugar industry in district has been facing a few problems in the recent past. On this backdrop, Harshwardan Patil, district guardian minister, has urged cooperative sugar factories to plan for the forthcoming decade to resolve the problems.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Raju Shetty, M.P. and chairman of Swabhimani Shetakari Sanghatana, says he has discussed the sugar industry problems with the State Chief Minister and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. "The union government should have a firm sugar policy in place," he adds. P. G. Medhe, managing director of a sugar factory, has expressed similar views.

It remains to be seen how sugarcane cultivators and sugar mills in the region benefit from the fresh policies. They are expecting that their issues are addressed sooner than later.

Date : 12 July 2011



SOME SUCCOR

Even as officials are taking action to curb child labour, activists have stressed the need for concerted efforts to end the menace

The latest government action plan on elimination of child labour dreams of a state without children engaged in hazardous works by 2017 and in all paid works by 2020. Drafting the third plan also means the first two have failed to meet the target.

It is a well-known fact that drunken fathers and sick mothers have forced many kids to leave homes and migrate somewhere in search of food and work. This is a common story of children coming from neighboring states like Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, who are often found in districts like Kolhapur, Sangli and Solapur.

Even as activists have accused some officials of hiding the facts, officials maintain that suitable action is taken as and when they come to about a case. Calling upon people not to tolerate or encourage child labour, they have said that cases, if any, should be reported to them immediately.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, D. Y. Gabade, Assistant Labour Commissioner, says, "Recently, after surprise raids, we filed four cases in Kolhapur and three in Ichalkaranji. Children were working in motor garages, hotels, brick factories and construction sites. We fined owners for Rs 38,000 collectively but there was no imprisonment."

Mohan Pawar, labour inspector, says, "We have created such awareness that now you will not find children working in big hotels in Kolhapur. Awareness was created through meetings, posters, mobile messages, television ads and radio speeches."

The district women and child welfare officer has told Kolhapur Plus that between 1-5-2005 and 30-11-10, they freed 66 child labourers. During this period, NGOs in district freed 31 children. Most of the kids were sent to their homes.

According to Activists, this is tip of the iceberg. In South-West Maharashtra, two out of three child labourers are engaged in agriculture while the rest work in unorganised sectors. It is horrifying that some of them are sexually abused. Many are forced to beg and commit petty crimes.

An NGO worker, who doesn't want to be named, says, "Hardly any people's representative has time to address the issue. Unless concerted efforts are made, the problem cannot be solved."

Date : 5 July 2011



A PIECE OF STORY

Dr Ambedkar had a special bond with the city through his close aide Dattoba Pawar and eminent artist Dattoba Dalvi,

Here's a special possession. J. D. Dalvi, son of eminent artist Dattoba Dalvi, has a couple of letters written by Bharat Ratner Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

The architect of the Constitution of India had a strong bond with the city Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, prince of erstwhile state of Kolhapur, was instrumental in helping many Indian youth pursue higher education in foreign universities and Dr. Ambedkar was one of them. Dattoba recommended his name to Shahu Maharaj, who extended financial assistance of £ 200. It is pertinent to note that Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj also financially helped Dr. Ambedkar start a newspaper, 'Mook-nayak'. Its first is-sued was published on January 31, 1920.

In a letter, dated August 10, 1921, written to Dattoba Dr. Ambedkar expressed his gratitude for the gesture. The two were in touch thereafter. Meanwhile, Dattoba started the first art institute in Kolhapur. On May 8, 1923, Dr. Ambedkar wrote another letter to Dattoba requesting the artist to make an oil painting of his father. The request was made through a common acquaintance, Dattoba Pawar.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, J. D. Dalvi says there were a few more letters written to his father by Dr. Ambedkar. "Some of them were handed over to Pawar.

Meanwhile, Shivaji University is planning to publish Dr. Ambedkar's 52 letters. Most of them are written to his close aide Dattoba Pawar. The period of the letters is between June 1927 and March 1939. Dattoba met him 1919 and their association lasted till July 1939 till there was debate over embracing Buddhism.

Vinay Kambale, an Ambedkar movement activist, says that late Dhananjay Keer, a renowned biographer, has referred to over 13 letters by Dr. Ambedkar to Dattoba Pawar who was a trustworthy person for the great leader.

Manjushree Pawar, a professor of history, says she has studied letters written by Dr. Ambedkar to both Dattoba Dalvi and Dattoba Pawar. "These are important documents," she says.

J. R. Dabhole, professor, says Dr. Ambedkar would preserve carbon copies of his letters. "If the copies are available, we can find missing links, if any," he concludes.

Date : 17 January 2012



ENSURING FAIR DEAL

Prakash Sanghvi, President of Commonwealth Association for Health and Disabilities, sees the need for more emphasis on women's progress.

Women have been playing a vital role in allround development of the country. Gone are the days when they were confined to the four walls. Things have improved and today, they are making marks in almost all the fields. However, a lot still needs to be done for allround development of women, says Dr. Prakash Sanghvi, newly elected President of Commonwealth Association for Health and Disabilities (COMHAD).

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Dr. Sanghvi, who was elected President of the organisation at the international conference held at Punjim last month, says the theme of the meet was 'women as agents of change'. "It is a matter of great honour and pride," he says about being elected as COMHAD president.

About the progress women have made, he says, "Women constitute half of the world's population. They have prominent roles in all spheres of life. They are successfully occupying high positions like Head of the State, Speaker of the Parliament, Leader of the Ruling Coalition, Leader of the Opposition and so on. Many of them are

holding high positions in judiciary and bureaucracy."

Pointing out that women have played a crucial role in social, political and economic development throughout the world, Dr. Sanghvi says there is the need for laying more emphasis on women's all-round progress. Referring to the conference, he says Dr. Bharat Chaparwal, former Vice Chancellor of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore, also opined that by investing in women and girls, social, economic and political growth can be accelerated.

Coinciding with the international Women's Day's centenary celebrations, the Common wealth will herald the role women can and do play in making a difference to the lives of others, as well as highlighting opportunities where more can be done to allow women and girls to reach their potential.

Date : 6 December 2011



NAARI SHAKTI

This small village has witnessed a big-hearted woman who has taken a road less travelled. After her husband's death, Shantabai Yadav, who hails from Hasur Sasgiri, has been working as a barber to win bread. Kolhapur Plus salutes her spirit.

Hasur Sasgiri is a tiny village in Ajara tehsil of district. The village has been witness to a story of rare grit and determination. Of course, the villagers also did their bit encouraging and motivating her every step of the way.

Meet Shantabai Yadav, who has been working as a barber to support her family. Her husband Shripati Yadav, a barber by profession, died of heart attack in June 1984 leaving her to fend for herself and her four daughters. For some days, she somehow made both ends meet with the help of her neighbours.

However, she was resolved to earn livelihood for her family. In her self-employment bid. This bold woman decided to do away with a taboo - a woman wouldn't shave beard and cut hair of men. Two villagers, Hariba Kudalkar and Ganpat Chavan, provided the moral support that she needed. "Don't be afraid. Continue your husband's profession. We're with you," they told her.

Shantabai goes down memory lane talking to Kolhapur Plus. It hasn't been all that easy for her "In the beginning, some village youth teased me, humiliated me and even abused me. I refused to surrender to circumstances. Gradually, the opinion changed and soon the village accepted mine working as a barber."

Initially, villagers gave her grains, and not money, in return. It was not enough. To assist her, her daughters started working as farm labourers. Not so willing at the outset, villagers slowly but steadily started visiting her shop. People also helped her raise money to marry her two daughters off.

Recently, some villagers came forward to help her get loan of Rs 9,000 under a scheme for people below poverty line (BPL). All formalities have been completed and the amount has been sanctioned. However, it is yet to be credited into her bank account till filing of this report. Not the one to give up hope amid adversity, Shantabai is struggling to secure justice and is looking up to some NGO for assistance in her attempt to tide over the current crisis.

Date : 6 September 2011



BAUXITE BOTHER

Alleging that illegal transport of bauxite has claimed many lives, people have sought permanent closure of mining in Radhanagari tehsil

Resentment is brewing over allegedly unauthorised transport of bauxite from mines in the district and people have demanded permanent closure of bauxite mining in Radhanagari tehsil. It is alleged that the illegal transport has so far claimed around 20 lives in separate road mishaps.

Kolhapur is rich in biodiversity and minerals like copper and bauxite. Radhanagari, Bhudargad and Shahuwadi tahsils in the western ghat are mineral rich and have attracted even some foreign companies that are into mining.

For the last 16 years, the mining work is going. Everyday around 500 trucks transport bauxite from Maharashtra to Belgaum in neighbouring Karnataka for further processing. There are allegations that the central government has given permission to excavate maximum

1,000 tonnes of bauxite per day but around 6,000 tonnes are excavated daily. It is alleged that many times, the truck drivers don't possess driving licenses and accidents are common on Radhanagari-Belgaum road. Many cattle have also allegedly died in mishaps on the road.

"It's really very risky to travel on the road. Two-wheeler riders like me have to be careful as the speeding trucks always pose a threat," says Raju Dhote, a businessman who has to take this road twice or thrice a week.

Another problem the mining has been causing is water pollution. It is alleged that reservoirs at Radhnagari and Kalamawadi, which are major drinking water sources for the district, have been bearing the brunt. According to medical practitioners in the district, there has been a rise in cases of kidney stones, thanks to high bauxite content in water, especially during monsoon.

Besides, mining also disturbs wildlife. A reserve forest is in the vicinity of mining sites. Owing to a heavy sound pollution, frightened wild animals stray into villages.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, several villagers in Radhanagari tehsil complained that the mining has been taking a toll on environment and life conditions.

Commenting on it, Laxmikant Deshmukh, District Collector, says, "We cannot stop mining as the central government has given permission for it. However, I have asked the official concerned to keep a check on plying of trucks and see to it that people's safety is ensured at any cost. Human life is more important than anything else."

Date : 26 May 2009



TRICKY TERRAIN

Fed up of the pathetic condition of city roads, citizens are protesting against the move to collect toll tax

For the last few years, residents of the city have been dealing with poor roads. Mishaps on roads under construction have cost many lives and left scores injured. Amid this, the decision to collect toll charges has irked people.

Citizens' forum fighting against the 'injustice' is in no mood to relent and its agitation against Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) is turning into a mass movement. Symptomatic of it is the response corner meetings over the issue are getting.

On behalf of the citizens' forum led by Atul Dighe and seven others, Advocate Shashikant Bavuchkar has sent a legal notice (*inward no. 4/12564; dated 20/01/2011*) to KMC commissioner and Mayor. The notice says that decency and dignity are non-negotiable human rights. Till now, 19 people have died because of 'negligence of KMC and road contractor'. Hence, criminal procedure should be initiated against the two.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Pandit Kandale, social activist, says the forum has called many corner meetings to make people aware. The road works are not likely to be completed before the rainy season, which means inconvenience to public.

Atul Dighe says, "Not only citizens but villagers near Kolhapur should decide not to pay toll charges. Prakash Dambre, another activist asks, If Baramati 'Latur, Nanded, Solapur, Nasik and Amravati have good roads without toll, why should Kolhapurians give toll for 30 years ?"

It is pertinent to note here that Harshwardhan Patil, Guardian Minister, and R. R. Patil, State Home Minister, have publicly criticised road works in Kolhapur.

Date : 17 May 2011



BEST FOOT FORWARD

A true Kolhapur residents Identity is incomplete without Kolhapuri chappals. However, the leather industry going through a rough patch, Subhash Desai reports

When Swami Vivekananda visited the city on October 10, 1893, Princess Anandibai invited him to Kolhapur palace and felicitated him presenting many precious gifts. As a sanyasi, he accepted only two things orange robe and Kolhapuri chappal.

For over four centuries, Kolhapuri chappals have been holding a special significance in Kolhapurians' life. Pandurang Krishna Nangare, 85-year-old whose family has been into the leather industry for generations, says a true Kolhapur resident's identity is incomplete without the world-famous footwear.

Nangare is native of Vadange village on Kolhapur Panhala road. His two sons are into manufacturing of Kolhapuri chappals. One of them is a wholesale dealer whereas other manufactures the chappals.

Kolhapuri chappals come in varieties like Kapashi and Kurundvadi in many designs. Earlier, Kolhapur was famous for tanning leather and manufacturing leather shoes.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Manoj Kanerkar, a trader, says the leather industry is going through a difficult phase. "Tanning industry folded up following pollution issues. Polluted chemical water and smell became unbearable for the city dwellers. Another problem is good leather is not available."

According to Kanerkar, leather would be available at around Rs100 a kg. The price has now gone up to Rs 200 a kg. In olden days, babhul tree was used to colour the leather but now the job is done using chemicals.

Around 1,000 shoemaker families are into Kolhapuri chappal manufacturing in the district. Chamhar Lane in the city is famous all over India for the footwear. Tourists who visit Panhala fort or historical Ambabai temple make it a point to visit the lane to buy Kolhapuri chappals. A nice pair could be purchased for anything between Rs 500 to Rs 700. The industry does need an impetus to see through the difficult phase.

Date : 17 May 2011



IN TRUE COLOURS

City painters Ajay Dalvi and Tanaji Avghade are holding an expo of their paintings in Mumbai

Here are two painters from the city who are making it big. Ajey

Dalvi and Tanaji Avghade are holding an exhibition of their paintings in the state capital. The expo will be held between May 7 and 13 at the army navy art gallery in Mumbai.

For the duo, art is an expression of mind. Ajey and Tanaji are both lovers of abstract art. Together, they will exhibit 24 paintings at the exhibition. Tanaji does paintings in acrylic colors. His subject is Shreechakra. a tantric design.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Tanaji claims to have presented paintings of Shreechakra to spiritual leaders late Sathya Sai Baba, Shri. Shri. Ravi Shanker and Shankaracharya of Shringeri math to name a few. Tanaji's paintings are usually bright, vibrant and mystic.

Ajey Dalvi, who looks very much an artist with his long hair and beard, is an atheist. He does not take delight in the occult or mystic themes. However, he deals with psychological effects and sees colours as a source of emotional energy "I use symbolic colours and lots of lines. It adds to the effect of abstract paintings. My viewers and I have a perfect communication without words. One may get confused with meanings of words but through colours one can always express perfect emotions," he says.

Date : 10 May 2011



LET'S PRESS HARD

Printing business in the city has a lot of potential. Experts stress the need for systematic efforts to improve the scenario

Expert speak

- * Become Internet savvy
- * Reach out to customers outside district
- * Work in tandem with others in the field
- * Weigh outsourcing options

Despite a huge potential, printing business in the district hasn't moved the way it should have. According to experts, it will roll smoothly provided a few steps are taken to remove the factors that have been holding it back.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Nandan Mithari, an expert in printing technology, says there are around 400 small and medium printing presses in district. These printing presses are working from litho to five-colour printing. The total turnover of the industry in district is around Rs 35 crone every month.

According to experts, printing and publishing industry in Kolhapur is facing a problem namely how to change printing press owners' mindsets. From calendar printing to books to sugar factory annual reports, most printing presses have a stead work flow. The book section is vast and includes competitive exam. books, school and college books, diaries and industrial job printing. Although the picture looks rosy, there's a kind of stagnation in the business, experts add.

Adil Momin, who owns a small press, says Kolhapurians have always demonstrated monstrated good skills in businesses like Kolhapuri chappal, jaggery and gold and silver ornaments. He wonders as to why the printing business is not running to its full potential.

Commenting on this, Mithari suggests steps to improve the scenario. He says the press owners need to become Internet savvy and. look out for private and government tenders floated from time to time. They should also make efforts to reach customer outside the district and overcome the inferiority complex.

He further says some of them might have a limited capacity. However, it shouldn't deter them from accepting jobs. They can share the work with others in the field and together they will grow faster. Outsourcing options can also be considered. "Some of us might get a huge order. Any work can be accomplished if one joins hands with other printers."

Experts also point out that Kolhapur has three painting and art colleges, college of interior designing and seven newspapers besides many advertising agencies. This also means there's a big printing work and people in the business should cash in on it.

Date : 14 June 2011



NEED OF THE HOUR

*There's another side to the growing expanse of technical education. **Subhash Desai** talks to a few experts*

Amid ever-increasing expanse of technical education, there are certain issues that need immediate attention. Even as engineering colleges are churning out thousands of graduates every year, experts have stressed the need for sorting out the issues plaguing the system.

In the last five years, there has been considerable expansion in technical education in the country. According to All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the country has 1,265 approved engineering colleges with annual intake capacity of 3,80,803. Besides, there are 1,200 polytechnics with annual intake of about 3,50,000. As far as Maharashtra is concerned, the government adopted the policy of privatisation of engineering education in 1983-84. The number of private engineering colleges in the state has gone up to 372 today.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Amarsinh Rane, Principal of an engineering college that recently organised a convention in the city, says the expansion is welcome in meeting aspirations of society. However, another side of the story is students having average marks at the 10+2 level could obtain admission in engineering colleges. "The expansion in technical education, particularly at diploma and degree level, has increased problems in the system." According to him, at a students' convention, students themselves mentioned that around 30 per cent of them are not serious enough.

R. A. Kulkarni, a participating teacher from Latur government polytechnic college, says teaching in many colleges is theoretical. "Engineers are professionals who influence the society. Hence, engineering institutes must keep pace with the changing times."

B. M. Naik from Aurangabad stresses the need for worldclass institutes. Concerted efforts and deft policies would help things move faster, he concludes.

Date : 10 May 2011



GREEN GRANDEUR

District Shetakari Sahakari Sangh, founded to protect and promote interests of farmers in Kolhapur, is now a leading consumer service society in Asia.

India is an agrarian country with over 60 per cent industries depending directly or indirectly on agriculture. Development in the farm sector ultimately boost the country's economy, experts believe.

Kolhapur has made a noteworthy contribution in agriculture. In 1939, P A Rane along with Tatyasaheb Mohite, V. D. Desai, B. G. Desai and Baba Nesriker, founded Shetakari Sahakari. Scaling newer heights, today it's become one of the best consumer service societies in Asia.

The society works on the philosophy of Bindu Madhav Joshi, founder of All India Consumer Movement. He says, "Consumer movement is non-political. Bureaucrats and consumers can join hands to bring about a revolution. This cooperation is vital."

Working on this principle of cooperation, the society aims at working for betterment of farmers besides curbing their exploitation.

Despite technological development, farmers were not benefiting. Shetakari Sahakari made the latest technology to farmers. That's not all. It started ensuring reasonable price to farmers for their agricultural products. The society's work is not just confined to the city but it has spread to different parts of district, even up to remote places like Chandgad.

The society has supplied quality seeds, fertilizers and equipments to farmers. In order to protect their interests, it has been providing them day-to-day things right from medicine to clothes at fair prices.

To sustain in the present day competition, the society has made some changes in the marketing policy.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, its fourth time chairman, Anandrao Patil Chuekar, said, "The society's progress is good. We have certainly tasted success and seen ups and downs. Eventually, we have made it loan-free. To protect farmers, we follow the principal of 'ethical values in the governance'."

Date : 20 Jan. 2009



FROM THE HEART

Jalal Nejad, an Iranian who has settled in Kolhapur, is impressed by India's unity in diversity.

This Iranian Muslim loves India. And he loves Kolhapur as well. He has spent 34 years of life in the city, which he finds warm and welcoming.

"From the bottom of my heart, I love Kolhapur and Kolhapurians," says Jalal H. Nejad putting his right hand on chest. "I have visited a dozen countries but Kolhapur is special people here are god-fearing, well behaved and secular. This is a nice place to stay," he adds.

Jalal completed his engineering from the Iranian Institute of Technology (IIT). He worked on air port and national high-way projects. He later went to Europe. He has also visited several countries including Sri Lanka. Finally, he came to India and stayed in Pune for a while before settling here.

"Before coming to India, I was in Colombo. I chose not to go to my country where trouble was brewing. On my first visit, I found Kolhapur amiable and decided to stay here," he says. He married Rozana, a girl of Iranian origin who had been living in the city. He runs a small hotel here and also takes English tuitions. Besides, he has been participating in social projects. He works for welfare of visually-impaired and also provides free coaching to poor students.

India's unity in diversity has impressed him. He has read a lot on Indian philosophy and culture. He respects all religions though he follows the Bahai school of thought and spreads its message. "We should love all. A time will come when the concept of one god and one religion will be there," he concludes.

Date : 14 April 2009



NOW GPS IN FOREST

The system will be used for animal census at Radhanagari Reserve Forest. It's happening for the first time

in the state

The forests, too, are now going high-tech. Radhanagari reserve forest will now have the global positioning system (GPS) in place. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Suresh Sawant, forest officer, said it was the maiden such experiment in the state. It would be quite useful at the Dajipur bison sanctuary.

GPS would go a long way in an exact animal census work. Sawant informed that the system was installed with the assistance of an environmental organisation.

Meanwhile, environmentalists and animal-lovers in the district have welcomed it as a 'positive move'.

Date : 30 Dec. 2008



NO FREEDOM HERE

*Residents of Bhairewadi village in Kolhapur district
are crying for water even after 62 years of independence*

Election time brings in its train hordes of promises pertaining to regular water and power supply and good roads. That doesn't amuse residents of Bhairewadi village in Ajara tehsil of Kolhapur district. For them, these are mere high-sounding phrases and they have come to this conclusion after going without a water supply scheme since the Independence.

The village- located on the Maharashtra-Karnataka border and has a population of around 5,000- has been crying for water for over six decades now. The border dispute between the two states has worsened the situation.

Hiranyakeshi-Chitri irrigation project is just 7 kms from the village. The project has water storage capacity of 2.73 TMC. However, benefits of the project haven't trickled down to Bhairewadi. It has 600 hectares of fertile land but farmers have to depend on rainwater for a good harvest.

In 1994, Kolhapur Zilla Parishad dug up six borewells here. Today, only two of them have water but the level had gone down to 500 feet.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sadashiv Patil, an educated farmer from the village, says, "We are hoping that this time around, the candidates will keep their word and give us water. If our land is irrigated, we can have better yields."

Suresh Khot, Deputy Sarapach of the village, suggests that the upcoming Amewadi irrigation project, which is 5 km from their place, can solve their problems. The project is under construction and will store 1.35

TMC water. M. R. Patil, a veterinarian, agrees. He says, that will bring about all-round progress. He laments that many educated youths have to either take up petty jobs or leave village. "The land here is fertile and after irrigation, it can change the face of the village," he opines.



FARMING FUNDA

B R Desai, farmer's son and official of an agrochemical company, has observed that Maharashtra faces major problems of labour and cost ,to remove grass and weed

Young farmers from the state, particularly in Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara districts, have pretty aware of using pesticides and fertilisers to increase agriculture production. According to B R Desai, General Sales Manager of a Switzerland-based company that manufactures agro chemicals and new varieties of seeds, mango and grapes are being exported which was not the case 20 years ago.

Son of a farmer from Bhudergad fort village Sheloli in the interiors of Kolhapur district, B. R. Desai has worked in Marathwada and Vidarbha for 25 years. He observed that Maharashtra is developing rapidly in horticulture. One of the major problems in Maharashtra is labour and cost to remove grass and weed in crops.

When asked whether excess use of pesticides has spoiled the quality of land and water, he said, "India has not yet reached the saturation point, except Andhra Pradesh : There is no pollution problem in our country due to use of chemical fertilisers or pesticides."

When asked about the alarming rate of farmers' suicides, he felt that there are a number of reasons. "There is a huge gap between the production cost and the sales. There are a number of expenses that could be curtailed," Desai said.

Sharing his own experiences, Desai said. "I am a farmer's son. My father used to cultivate 200 metric tonne of cane crop but gradually the labour problem and expenses increased resulting into increase in the bank loan. But when we used proper pesticides, seeds and fertilisers, the production increased and we started earning profit."

According to Desai, without chemical fertilisers, farmers in Maharashtra would find it difficult to survive. "Of course, there should not be excessive use of either pesticides or fertilisers. Young farmers should concentrate on marketing of farm products," he said.



THE HEAT IS ON

Domestic gas distributors, who are facing music for irregular service, allege that oil companies are applying dual standards

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cooking gas distributors are feeling the heat as consumer awareness is increasing and oil companies have warned them to regular their business or face heavy penalties. Some distributors while talking to Kolhapur Plus told that the companies are applying dual standards. On one hand they send letters giving directives in favour of customers while on the other hand speak totally opposite, the distributors allege.

Another point is that these gas agencies are not united. If somebody dares to oppose the occasional raids, inspection teams are sent that penalise the so-called bold one.

Recently, a confidential letter has been issued to distributors on the LPG distribution system. It's not the customers but oil companies have highlighted the irregularities in distribution of LPG cylinders. They are as follows.

1. Cash memos for delivered refills are not available and also not signed.

2. Cash and carry rebate of Rs eight are not extended to customers.

3. Domestic cylinders are being delivered at commercial premises and are used at clubs, hotels tea stalls and hospitals.

4. Deliveries shown against customers who are no more.

5. Phone calls are not attended at the booking counter.

6. Cylinders are stored at unauthorised locations. Delivery boys argue that since they are poorly paid, they adopt such methods.

Surprisingly, not a single people's representative has taken up the issue.

Date : 23 September 2008



NAVDURGA DARSHAN

As Navratri Utsav starts from September 30, devotees from all over the country as well as abroad come for darshan of Amababai. In Maharashtra the main places of Durga are Shri Tuljabhavani of Tuljapur, Shri Mahalaxmi of Kolhapur, Shri Renuka of Mahurgad, and Shri Saptashrungi of Vani. Besides these there are nine deities in Kolhapur that are known as Navdurga.

Shri. Ekvira devi is situated near Dattabhiksha ling, commerce college, Azad Chowk. She is also recognised as Renuka or Yallamma. She is deity of Mahurgad. The idol is about one feet. She is the prime durga in Kolhapur.

Shri. Muktambika is situated at Ramkrishnaparamhans Marg, Mangalwar Peth, near Shivaji Stadium main gate. She is also known as Mokamba. It is believed that the idol was installed by Shri Parshuram. It is carved from a black stone and is 1 and 1/2 feet in height.

Shri. Padmavati is situated at Padmavati Mandir, near Jayprabha studio. In ancient times there was a lake here called Padmale. She is also known as Padma or Padmalaya. The beautiful idol is 2 and a 1/2 feet tall.

Shri. Pratyangira is situated in Firangai Mandir near Padmaraje High School. The idol is 10 inch in height in a standing position.

Shri. Kamaljadevi is situated in Nrusinghmandir, in front of Balbhim Bank, Shivaji Peth. The idol is Bitted on a lotus, having four

arms and the height is two feet. The deity is worshipped by lotus flowers. People take darshan of this deity to give freedom to their forefathers.

Shri. Mahakali is situated at Mahakali Mandir, Shivaji Peth. The beautiful idol is carved from a black stone, and three feet tall.

Shri. Anukamini is situated on the road to Javla Ghanpati near Rankala lake. The protector deity of Kolhapur is placed on confluence of Sanjivani river and Mayuri river. The idol has six hands and a demon under her leg.

Shri. Gajendralaxmi is situated in Kumbhargalli, near church, Toraskar Chowk, Bramhpuri. The three-feet idol is made up of black stone.

Shri. Laxmi is situated in Weights and Measures Office, Hattimahal Road, in front of Shahu Cloth market. The two-feet idol has four arms and is symbol of Vishnu-Shakti.

Date : 30 September 2011



SONGS OF THE HEART

Every day the Ambabai Goddess is adorned in new avatar and different pujas are performed during the nine days. Gondhalis sing songs in praise of the deity throughout the night

Even though scientists all over the world are engaged in creating a situation of big bang and solve the mysteries behind the creation of the universe, the Indian religious minds from Kolkata to Kolhapur are pretty sure about their faith that Shiv and Shakti have created the universe. Shakti is mother Durga. She is worshipped in different forms, sometimes as Kali, sometimes as Saraswati, and Mahalaxmi. Kali destroys the enemies, Saraswati helps in gaining knowledge and Mahalaxmi brings prosperity.

Though now she is known as Mahalaxmi or Haripriya, historically she is known as Karveerchi Ambabai. Devotees from all over India and from different religions come in lakhs to take her darshan. There are nine shaktipithas in India and one of them is Karveer.

The structure of temple is like a shreecharka a tantric design. In the temple two goddesses a Sarswati and kali are both sides, a shreecharka of black stone is to the right side and matruling (shivling) at the head of diety on first floor. This all indicates that it is tantric and the diety is ma durga. This is the reason why Navratri is celebrated with great enthusiasm. Every day the goddess is adorned in new avatar and different form of pujas are performed. Women devotees offer her costly sarees while others offer her coconut and choli with bangles.

The devotees observe fast for nine days. Some read saptshati pothi, life story of mother Durga. It is about destruction of demons called Chand and Mund, Mahishasur and others.

Gondhal

To please the Goddess, songs are sung in dramatic form throughout night. It is known as Gondhal. In Kolhapur, at Tuljapur at Mahur is performed and in front of local form of durga such as Injubai, Mahishasurmardini. A group of four to five people sing the prayers. The group comprises a naik, sambalwala, tuntunwala and divtya nachavnara. An image of the Goddess is installed, worshiped and offered prasad.

These gondhalis are also invited in marriage functions to bless the couple. Families of farmers offer them foodgrains.

Bhutya

He is a Gondhali who narrates a life story of the Goddess. He wears a white beads mala, a kumkum bag on his neck, a burning lamp of cotton and a musical instrument. These people worship Renuka Devi of Mahur, Bhavani of Tuljapur and Ambabai of Karveer. They also use a symbolic language.

Date : 30 September 2008



NOT SO COOPERATIVE !

Despite 2012 being observed as the International Year of Cooperatives, the district - considered bastion of co-op movement - activity on this front has been lukewarm, Subhash Desai reports

Talk of cooperative movement and Kolhapur region has been considered its citadel in the state. However, things seem changing, and certainly not in a positive manner. In spite of 2012 being observed as the International Year of Cooperatives, activity on this front has been se-date.

The United Nations General Assembly had passed a resolution declaring 2012 as the UN International Year of Co-operatives. Recognising diversity of the movement around the world, it urged national governments, business communities and general public to draw maximum advantage of the cooperative movement with more focus on human needs than greed. In the wake of this, Dr AN Kalam, Former President of India, has said that India needs to focus on rapid development of villages to become a developed country in true sense.

Maharashtra is celebrating 2012 as the Cooperative Year of sector. However, leading names in the state and the district cooperative circles appear not so aware of its importance.

If current situation is any indication, there are reasons to believe that cooperative movement in Kolhapur had weakened. Many cooperative sugar mills in Sangli, Satara and Kolhapur districts are today owned by political heavyweights cutting across parties. The change is attributed to cooperative factories incurring losses. However, concrete steps are seldom taken to identify and remove the flaws that might have led to losses.

The latest economic survey tabled in the state legislature reveals that the cooperative sector is in a sad state.

Around 81.1 per cent cooperative cotton, ginning and pressing societies are running into losses. In Kolhapur district, many cooperative banks have been merged into private banks. Similarly, private players have taken over several cooperative sugar factories. According to experts, timely and concerted efforts alone would help the cooperative movement regain its lost glory.

Date : 10 April 2012



ARE THEY SPORT?

Sports-lovers recently staged demonstrations and even locked the Satara district sports office demanding better facilities and upkeep of existing ones

In pursuance of their demand for better sports training facilities and up keep of the existing ones, sports-lovers at Satara staged demonstrations at the district sports office and locked it to register their protest.

It is pertinent to note that district sports offices at Satara and Kolhapur are drawing flak for their functioning 'not up to the mark'. The recent agitation was led by Shivendrasingh Raje, MLA.

A delegation later met Subhash Bhagde, tehsildar, and submitted a memorandum of demands, which included immediate repairs of swimming tank, badminton court, jogging track, basketball court and playground. For the last four months, the swimming tank is closed. Agitating activists demanded that summer is the best time for swimming and since schools and colleges have vacations, the tank should open as soon as possible. Following assurance from Bhagde, the lock was removed.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, the MLA says, "Amount Rs two crore is balance with the sports committee. There is neither gymnasium facility at the sport complex nor electric generator for night matches.

In Kolhapur, football-lovers have decried appointment of a person, who is not a footballer, on the state selection committee. Through RTI, activists in the city have got information about certain glitches. They have demanded immediate steps to set things right.

Amardeep Kundale, founder of Kolhapur Football Association, has told us that he is shocked by the attitude of the sports department and lie would soon initiate criminal action.

Date : 3 April 2012



JUMBO JOY

Kolhapur has a history of Sathmari - a sport in which a man takes on an elephant - during Dussera and Diwali. The tradition has faded now. Subhash Desai reports

Capturing wild elephants and relocating them have always been giving headaches to forest departments of both Maharashtra and Karnataka. He jumbos stray into Kolhapur district from Karnataka.

Plenty of water and sugarcane fields and banana orchards often elephants to district. The giant animals damage crops and dealing with them has been a major issue for the government machinery as well as the pope 'ace.

According to forest department figures, 30 people, mostly farmers, were killed in Maharashtra and Karnataka together in the last 10 years. During this period, the two states have collectively spent Rs three crone on compensation to affected farmers and elephant relocation programmes.

Vasant Shetye, expert in elephant behavior, says these measures are temporary steps. "Elephants keep moving from one place to another. Sooner or later, they return to the place from where they have been shifted. Ganesh Nerlekar, student of history and epigraphy, says certain herbs help animals return to their original place. "There are old Nooks written on science of elephants by Matang Muni and Malpey Muni. Names of the books are - Karikalptaru, Matanglila, Gajshatrasar and Gajaurveda. They have discussed elephants in details discussing their sports, body, medicines and art of controlling angry elephants.

Leelavati Jadhav, 94-year old who has witnessed the erstwhile princely state elephant sport recalls, "Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj himself was a sports-lover. He revived 'Sath-mari' - sport in which a man takes on an elephant. He built special stadiums for it in Kolhapur, Rajaputwadi and Radhanagari. These fights were special attractions during Dussera and Diwali festivals.

Kolhapur palace had around 14 elephants, four of which were around 10-feet tall. During the festivals, they were carried in a procession. Though such processions would be taken out till 1965, the 'Sathmari' tradition has faded today



A SOLID SUPPORT

Through an NGO, a city-based couple and their colleagues have been striving to create awareness about HIV/AIDS

They have been doing a commendable job in 10 districts of the state. Dr. Vinay Kulkarni, his wife Sanjivani and their team of 35 workers have been working to create awareness among people about HIV/AIDS through Prayas, a non-government organisation.

According to them, cities with greater number of factory workers need more attention with regards awareness about HIV/AIDS. They have been working in different districts including Junnar, Ratanagiri, Ahamadnagar, Pune, Satara, Solapur, Sangali and Kolhapur. During their surveys, the NGO found that from among 2,00,000 women, 1,400 tested HIV-positive.

Dr. Vinay is son of freedom fighter late Vaman Kulkarni and Kusum Kulkarni of Gargoti. After his medical education, he began his career as a dermatologist. While working in health field, he sensed an urgent need for creating awareness about HIV/AIDS. He submitted a proposal in this connection to a USA-based AIDS foundation, which cleared it and granted annual assistance of USD 77,000. The financial aid gave a much-needed push to their work. From the funds, they established a laboratory to take their work forward.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Vijaya Jori, coordinator of the NGO, says six hospitals in Kolhapur district conduct free HIV test on pregnant women. The treatment helps stop transmission of HIV from pregnant women to newborns. The hospitals are Chougale Hospital, Ichalkaranji, Changundi Hospital Hupari, Apurva Hospital, Market Yard, Kolhapur, Sakharpe Hospital Sakharape, Patil Nursing, Bindu Chowk Kolhapur.

About Prayas, Vijaya says it is non-profit making organisation. It works in health, energy and education sector besides taking up other service oriented programmes.



SMART STROKES

Sanjay Daiv has organised an exhibition of his paintings in the city along with Prakash Athane and Raghu Jadhav

Recipient of an Asian award in advertising, Sanjay Daiv has organised an exhibition of his paintings at Rajarshri Shahu Smarak Bhavan in the city. A former student of a city-based art institute, he did his course in applied art in Mumbai.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sanjay says he is extremely proud of the city that has produced a number of good artists. "We have had master artists like Abalal Rehaman, Dhurandar, and Oscar winner Bhanu Athaya. In sports also, the city has always excelled. I am proud I am born in Kolhapur."

He got the Commercial Artists' Guild (CAG) award in advertising recently "I love advertising because it allows you to peep into others' mind, keeps you grounded, puts you in challenging situations and also gives you decent money. It helps one stay in touch with both rich and poor."

Sanjay further says advertising also has a key role to play in the developmental process. It's a good way to spread right information and create awareness among well people. This helps prints as electronic media a great deal.

Besides the CAG award, he has bagged many more of them. He says his real strength is his friend circle in the city. "Friends in the field in Kolhapur keep egging me on and not awards and honours," he says.

Along with Prakash Athane and Raghu Jadhav, Sanjay has been organising the expo in the city for the last 18 years. They are expecting a positive response from new generation artist from Sangali, Satara and Kolhapur districts.



A COLOURFUL SHOW

Here's yet another city painter who recently put his talent on show. An expo of Suresh Potdar's creations received good response

An exhibition of painting by Sunil Potdar was organised in the city on Sunday last. The expo, held at Rajashree Shahu Kala Dalan, received good response from art-lovers in the city.

Hailing from a goldsmith's family at Herle village in Hatkanangale tehsil, Sunil found out that painting was his first love. His father Balkrishna Potadar recalls, I remember, as a 10-year-old he would love drawing. He would get hold of a blank paper or a post card and start drawing."

After completing his SSC, he joined Kala Niketan Mahavidyalay and later joined the same college as an arts teacher. The institute has been formed by a group of city artists including Ravindra and Arvind Mestri, sons of legendary painter and film director Baburao Mestri.

Sunil's journey as an artist started with designing invitation cards and paintings banners. With the advent of computers, he honed his skills to keep pace with the changing world. He has been teaching figure drawing, graphic designing and making illustrations to state government employees here. Many of his students have also excelled, Vinay Kurle, Sudhir Mirge and Nilesh Gore to name a few. All of them have made mark in animation and photography fields.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, he says, "Knowledge of computers has actually helped me in my art. Certain things like composition became easier for me. For detailing, I also take support of photography"

About his plans, he says, "Since I hail from the goldsmith community. I am looking at introducing new designs in ornaments. I also want to travel the country extensively. That helps one as an artist." He is happy that his children are carrying forward his legacy His daughter Snehal and son Suchit are both artists. Twenty-one paintings of Suresh were displayed at the exhibition. They include oil work on canvas and acrylic and watercolour paintings. There were 18 landscapes and three portraits.

Date : 22 November 2011



ROW OVER RADHANAGARI

Amid protests over privatisation of Radhanagari irrigation project, the officials have averred that everything is going according to the rules and that no injustice would be meted to people

A century ago, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj established a township called Radhanagari, 50 kms from here. The reason behind the township was an irrigation dam constructed for prosperity of erstwhile Kolhapur state. Till 1918, 40 feet construction of the dam was over but the work was stopped due-to-the Second World War.

After Independence, Sir Vishveshwarayya designed seven automatic doors for spill over water and four British made turbines, which are generating electricity even today. This project, that irrigates 30,000 acres land, has ushered prosperity in the district. Owing to his untimely death, the Chhatrapati could not see the dam work done. His son Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj later completed it.

Today, the villagers complain that despite 40 TMC water in it, they get water only for 40 minutes a day. However, a few in the district know that the dam has been privatised.

Video letter (No. 146197 dated 20.10.1997) superintending engineer and executive engineer of irrigation department proposed the government that the dam overflow could be used to generate more electricity. The proposal got the green signal from V M Kulkarni, deputy secretary, Koyana division, Government of Maharashtra, vide his letter dated October 24, 2005. Only one bidder came forward and that too from Kolhapur district. It is recorded in the government files that this power project is pollution free.

The bidder has taken charge of service gates No.1 and 2. Electricity would be generated using China made turbines. The government was generous enough to repair the dam wall and gate. It is now gathered that the electricity produced would be used by the bidder himself.

Besides the place required for generators, the government has given land on 30-year lease to the bidder for guesthouse purpose (letter dated May 11, 2006). It is approximately 20 acres with rare, vegetation. Now questions are being raised as to why the guesthouse requires 20 acre, of land. The land costs around Rs. 1 crore.

It is interesting to note that none of the people's representatives

from the region has gone on record either backing or opposing the move that is so close to district people's hearts. When contacted, Khalil Ansari, superintending engineer, said he was not able to understand why there was so much opposition to the project. "We are handing over it to the bidder or doing any favours," he said. Ansari also pointed out hydroelectric projects were in need of the hour considering the shortage of power. Such projects would help reduce load-shedding, he added.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, J J Bardeskar, executive engineer, said it was not true that 20 acres of land was earmarked for the guesthouse. "The land is not handed over to the bidder. We can claim it back anytime. The space actually needed for the guesthouse work will only be given," he asserted.

About people's agitation over their allegedly being denied access to the dam, he said people were not allowed on security reasons following the Central Government's directives. However, he made it clear that the road which people used to take from near the spot would be opened soon.

When asked if the old British turbine would keep generating power, he answered in the affirmative. About the generators being installed by the bidder, he said that would generate 10 MW power. The bidder would give it to the government at nominal rates. The reports that the bidder would use the power himself were baseless, he added.

Bardeskar further said that there should not be any hue and cry over privatisation of the irrigation project. Radhanagari project was not a case in isolation. In Maharashtra, 250 hydroelectric plants have been privatised. In Kolhapur district alone, 20 such projects are on BOT basis, he added.

Date : 30 September 2008



OPENING THE DAM GATES

Ngo takes out a protest march, independent MLA talks of raising the issue in assembly and suggestions are made to file public interest litigations. These are the reactions the privatisation of Radhanagari dam has evoked

The news on resentment over privatisation of Radhanagari dam to generate more electricity has evoked sharp reactions in Kolhapur. Though the officials have assured that no injustice would be meted to villagers, it seems they would have to answer some more questions.

NGO takes out protest march

A non-government organisation called Parivartan took out a protest march to irrigation office along with people from Radhanagri tehsil and submitted a memorandum to the officer. Activist Sanjay Patil told Kolhapur Plus, "Till now I was unaware of the gravity of the issue. When we gave a prior intimation to the officered concern I started receiving phone calls from politicians requesting to drop the issue. However, we decided to continue with our protest march."

Meanwhile, independent MLA and leader of Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghata, Raju Shetty, said he would raise the issue in Maharashtra Assembly "We are emotionally attached to the dam built by Chattrapati Shahu Maharaj for the farmers in the district. The government should have taken public opinion before handing over it to a private party"

Shetty added, "The bidder has paid Rs 38 crore. When farmers can start a sugar factory of Rs 200 crore on co-operative basis, they can also operate the dam. Ultimately, the farmers would have used the electricity generated."

"The government could have asked the sugar factory. Instead of co-generation project start hydroelectric project. Experts from the irrigation department were repeatedly requesting the government to start such projects but it did not listen as it favoured private parties."

When asked why he did not raise the issue in the Assembly, he said he did but it was dropped making it non-star question.

Prakash Hilge, leading lawyer and former president of district bar association, suggested that people could file a public litigation. "It's a serious issue affecting rural life. I will also move the matter," he said.

There is no need of privatising many irrigation dams in Maharashtra, and 20 in Kolhapur district. People should agitate against this," he added.

"If you continue privatisation on the line of Radhanagari, one day people may turn violent and will the situation be out of government's control." When MLA Banti Patil was contacted, he did not comment. Similarly, J J Bardeskar, executive engineer, gave no response.

Meanwhile, at a Cabinet meeting held last week, the state government has decided that the bidder has sell to first the electricity generated from the dam to the government.

Date : 14 October 2008



PEOPLE'S PLEA

Expressing concern over increasing thefts, citizens have called upon cops to protect temples, art galleries and museums in Kolhapur district

Burglars laying their hands on. precious idols and artifacts have become a matter to concern in the city. In the last few months, there have a number of such thefts and people have urged the police department to protect temples art galleries and museums in Kolhapur district.

There are increasing number of thefts reported at temples. Besides, artifacts have also been stolen from some places in the district. In Kolhapur city, in the last one-and-a-half year, articles have been stolen from public places. A beautiful bronze statue of trumpet blowing lady, symbol of Prabhat Film Company, was stolen. Similarly, sword in the hand of a statue of Chhatrapati Sambhaji, and a spear in the hand s of a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji were stolen.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Balasaheb Chavan, a Jain merchant from the city, says a Digambar Jain temple in front of his house in Shahupuri was burgled. The thieves made good their escape with 36 gold and silver idols and also some diamond-studded ornaments. Upset over the theft, Pandit Vasudev Upadhye, priest at the temple, died of heart attack soon after. A few days later, theft was reported at a Shvetambar Jain temple in Laxmipuri area. Recently, some small temples in the district became the target.

It is pertinent to note that a few valuable paintings of masters like Abalal Rehman and others were stolen from art galleries and

museums. Experts say the paintings are sold at high prices in the international market.

On this backdrop, people in the city have urged the police to step up security at temples and museum to curb thefts.

Date : 23 August 2011



GUARDING AGAINST PHISHING

Cyber crime is becoming a concern for Kolhapur. The case of stealing ATM passwords through video shooting was recently reported in Laxmipuri

Metros apart, cyber scare has not even spared 'developing towns like Kolhapur. The recent incident of stealing ATM password through video shooting scared the city. Thanks to the presence of mind of a bank officer, truth came into the light.

In Laxmipuri, the officer observed a strip on the ATM monitor. Smelling something suspicious, he informed the branch manager. The manager called cyber experts. During investigation, it was found that three micro cameras, secrete card scanner, memory card and USB port were installed with two high quality mobile batteries. Experts said that it was an attempt to steal ATM password through video shooting. Bank officials claim that it was an effort to withdraw large amount of money from the bank account.

Understanding the seriousness of crime, Dr. H. T. Vasappa, senior bank employee, lodged the complaint with the Laxmipuri police station. Police inspector M S Patil rushed to the spot. Now, the police is investigating the matter with its team of experts. Meanwhile, the police have appealed to the bank to take adequate security measures.

According to IT experts, it's high time to wake up before it's too late. Kulbhushan Patil, an IT professional who worked in Bangalore, says, "Such incidents may rise and we will have to take concrete security measures to guard against cyber crime." A retired army officer, on the conditions of anonymity, said that a massive purchase of

intelligence equipments takes place in the country illegally "It's a digital age where we cannot afford to lower our guard against cyber crime," he says.

Date : 13 December 2011



SMART ZONE

New office of the district superintendent of police has recently been inaugurated in Kolhapur. The city is also likely to get police commissionerate

The district superintendent of police (DSP's) office here now dons a dashing look. The new office was inaugurated recently.

With a view to improving efficiency of state police force, it's imperative that they have a decent infrastructure and equipment. In the wake of the 26/11 terror strike in Mumbai and increasing Naxal activities, the central and the state governments had underlined the urgent need for modernisation of the police force. Some top police officials are studying the systems in Israel, UK, and America.

Kolhapur is a boarder district connecting Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa and holds a significant geographical importance. After the face lift to the DSP's office, police commissionerate is on the cards. Jayant Patil, Maharashtra home minister, has already assured office of the commissioner of police (CP) in Kollapur. S S Virk, director general of police (DGP) and Ashok Dhivre, special inspector general of police (Spl IGP) were also present at the in-augural function. Speaking in Marathi at the programme, DGP Virk surprised one and all.

According to reports, some positive developments are sure to come the Kolhapur and Sangli districts' way. As per the state government policies, a population of one lakh should have 1,000 cops. The equation is expected to be followed in these two districts.

It is also gathered that a portal specially designed for police personnel is on the anvil. There would be some salient features including posting requests for transfer. If a policeman uploads his

transfer request on the portal, the very next day he would get decision on it from the DSP The state home minister feels that the system would help curb alleged political interference in cops' transfers.



WE ARE THE WORLD

Batkya Vimuktya Samaj sanstha is imparting education and providing shelter to children from nomadic tribes

This school is a ray of hope for children from nomadic tribes and other backward communities. Batkya Vimuktya Samaj sanstha is the place where they learn to become a part of the society.

Nomadic tribes have no standing in the society These people wander from one place to the other and sometimes allegedly become victim of atrocities. They don't know how to protect them. This is because they are not literate and empowered to fight for their rights.

A couple from the tribe committed suicide and left behind a boy and a girl. Nobody was willing to shoulder the responsibility of these orphans. Finally, it was Vyankppa Bhosale who admitted them to this school.

Bhosale and Laxman Mane, farmer MLA, started this school in 1994 with 20 children sans building and money but they had goodwill with them. Socialist groups from Ichalkaranji, hawkers association, slum-dwellers, Rotary Club, Pawar Charitable Trust Rammanohar Lohia Centre, Satendra Prasad Patel, Mohan Mulhareker and Dipti Vidhans contributed for the school building, now worth Rs one crone.

The sanstha takes entire responsibility of its students. It's ashram shala runs classes from Std I to VI at Rajputwadli on Kolhapur-Ratnagiri state highway In all, 450 boys and girls are taking education. Of them, 240 have been given accommodation.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Prof J R Dhabhole, president of the organisation, says that our NT, OBC students faired well in the March 2008 Board examinations. "The resident students gave 100 percent result while others achieved 75 per cent," he says.

Prominent figures like the late Nilu Phule, MP Supriya Sule and

former MP Surendra Mohan have visited the school and appreciated its work. Suresh Shipurkar, adds, "These students are very hard working. They can excel in sports as well if given proper coaching. We have now started a well-equipped gym for the purpose."

Date : 1 September 2009



DIWALI DHAMAKA

Jewellery, white goods, furniture, clothes and accessories city markets are lining them up for you. It's diwali folks, so make the most of this festive season pic for representational purposes only

This Diwali promises to be really big for the people of Kolhapur and the district. For farmers in Kolhapur district, the season has been good as they are getting a maximum price Rs 2,000 per tonne for the cane crop from sugar factories. Government employees also have their wallets full due to revision in the sixth pay scale. Political activities also picked during this season due to election. All those talks of recession and draught have become history. It's time to rejoice and celebrate and pay reverence to goddess Ambabai.

Paper merchants are already celebrating, courtesy the business they did during the canvassing by selling tonnes of paper needed for campaigns. According to Rajesh Batheja, paper merchant, they had a good season but other customers had to wait due to the election rush.

Prashant Patil, chairman of Kolhapur Radio and Electronics Association, said they are hopeful of doing a good business during Diwali. They are organising an exhibition with 127 stalls and expecting a sales of Rs 25 crore.

What are customers looking for ? According to Rahul Dhakrus of Chinmay Electronics at Shivaji Stadium Electronics Market, customers are more attracted towards dish antenna USBs, memory card, LCD TVs and washing machines.

Sadanand Chavan of Suvidha Furniture says right now he has less orders but expects things to improve.

Rafiq Pathan, who runs a travel agency, said that there hands are full. "People are travelling to Mangalore, Bangalore, Mumbai

Hydrabad and Goa this season."

The oldest gold merchants in Kolhapur, Kakade Jewellers are optimistic about sales. Nandkumar Kakde says, "The business was good during Dassera and we are hoping for the same in Diwali. Gold is a safe investment and people are purchasing solid gold items."

Chipde Saraf is also predicting good business. According to Dilip Chipde, rain and recession had adversely affected the market but now there's a positive buzz. "Customers are purchasing more diamond jewellery now," he added.

Bhavesh Bondaliya of Rupesh Stores said that accessories have good demand. "Youngsters are buying bags and belts. The sales will increase further to an extent that things will be difficult to handle."

Big malls and bazaars are also dishing out offers to attract customers. So, what are you waiting for? Just head towards the market to take advantage of the shopping frenzy.



MOVEMENT SLOW ?

Cooperatives in the region were once anonymous to sugarcane. However, private ownership of sugar factories is increasing. Subhash Desai reports

A major factor that provided an impetus to development of the region was sugarcane cultivation. A strong movement ensured that cooperative sugar mills progressed by leaps and bounds. Of late, the scenario is changing rapidly with private ownership of sugar factories steadily increasing.

Earliest reference of cane crop in India is found in Atharvaveda. From India, the crop spread to Iran, Syria, Egypt and many other countries. This cash crop ushered development in the district and co-operative movement expedited it. But things are changing now

Talking to Kolhapur Pius, sources at Vasantdada Sugar Institute say that in 1999, 120 sugar factories were manufacturing sugar in the state. A huge area of 590 lakh hectares was under cane cultivation then. With an average of 90 tonnes of the crop per hectare, sugar production stood at 65.03 lakh tonnes.

If we compare the present situation with this, we learn that production of cane per hectare has gone down from 90 tonnes to 83 tonnes. At the same time, number of sugar factories in the state has increased from 123 to 142. In general, sugar production has gone up from 65.03 to 70.66 lakh tonnes.

The difference, however, is that the number of private sugar mills has increased over the years. In other words, according to experts in the field, this phenomenon hints at a not so strong cooperative movement.

A heavy rainfall western Maharashtra this year has affected growth of the cane crop. Floods worsened the situation for farmers in some parts. Pratap Morbale, agricultural officer, says that sugarcane production may go down this year.

Santosh Gatge, a cultivator, says that increasing fertilizer prices and hiked power tariff have multiplied their problems. Adding to their woes are well disruption in electricity supply as well as labour crisis. It's getting difficult to get labourers. Prabhakar Sawant, an illiterate farmer from Sonali village, doesn't know the statistics and other details. However, he can hear alarm bells ringing from a decreasing number of farm animals.

Since landholding is less in the Western Ghats, mechanical equipments are not used for cutting crop. Labourers who usually come from Bid and Parbhani districts corner cultivators and drive hard bargains.

K P Patil, chairman of a sugar factory, says the price of a cutting machine is about Rs one crore and most mills cannot afford it.



CITY ENGINEER BAGS AWARD

In October this year, Kolhapur became the third city in Maharashtra having the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNUs) Internet protocol television (IPTV) service. Uttam Khuspe, sub-divisional engineer (SDE) played a pivotal role in configuring the network in district.

In the broadband multiplay service, BSNL landline has simultaneous applications like telephone, high-speed Internet and IPTV. For his outstanding performance in the field of information technology (IT), Khuspe was honoured with the state-level Vishisht Sanchar Seva Padak'. The award comprised certificate, silver medal and Rs 21,000 cash. He received the award from Padmashri Javec Akthar at a function held in Mumbai recently. Chandra Prakash, chief general manager (Maharashtra & Goa) presided.

Khuspe played a significant role in the expansion of Internet, broadband, multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) and Wi-Fi systems in district because of which Kolhapur secured the number one position in the state and helped BSNL increase revenue.

Khuspe played a key role in installation and effective maintenance of Internet in May 1999 and broadband in May 2005. The two services made available loads of Internet information to residents, industry, businessmen, banks, shareholders, press and news agencies. Broadband provides simultaneous voice (telephone) and high speed Internet access used for emails, web surfing, chatting, e-commerce and so on.

His expertise In IT, he was deputed to Doha, Qatar for the latest telecom services during the 15th Asian Games 2006 and got certificate of appreciation from the Qatar Telecom.

Various applications of IPTV service are live TV channel broadcast (both free and pay channels), entertainment service : personal video recorder (PVR) and video-on-demand and gaming, communication services : SMS, video conferencing and education service : education-to-home, distributed class rooms and so on.



A HELPING HAND

Starting with 20 kids, NGO Chetana Public Trust today caters to educational needs of 150 mentally challenged children

Mentally challenged children have probably been one of the neglected sections of the Fortunate, the situation is gradually moving in the right direction, thanks to efforts of non-government organisations (NGOs) like Chetana Public Trust here.

Founded in 1986, the NGO started in a garage with just 20 kids. Today there are 150 children whose educational needs its volunteers are catering to.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Pavan Khebudkar, principal of Chetana Apangmati Vikas Sanstha, says, "Our mission is to help mentally challenged students become self-reliant members of the society.

Pavan elaborates on their out-look; every person with mental retardation is a respectable member of society His/her rights must be protected and she should receive equal opportunities in social spheres.

Dr. Vijay Karnad, eminent physician who is president of the organisation, tells Kolhapur Plus, "Ours is a public charitable trust. I am proud to say that we have got the best organisation award instituted by the National Trust, New Delhi."

Dr. Karnad further says their institute has recognised by the state government's department of social welfare. "All students in the age group of five to eighteen are provided education and vocational training free of cost. We run a special wing of home science training Emphasis is given on personality development through music, dance, drama and sports."

About their financials, Pavan says, "Our teaching and non-teaching employees as well some well-wishers contribute to the fund specially created for providing assistance to poor and needy students. They can buy their uniforms and get medical treatment from it."

According to Pavan, trips and excursion help students. "Several trips are organised. One of the memorable trips was to Delhi, where 25 students witnessed the Republic Day parade. Their joy knew no bounds."

Sharad Navare, a trustee informs that 'Aamhi Asu Ladake', national and international award winning film directed by Alhiram Bhadkamkar, is based on this NGO. "The entire film was shot at Chetana and students also played roles," he concludes.

Date : 18 October 2011



GUD PROSPECTS

Despite production of high quality jaggery in the region, the trade hasn't flourished in the absence of an efficient marketing structure. Formation of jaggery cluster may help the business

Kolhapur region is famous for jaggery production. There are around 1,000 to 1,200 jaggery - producing units in Kolhapur district alone besides many more in Sangli and Satara districts. According to experts, the region hasn't registered expected turnovers despite producing high quality gud, thanks to poor marketing.

A small bucket-full size of jaggery is called a 'rava'. Around 25 to 26 lakh 'ravas' are brought per year for sale to the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) yard in the city.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Bhagavan Kate, district president of Swabhimani Shetkari Saghatana, urges elected people's representatives to sort out issues of jaggery producers. "Promises are usually made during every election but later not much is done for them. On its part, the state government should also take measures in this regard. The industry generates jobs for nearly 50,000 people in a year."

Khanderao Ghatge, former president of the same organisation, says, "We have a big market here but lack high standards. As moisture in jaggery goes above five per cent, fermentation takes place. Airtight packing is therefore needed."

According to him, some merchants from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka sell salty jaggery in the name of 'Kolhapuri gud'. Efforts are needed to curb such incidents in the interest of Maharashtra jaggery producers, he adds.

Bapusaheb Chougule, social activist, says non-chemical jaggery is good for health but people at large are attracted more to sugar.

It is pertinent to note that sugarcane research scholars from Lucknow and Coimbtore came to Kolhapur. They were satisfied with the quality of 'kakavi', liquid form of jaggery that contains iron, glucose, calcium and potassium.

Raju Shetty, MP, tells Kolhapur Plus that he is member of a panel of the Union food processing ministry. "I've taken up jaggery

producers' issues with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. He has assured to sanction a jaggery cluster if a comprehensive proposal in this regard is submitted."

The MP says sugar industry is stable and there are clusters for garment and resin industries. The jaggery cluster would give a boost to farmers in the business. Export of jaggery would also bring foreign currency, he concludes.

Date : 28 June 2011



IT'S HIGH TIME

The demand for a Bombay High Court bench here has been perding for years. After it comes into being, the bench would be a huge relief for- people in the region

People in the region in general and advocates in particular have been demanding a bench of the Bombay High Court at Kolhapur for quite some time. In fact, the demand has been around for nearly three decades.

As of now, people in the South West part of the state - Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara, Solapur, Sindhudurg and Ratnagiri districts - have to travel 450 kms all the way to Mumbai for their cases being heard by the High Court. Obviously, that consumes a lot of time, energy and money. The high court bench here would relieve people of this inconvenience.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sampatrao Pawar, president of the Kolhapur district bar association, says that the 18th Law Commission, has submitted its 238th report on August 5, 2009 in which it is clearly observed that in every high court, there is huge pendency and the present strength of judges can hardly be said sufficient to cope with alarming situation. Benches should be so established that a litigant is not required to travel long.

Here go some interesting details from the past. Kolhapur once had a high court and the Supreme Court. Chhatrapati of Kolhapur Rajaram Maharaj, who had the powers of high court since 1902, had appointed three judges. Through a promulgation made in 1931, the

Kolhapur darbar had established an independent high court and the Supreme Court on May 31, 1931. This arrangement continued till June 30, 1947. On March 1, 1949, the then state came to be merged in Bombay state and Kolhapur became a district.

Date : 28 June 2011



GLOWING TRIBUTES

*At a meeting held recently, city artists paid tributes to
M. F. Hussain*

Artists in the city recently organised a meeting to pay tributes to M. F. Hussain who passed away recently. They remembered contributions of the controversial painter, who was born at Pandharpur in Solapur district, to the Indian art saying that he was in a class of his own.

Kolhapur is also known as Kalapur. The historic city has produced renowned painters like Abalal Rehaman, who bagged the viceroy gold medal, Madhav Dhurandher, the first Indian art director of J. J. School of Art, Mohamad Patel, eminent calendar artist, G. Kambale, poster artist and Baburao Painter. Artists Ajay Dalvi, Girish Vagale, Sangram Patel, Rahul Repe and Sharad Sutar to name a few have kept the tradition going.

Hussain was always discussed in the art circle of Kolhapur. While realistic painters did not appreciate his modernism, youngsters felt he was bold and his strokes on canvas were simply superb.

The speakers said that Hussain created a unique visual language by synthesizing the European modernism with traditional Indian art.

Girish Vagale said that Hussain was never against the Kolhapur school of realistic paintings but he represented Indian art in cotemporary form. Sharad Sutar said that at the time of his death, Husain was working on 'History of Indian civilization. Unfortunately,

many in India could not understand him.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Ajay Dalvi says, "Hussain should not have left India but continued his art experiments here. Abhijit Wadangekar, grandson of noted portrait and land-scape artist G. R. Wadangekar, says, "Freedom of expression was guaranteed as a fundamental right in our Constitution. Everyone is free to express oneself in the legal framework."

Prashant Jadhav, art teacher, says, "Hussain's painting is like poetry, spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions and not a laboured exercise."

Date : 9 July 2011



GANAPATI YETI GHARA...

The arrival of the Vignaharta, destroyer of evils, has rejuvenated hope among every section of the society. The mood is happier and the Lord of Wisdom will take care of our worries, feel citizens

Kolhapur is all set to welcome the Lord of Wisdom. Shopping centres are witnessing hordes of people and authorities are trying to ensure that the festival is celebrated without any issues.

Festive occasions are incomplete without shopping. Offering shoppers a plethora of options, the city markets are displaying a variety in decorative items, jewellery and sweets. With Ganesha festival being celebrated with a lot of enthusiasm for decades, households are gearing up to welcome the Lord. If you are looking for something different ahead of the big day, make your pick from the city market.

Markets are decked up with latest decorative items. Electric lamps, then modern designs for Makhar and Asanas for installing the idol are on display. Electric lamps are in huge demand for decorations,

says Satish Kapre, a shopkeeper. "From households to social events, electric lamps are used for decorations. These lamps are available in a wide range, colours, shades, designs and suiting every budget," he adds.

The festival also boosts - traditional business like paper manufacturing. The paper merchants in Shivaji Stadium market are doing brisk business due to rising demand for golden, butter and readymade paper arches. "It's good time of the year," said Gyani Batheja of Kolhapur Kagad Kendra.

Ganesh Mandals have made elaborate arrangements to make it a grand affair. A few worth mention are Radhakrishna Tarim Mandal and Shivashakati Tarun Mandal, known for their artistic and unique decoration themes.

Amidst this festive frenzy, one cannot overlook the law and order situation, paramount to ensure safe celebrations. Even before a week of the festival, many Ganesh Mandals had not obtained permissions from agencies concerned like the police and collectorate.

To prevent any untoward incident during this period, hardened criminals would be expelled from the city from September 1 for a month, police sources told Kolhapur Plus adding that a proposal has been sent to the collector on this.

The deputy SP's office has opened a window for allotting permission. The mandals are being charged Rs 250 for digging pits. The mandals have to submit a picture of the president of the mandal, along with an affidavit adhering to the guideline of no-use of loud sound systems.

Meanwhile, the Chaka Jam Andolan by the lorry owners caused disruption in transportation of festive material from Mumbai. Subhash Jadhav, president of the lorry association, said that this was done to protest condition laid down by the RTO, which made education till class eight mandatory for drivers. The association is also demanding uniform diesel rate across the country and stopping illegal toll tax collection. According to grain merchant, Sadanand Korgaonkar, the strike has affected the import of grains from Punjab, NIP and Andhra Pradesh. "This may have some impact," he added.



SURGING AHEAD

*From art and culture to sports and education, Kolhapur has achieved a handsome growth over the last couple of decades. **Subhash Desai** takes stock on our fourth anniversary*

In the last couple of decades, Kolhapur has witnessed a phenomenal progress. From a sleepy town, it has grown into a fast-growing city that holds good promise for further development. Right from art and culture to real estate and information-technology (IT), it has been surging ahead on different fronts.

City's educational field has had stalwarts like Balasaheb Khardekar, M. R. Desai, V. T. Patil, Dr Bapuji Salunke and Appasaheb Pawar, first vice chancellor of Shivaji University Barrister Khardekar founded Gopal Krishna Gokhale College. It is pertinent to note that the great freedom fighter, Gokhale, was born at Kagal, 20 km from here. V. T. Patil was pioneer in girl's education through his institute. Tararani Vidhypeeth. Bapuji Salunkhe, Padmashree D. Y. Patil, Patangrao Kadam (Sangli), Jayant Patil (Islampur) and Vinay Kore (Warna Nagar) have contributed immensely to the field.

Industrial progress of the city has also been note-worthy. The city has always held a key position in the foundry business. Around four decades ago, Kolhapur was famous for diesel engines, pump sets and iron casting. Y. P. Powar, Rambhai Samani, Chandran Menon and Ghatage-Patil are among prominent names in the region's industrial area.

Influence that wrestlers from this city dominated the national scene and still continue to make their presence felt. The likes of Khashaba Jadhav, Ganpat Aandalkar. Shripati Khanchale, Dadu Chougule, Shriram Sarang. Yuvaraj Patil and Vinod Chougule have excelled at the national and international scene winning titles like Maharashtra Kesari, Bharat Kesari and Hind Kesari. Andalkar bagged the Arjuna award in 1962.

Besides wrestling, sports persons from the city have often shone. In 1971, Kolhapur district badminton champion Shobha Murti. Mehata won the Arjuna award. She also won Shiv Chhatrapati award. After that. 1997 national table tennis player Shailaja Salokhe got the Arjuna award.

After a gap of 33 years, golden boy and swimmer Veerdhaval

Khade and golden girl and shooter Tejaswini Sawant got the Arjuna award. Veerdhaval has, in fact, qualified for the 2012 London Olympics.

Art and culture have al. ways been salient features of the city. Baburao Painter, Bhalji Pendharkar, Lata Mangeshkar, Keshavarao Bhosale, Shahir Sarnaik, Alladiya Khan, Govindrao Tembhe, Surykant and Chandrakant Mandhare, Novelist Baba Kadam. Vi Sa Khandekar, Shivaji Sawant, Ranjit Desai, Rajan Gavas; the list seems unending when it comes to leading lights in art culture and literature.

The city has always been game for sports. In fact. Kolhapur and wrestling are synonymous. Such has been its....



LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

Unconditional love can build a bond even between human beings and a 'beast'. Here goes an unusual story of Sangramsinh Gaikwad, who shared such bond with a lioness. As luck would have it, the story ended on a sad note

It takes a lion's heart to be friend a lion. Tales of extraordinary men establishing a strong connect with big cats aren't unheard of unfortunately this story doesn't end on a happy note like the famous Androcles and lion. We have all heard this fable of Andocles, a slave, who escaped from the clutches of a tyrannical king and sought refuge in a forest. He came across an ailing lion there and treated it. The king's men finally traced him. Meanwhile, the lion was also caught. Androcles was caged with the same lion as punishment. The lion recognised his saviour and started licking his feet. A man in our own city shared a similar bond with a lioness. However, Sangramsinha Gaikwad, now 54, wasn't fortunate like Andocles.

The story dates back to 1982-83 when The Great Rayman Circus visited Kolhpur. As Gaikwad family had walked an extra mile to help the circus, its owner then gifted a lion cub to the Gaikwads as a token of gratitude. Sangram, an exuberant youth those days, had an

unusual longing for the big cats and it was a pleasant surprise for him.

Recalling those memorable years, which he still cherishes, he says, "My desire to be friends with the big cat was fulfilled. I would happily serve three-four kg meat, eggs and two to five litres milk to her every day. It had become a ritual to take her on a walk at Merry Weather ground. At night, I would set her free in my bedroom. Naturally nobody dared enter my room," Sangram smiles.

Why just family members and relatives, many visitors were scared at the very sight of the ferocious animal. Narrating a funny experience, Sangram says, "Once, a chief conservator of forests happened to visit my place. He saw the animal sitting under the bed and took it for a fierce dog. When the lioness moved, he got so scared and somehow wriggled out of the room."

Time came when the animal started showing its natural instincts. Sangram realised that his beloved friend was growing up. "There was no point in keeping her at home. We informed the circus owner and she was taken back. Parting ways was difficult and she was so fond of me that she just didn't want to leave me. With a heavy heart, I bid adieu to her," Sangram says. His eyes still grow moist as he speaks.

Missing her badly, he once went to see his dear friend after three years. Alas! She had forgotten him. "She refused to recognise me. called her, but in vain," he signs off.

Date : 30 August 2011



KEY TO HIS HAPPINESS

Subhash Patnekar has a big collection of key chains.

Talking with Subhash Desai, he speaks about his hobby

He retired as a head clerk from National Cadet Corps (NCC) after a service of 30 years in the 5 Maharashtra Battalion. During his service period, he was able to shake hands with Army chiefs and also share the glow of the Republic Day Parade. He maintained one more

habit of collecting key chains while travelling all over India.

In his collection, Subhash Balkrishna Patnekar now has key chains of animals - monkey bison, tortoise, horse, elephant and lion, birds - eagle and parrot, fruits like banana, grapes and lemon, gods like Bal-Ganesh, Bal-Hanuman, saints like Sant Dnyaneshwar and Saibaba, different cartoon characters, boxing gloves, football, earth, currency notes and coins, shoes, motorcycle, T-shirts, electric bulb; you name it and probably he has it in his collection.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Patnekar recollects how he started this hobby "My friends and relatives are aware of my hobby. They appreciate it by presenting me key chains." He says he has been travelling to different places for the last 20 to 25 years. "Wherever I go, the first thing I do is to look for smart key chains. I have in my collection key chains from Europe, America, Malaysia and Singapore.

Patnekar has some interesting experiences to narrate. "Once two women were moving on their two-wheeler for census work. Without locking their vehicle, they left the key chain to it. Somebody locked it and handed over keys to me. The women came to my house to collect keys. When they found many key chains in my cupboard, they presented the key chain of a T-shirt."

He says sometimes he invites displeasure of friends and relatives who visit his house. "They ask for some key chain and when I refuse to part with my treasure, sometimes they feel unhappy"

However, he says most of his kin and acquaintances appreciate his work and congratulate him. "I want my sons to continue this hobby. I wish they live in the world of key chains. The hobby unlocks the door to mental peace," Patnekar concludes.

Date : 8 November 2011



SOARING HIGH

Rooted in Bevnur village of Sangli district, Prakash Shinde has grown tall to become a lying . Officer rising above adversities. The tiny village has already produced a tehsildar, a collector and a chief executive manager of a major company

His is a story of rare grit and determination. Born in the modest family of a coolie at the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC), Prakash Shinde, flying officer in the Indian Air Force, has scaled great heights, literally and figuratively.

A couple of decades ago, Bandu Shinde, an APMC coolie who hails from Bevnur village in Jat tehsil of Sangli district, had noticed the spark in his son. Bandu always dreamt of seeing Prakash travel in a government car with red beacon. Today, he is soaring in the sky.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Prakash takes pride in saying Bevnur, tiny village on the Maharashtra-Karnataka border, has already produced a tehsildar in D S Kumbhar, a collector in R T Shinde and a chief executive manager of a major company in Raghunath Shinde. He says he is happy that he has kept the proud tradition going.

Although Prakash's father owns 23 acres of land, it is non-irrigated. To earn his livelihood, Bandu would work at Sangali APMC yard. While he started working as coolie, his wife would work as domestic help. A promising student, Prakash scored 83 per cent marks in the SSC examination. The boy wanted to pursue science but his father was unable to pay the fees. Suresh Patil, chairman of an educational institute, came to his help and gave him free admission. Prakash later went to the Marathawada Agriculture University, Parbhani. There too, Suresh Patil extended him financial assistance.

During this period, Prakash appeared for NDA and cleared it. He was called for interview in Bangalore. He had no money to go there and lost the chance. After three years, he passed the combined defence services (CDS) examination while doing his B Tech. He joined the Indian Air Force in Hyderabad. Shyam Wardhane, collector, recently feted, Prakash on his success. Speaking at the function, he

described Prakash as 'a hero of Sangali district'.

What's Prakash's advice to rural youths ? "Usually, rural youths think getting' jobs of clerks, gramsevak and talathis is a big achievement. They should dream big. Many of them lack information and guidance and think narrow. I would say, have great dreams, pursue them sincerely and bring them into reality" About his dream he says he wants to scale greater heights in his career.

M. D. Desai, 'ex-serviceman and founder of Daduma Trust, recently felicitated Prakash and his parents at a junction, organised at Karveer Vachan Mandar to the city.

Date : 26 July 2011



HANDLE WITH CARE

*Bursting crackers is fun but we need to be careful.
Parents should take adequate precautions. Considering
environmental issues, why not keep crackers to minimum ?
Subhash Desai reports*

Diwali is just round the corner. It's time to purchasing new clothes, white goods, sweets, and of course, firecrackers, one of the major attractions for children. Here is a word of caution. Parents need to take adequate precautions to ensure that the Festival of Lights is celebrated safely talking to Kolhapur Plus, Dr Prakash Sang-child specialist, says parents' role is crucial in averting accidents involving firecrackers. I have seen cases of major burns, injury to limbs and loss of vision. There are fatal mishaps as well. All this can be avoided with right precautions."

Besides burns and injuries, firecrackers may lead to bouts of asthma, other respiratory disorders and pneumonia. Dr. Sanghavi, who is also a social worker associated with many non-profit organisations,

blames the government. "Why does the government issue licenses to manufacturers ? People working in the cracker industry may be given alternative jobs," he says.

Anup Gargate, student of environmental science, explains in scientific terms the hazards of crackers. "Sulfur used in firecracker emits sulfur dioxide and other hazardous fumes after the explosion. It is unhealthy both for humans and animals. Breathing problems, irritation in eyes, temporary blindness, headache, vomiting and restlessness are some of the common complaints. Kids and senior citizens are soft targets.

Eminent environmentalist J. S. Samant has been creating awareness on the issue among people in general and students in particular. NGOs like Nisarga Mitra, Devarai and Maharashtra Pollution Monitoring Board and ENT Surgeons' Organisation are also doing a commendable job.

Samant stressed the need for strict implementation of the law. "People are aware of sound pollution hazards. Sustained awareness and implementation are needed. It's up to them to come forward and decided not to burst crackers. In the first place, there should be ban of crackers exceeding certain decibels."

Dr. Shaligram, an ophthalmologist, gives some tips. He says after an accident, one should keep eyes closed and rush to an eye specialist. It's not advisable to wash eyes with water or put eye drops before the doctors examines nature of the injury"

Date : 5 November 2010



A JUICY DECISION

Talk of grapes and raisins and Nasik comes to mind. But wait. These farmers ill Sangli district are determined to make its presence prominently in felt on Maharashtra's horticulture map. Subhash K Desai gives us a low down

They are a resolute lot. These 150-odd farmers from Sangli district are leaving no stone unturned to make a foray into raisin

production. They have made a solid start and if their efforts bear fruit, South-West Maharashtra would find a prominent place in the state's horticulture map.

As far as grape cultivation in the state goes, Nasik has been maintaining an unassailable lead. Though it would be too early to say that here appears a competition emerging from Tasgaon and Palus talukas (earlier known as South Sangli) of Sangli district, the farmers' effort is certainly praiseworthy.

Grape is a fruit that cannot be preserved for a long time. Considering this, grape cultivators in Sangli district have started turning them into raisins (kismis). They have improved in quality a lot since they started off in 1975, yet maintaining high international standards is indeed a tall order.

Over the years, the farmers have been adopting traditional sun-drying technique to produce raisins. However, it affects the colour of the product. Cleanliness is another issue. As grapes are exposed to dust particles during sun-drying, the end product suffers in terms of cleanliness. That's why the farmers have been struggling to take their product overseas.

With a view to learning new techniques, a farmers' team from Miraj tehsil recently visited United States of America (USA) and Turkistan on a study tour. There they interacted with experts and returned with valuable inputs.

As a step towards reaching the international area, a new project is coming up. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Dhondiram Dattatraya Patil, an educated farmer, says, "It is going to help the farmers immensely. It will enable them take the standard of their product to a new high."

Vinay Pawar, a progressive farmer who produces 28 tonnes of raisin from his seven acre land at Shivani, 35 kms from Sangli, says, "We are very happy with this cash crop than sugarcane or turmeric." He also says that the project will help them. In sun-drying, sudden climatic changes affect colour of the product and it becomes very difficult to export it, he adds.

The project, on Miraj Malgaon road, is coming up with the help of the Union agriculture ministry Pramod Kulkarni, district industry officer, has been making efforts to guide farmers in this regard. The farmers have also expressed their gratitude to R. R. Patil, state home minister, and Prabhakar Kore. MP from Karnataka, for their

cooperation in the effort to bring farmers on a par with other progressed regions.

The project is estimated at Rs. seven crore. The central government is contributing 70 per cent of the export-oriented project cost while the state government is chipping in with 10 per cent. In all, 150 farmer members will raising 10 per cent whereas 10 per cent will be a bank loan.

On completion, it is expected to increase raisin producers' income by around 30 per cent.



CALL OF HIS HEART

Shivaji Sharma, eminent city painter, is set to display his painting at an exhibition in Mumbai.

His musing with colour and canvas stands out. For Shivaji Sharma, former principal of an art institute in the city, painting is a powerful medium to express himself.

Sharma has displayed his paintings at exhibitions held in Pune and Mumbai. Now his paintings will be displayed at the famous Jehangir art gallery in the state capital between November 8 and 14. This will be the 17th expo of his paintings.

Born in a poor scheduled caste family at Masudmale village near historic fort Panhala in Sahyadri ranges, Sharma's childhood was spent in company of rich nature. As a student, he came in contact with eminent painter and sculptor Ravindra Mestry, son of Baburao Painter. Here Shivaji learnt how to capture natural colours and bring them on canvas. He joined an art institute as a student and later served there as a lecturer. He retired as principal of the same institute last year.

Sharma mastered different art forms; from charcoal painting to acrylic colours. His vivid strokes make his portraits lively and his use of water-colours make his land-scapes vibrant.

He firmly believes in Lord Buddha's message that change is inevitable. According to him, changing times have reflected in his style and strokes of his brush. He has studied changes in the world of

painting from Picasso to Monnet and in India from Abala Raheman to M F Hussain.

So far he has participated in exhibitions, some group and a few solo. His new series is on the life of Lord Buddha. Meditating Buddha, and Raja Bimbisar are a few of his paintings worth mention.

Sharma wants to try abstract paintings in near future. With his art, he has been successful in crossing the barrier of realistic paintings traditionally practised in Kolhapur.

Date : 26 October 2010



THE RIGHT MOVE

A block education officer in the district has started a talent search examination for Std I students

School and colleges examinations are either over or on their last legs. Along with students, many parents whose wards have appeared for SSC and HSC examinations have heaved a sigh of relief. Usually when we speak of examinations, major examinations come to mind. Wait. Here's a novel initiative in the district for Standard I students.

About a year ago, Sampat Gaikwad, block education officer, submitted a proposal to the Panchayat Samiti (PS) of Bhudargad, a remote hilly tehsil in the district about a talent search exam. Bapusaheb Arde, PS chairman, and Rahul Desai, vice chairman, liked it and decided to cooperate.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Gaikwad says, this is a maiden project in the state. "In 2010, a booklet was published to guide teachers in the tehsil. For practice, xerox test papers were provided." On March 10, 2011, the examination was conducted in which 1,091 students appeared, he adds.

The test paper had 50 questions out of which 18 were for Marathi, two for English, 20 for mathematics and 10 for Environment. It was based on the syllabus given by the state government.

Arde says they were pleasantly surprised to see the results. More than 93 students secured marks above 90 percent, 750 students scored more

than 36 marks.

Gaikwad says Standard I students learnt to read with understanding and solve question papers confidently. This is a kind of foundation for competitive exams for Standard IV, Standard VII, National Talent Search, CET, MPSC and UPSC.



TEMPLE TALE

In 1978, flue Dalit couples had performed pooja at the Mahalaxmi temple. Is the issue of women now being allowed into the sanctum sanctorum hyped ? Subhash Desai tries to find answer

The issue of a group of women entering the sanctum sanctorum at the famous Mahalxmi temple here hit the headlines nationally Even as the incident is being termed as revolutionary, there is among people the issue is being hyped.

It is pertinent ... note here that the decision to allow women into the temple sanctum sanctorum was taken on Friday last at a joint meeting of the temple priests, management committee and officials of district administration and police department. Announcing it, Laxmikant Deshmukh. Kolhapur collector, told us that the meeting resolved in favour of giving open access to women to the sanctum sanctorum between 10 am and 11.30 pm everyday. He also said women would be allowed to accompany their immediate relatives for performing various rituals. Satej Patil, minister of state for home and district guardian minister, had called the meeting.

A social activist, who does not want to be named, says that coming close on the heels of the decision to have 50 per cent reservation for women in the local bodies' election, the issue did offer political mileage. There is no doubt that the issue was hyped out of proportion, he adds.

Word of caution: *While welcoming the decision to allow women into the sanctum sanctorum at the Mahalaxmi temple, some prominent citizens have stressed the need for*

closely monitoring security arrangements. Adv Prakash Hilge, former president of Kolhapur District Bar Association, and Prakash Jokhe, industrialist, have opined that once security is taken care of, there should be no problem.

The social activist points out that women had entered sanctum sanctorum of the temple on earlier occasions. On 16th July 1978, late Ashok Ravrane entered the inner chamber with five Dalit couples and performed pooja. No priest had objected to it then. The people who entered were N B Londhe, Tukaram Chougule, Krishnat Waydande, Bapu Londhe Bhavan Gode and their wives

Welcoming the decision, Adv Prakash Hilge, former president of Kolhapur District Bar Association, says while allowing devotees into sanctum sanctorum, the issue of security should also be given a serious thought to. With security measures perfectly in place, there should be no problem, he adds.

Prakash Jokhe, industrialist, agrees, and says there have been incidents of thefts at Jain temples where devotees have free entry to the inner chamber. Considering this, adequate security arrangements should be made at the Mahalaxmi temple also.



A FAIR SHOW

Here's a doctor couple creating awareness about saving a girl child. Rajiv Chavan and Jayashree Chavan have recently produced a short-film on the topic

This doctor couple is doing its bit when it comes to saving a girl child. Rajiv Chavan and his wife Jayashree, both medical practitioners in Bhudargad tahsil of South-West Maharashtra, have recently produced a short-film on the topic.

Earlier, the Chavans would stage 'Path Natya' (street play). However, the response they got was not much encouraging. During interactions, people would often list practical difficulties in bringing up girls. It was not always possible owing to time constraint to answer and convince everyone who had a query

The doctor couple finally decided to produce a short-film on the

subject to create awareness among people. Anup Jatrakar wrote the script and also directed the short-film. Jayshree is the producer while Rajiv, Dr. Manjushree Patil, Vijay Burud, Yogita Jadhav, Trisha Jatilekar and Rutuja have acted in it.

The short-film was released at Shahusmarak Bhavan, Kolhapur. Yuvaraj Sambhaji Raje and Laxumikant Deshmukh, district collector, released the film CD. Speaking at the function, they appreciated the young medicos working in hilly terrains like Bhudargad.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Rajiv said the film of 20-minute duration is for every one.

Date : 15 March 2011



RIGHT VISION

Various programmes marked glaucoma awareness week in the region

With a view to creating awareness about glaucoma - called the sneak thief of sight, various programme were organised in the region during the awareness week observed between March 6 and 12.

A team of ophthalmologists including Dr Chandrashekher Shaligram has been striving to create awareness among rural and urban populace about the sneak thief of sight. Gayatri Hoshing, a specialist in glaucoma treatment, arranged an awareness camp, which was attended by 76 patients.

Glaucoma is called the sneak thief of sight because it does not show any symptoms and there is no way any person can be aware of its progression until almost she would have entered into a very advanced stage of the disease. Hence, it is very important for people to be aware of its dangers and undergo a comprehensive eye check-up at regular intervals. The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that glaucoma is second leading cause of irreversible blindness.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Dr Shaligram said even many educated people are not aware of glaucoma. For people, usually

cataract is synonymous to eye ailment. When they come to know that they don't have a cataract, they think they have no problem whatsoever. They should insist on doctors examining the eye pressure. A national survey suggests that doctors/media should highlight facts about the disease. If a diabetic takes proper eye care, his/her sight can be saved. Dr Milind Sabnis, eye specialist, says heredity, diabetes and excessive use of steroids are main factors causing glaucoma. With timely treatment, it can be checked.

Date : 15 March 2011



BUBBLING WITH LIFE

Shivaji University's National Conference on recent trends in life science received good response. Around 250 delegates from all over the country participated

Ninety research scholars from all over the country presented their papers at the conference on 'Recent trends in life science' held at Shivaji University (SU). Around 250 delegates attended the meet.

Dr. Suman Gavali, adviser to Department of Bio-Technology, New Delhi, Dileep Deobagkar, vice chancellor of Goa University, Prof Ashok Pande (NIIST, Trivendrum) Prof. T. R. Sharma, IARI, New Delhi. Prof. Vidya Gupta, Pune, Dr. Vdhavesh Sonavane, CDAC, Pune, and Dr. Asok Giri, NCL, Pune were among those who delivered lectures.

It is pertinent to note that biotechnology department of SU has produced a good number of outstanding students, presently working in India, as well as USA, South Korea, Taiwan and Ireland.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Prof. S. P. Govindwar, head of the department, said, "Research thrust of the department was on bio-transformation, microbial and Phytoremediation (Textile dyes and Xenobiotics). J. P. Jadhav said, "Poster presentation on plant biotechnology, Aurvedic drug and their function could help farmers and medicos in South-West Maharashtra."

Prof. S. R. Patil, head of chemistry department, said, the varsity observed 2011 as international chemistry year, Anil Kumar, scientist from NCL Pune, addressed a meeting. Various programmes including science exhibition, book exhibition, essay competition and debate competition were organised. Dr. G. B. Kolekar, coordinator, said, workshop on laboratory safety management for chemist will be held in July 2011 and an interface between industry and academia in August 2011.

Prof. N. J. Pawar, SU vice chancellor, has appealed to local businessmen to participate in the event.

Date : 15 March 2011



HORNS LOCKED!

Traders are tip in arms against collection of local business tax. After abolition of octroi, this tax is the only source of income For the civic body

The showdown between traders and Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) administration over collection of local business tax (LBT) is unlikely to end with traders in no mood to relent. Their leaders have called upon them not to 'pay' LBT on goods brought into the city

Even as traders have taken a tough stand, the conflict has deepened. With abolition of octroi, KMC has lost its major source of income.

Around 75 per cent of the amount collected through octroi was spent on civic employees' salaries. The civic body is struggling to sort out this issue.

In its bid to increase revenue, KMC hiked property tax and water charges. The hike has created resentment among citizens. Regarding LBT, KMC officials say that they have left with no other option to generate revenue. Hence, KMC has appealed to merchants and industrialists to register their names with it and inform about their turnover.

On their part, members of the Kolhapur district merchants' association and the Industrial association asked for some breather, but to no avail. They have now moved the court seeking justice.

Meanwhile, at its meeting last week, grain merchants' association strongly apposed 'highhandedness' of KINK. Sadanand Korgonkar convener of the association. says, 'We are not afraid of KMC's action.' He called upon the merchant community to bring goods into the city without paying LBT Suresh Gaikwad, president of Saraf association, says we have decided oppose KMC's decision.

Sadanand Korgoakar and Ravindra Tendulkar have appealed to merchants and industrialists to shift there businesses out of Kolhapur 'to teach a lesson to KMC'.

Rahul Channe, a paper trader, says, on the face of it, octroi and LBT seem equal. However, KMC will not trust our bills and vouchers. They might look into our account books, which is not acceptable. Besides, LBT along with VAT would increase prices of goods in the city."

Date : 31 May 2011



RIGHT ON TARGET

After Tejaswini Sawant, Rahi Sarnobat has won laurels for the city. She has also qualified for the 2012 London Olympics

Rahi Sarnobat has hit the - proverbial bull's eye that has opened for her the gate of the 2012 London Olympics. Sports-lovers in the city have congratulated her on her success.

During the 2011 Commonwealth Games in Delh, Rahi secured a bronze medal in shooting. It is pertinent to note that she got the eighth spot at the women's international sports pistol competition held in US. The 20-year-old put up a spectacular performance with an impressive average of 10.4 points for each shot. Rahi had missed her silver medal by a whisker at the Beijing Olympic.

On her return to the town, the district administration had

felicitated her on her success at the Commonwealth Games. Replying to felicitation, she had mentioned that her next target was the London Olympics and her dream has come true.

Tejaswini Sawant and Rahi Sarnobat have become glamour girls for Kolhapur that has made its mark on the international shooting scene.

Rahi lives at Takala area of Rajarampuri. Her father Jeevan and mother Prabha say, "We have always had a great confidence in her abilities. We were absolutely sure about her success." They also thanked their daughter's gurus Ajit Patil and Sheela Kanugo from Mumbai for honing her skills and guiding her from time to time.

A student of Tararani Vidyaapeeth and Vivekanand College in the city. Rahi first held the rifle as a National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadet and handled air pistol in 2006. She has always excelled on both sports and academic fronts. She scored 78 per cent marks in her SSC examination.

A proud Ajit Patil recalls one of her feats. gold medal at the 2007 national competition held at Noida. So far, she has bagged 43 national and international events.

Date : 31 May 2011



NAVRATRI MAGIC

*Come Navratri and the city is teeming with devotees.
This time around, 15 lakh of them are expected to visit the
famous Mahalakshmi temple*

With hordes of devotees pouring in to visit the famous Mahalakshmi temple, enthusiasm is in the air. City is bustling with activity as Dussera, the last day of Navratri, is drawing closer. The festival is celebrated to mark the victory of good over evil.

This year, Navratri fest. got underway on Friday last. The first day of Navratri is known as 'Ghatasthapana' in northern parts of the country while in southern India, it's called 'Durga Pratipada'. Goddess Durga is worshipped as the protector and nourisher of good and destroyer of evil. A mythological story in Markandey Purana is read

with great devolion. It is called 'Durga Saptashati'. It has tales of the fight between Goddess Durga and demons like Mahishasur, Chand and Mund, Raktbij who were defeated by Her.

Kolhapur has the famous temple of Maa Durga. She is also known as Ambabai of Karveer or Mahalakshmi. The city is one of the 12 Shaktipeethas.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Nandkumar Marathe, priest at the temple, says the idol of the goddess is three feet high and it is made out of stone called Ratnasheela. It weighs 40 kg. Researchers claim that it may be 3,000 to 4,000-year-old.

Rita Thakur, research student who is doing her PhD on Mahalaxmi, says she has come across two different views among devotees. Some worship the goddess as Ambabai, a name for Goddess Durga, wife of Lord Shiva, as she stands with lion and Shivlinga and a, shreechakra. Others worship Her as Mahalakshmi, wife of Lord Vishnu and a rich sari comes from Tirupati Balaji every year as gift. However, devotees in general, don't go much into these details. For them, She is the Mother who protects her children.

With Dussera round the corner, mood in the market is upbeat. People reserve their important purchases for this one of the three-and-a-half auspicious muhurats. Many property deals are also sealed during the period. Again, many make their wedding purchases with shopkeepers coming up with lots of attractive offers and discounts.

Even for petty shopkeep ers, it's gala time. Mahadeo Kajale, a florist, says as lakhs of devotees come to the city, they have a booming business. "Flowers, garlands and marigold, which sees brisk sales on Dussera, are in big demand. Apart from us, those selling puja material are sitting pretty," he says.

All's in place : Devotees visit the city from different parts of Maharashtra as well as from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In view of the large turnout, cops have made elaborate safety and security arrangements. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Yashvant Kedge, police inspector, says 225 police personnel and 18 officials are looking after bandobast in the temple area. All four gates of the temple have metal detectors. Besides, six watch towers have been erected to monitor proceedings.

People are also gearing up for the long festive season ahead that

will continue till Diwali. "Festivals give that welcome break from otherwise hectic schedules. It's time to catch up with friends and also spend quality time with family. Festivals are indeed greatest busters," says Sagar Mo a professional.

Date : 12 October 2010



UNITED WE STAND

People in the city paid rich tributes to Mumbai terror attack victims and the brave hearts who lost their lives fighting against the ultras

First it was shock, then agony and finally ire. The 26/11 shook this tranquil city as it did the entire nation. Even as the state capital limped back to normalcy, anger brewed among people at large. Right from Maj Gen (retd) Shivaji Patil to Sada Sathe, autorickshawallah, everybody has something to say. In Kolhapur, they gathered for candle prayers held at the historic Bindu Chowk, Dussera Chowk and Bhavani Mandap. Behind the composure, there was anger towards terrorists and yes, Pakistan. They were also surprised at the statements made by some political leaders. The feeling was clear; the current system has to undergo a drastic change.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Col Viswas Desai said, "There has to be more accountability on part of the politicians. Can't there be a system of negative voting ? The polity and the bureaucracy should match the sacrifices made by our brave jawans and gallant police officers."

Major General (retd) VSM, AVSM Shivaji Patil opined that the operation was not well coordinated. "Our police lack proper training and their weapons are outdated. The cops at sensitive places, at least in each metro, should get training to combat terrorists."

Dr. Prakash Sanghavi, a medical practitioner, said, the government should stop being soft on Pakistan. Another medico, Dr. S. V. Walke said, it's high time people of the country should unite against terror. Let's sink the difference of languages, caste, region and

religion."

P. Y. Kangale, a professorial, wondered as to why no MP or MLA joined the city people in registering protest but for a blood donation camp arranged by an MLA.

Meanwhile, Kolhapur District Bar Association, Charmakar Samaj Seva Association, Shahid Bhagatsingh Sangharsh Samiti and several other organisations paid tributes to Mumbai victims at meetings held at different places.

Date : 2 September 2008



CLEAR ROAD AHEAD

The Sonvade Ghat Raod project, that had been long pending due to forest land transfer, received a shot in the arm following an initiative by public representatives from various parties

In a unique example, public representatives from different parties kept aside their differences and pursued the government to remove hindrance in the construction of Sonvade Ghat Road project. The Ghat project is under way at the Sahyadri hills. There are five approach roads between Sindhudurg and Kolhapur districts, but the ghat road would be reducing the distance by 85 kms.

The road work was facing blockades due to forest land issue. Revenue Minister Narayan Rane, during the platinum jubilee celebration of former MLA Anandrao Desai at Gargoti last year, had promised to take care of the issue that was lingering on almost three decades.

Interestingly MLAs from different parties came together to sort out this problem. Former MLA from Congress Bajarang Desai, Congress MLA Satej Patil, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLA K. P. Patil, BJP MLA Chandrakant Patil (newly elected from Graduate Constituency) are working together beyond party politics.

Bajarang Desai represented Bhudargad-Radhanagri tehsil in

Kolhapur district for two terms. While talking to Kolhapur Plus, he said, "Sonvane Ghat Road would be six-km long. The forest department was demanding 24 hectares land elsewhere as compensation. Rane ordered Nanded collector to provide the land in Marathwada. The collector, by order dated 7-5-2008 under the Maharashtra Revenue Act 1966 clause 22, transferred 20 hectares land to forest department as compensation."

The approaching bridges on either side of the road are almost complete. If the road is completed in a year, it would boost the business and create job opportunities in the region. This road, starting from Konkan Highway near Kudal would reach National

Highway No. 4 near Nipani via Gargoti. Desai also thanked Mandpe, Superintendent Engineer from Public Works Department and Khobragade, executive engineer, for their efforts.

K. P. Patil, who is also from the same tehsil, told Kolhapur Plus that we should also give credit to Rane for his quick action. Leaders from all parties are supporting this project. Maharashtra Government has already sanctioned Rs three crore for this project.

BJP MLA Chandrakant Patil is from Khanapur in Bhudargad tehsil. This means the tehsil has two MLAs, one from BJP and another from NCP. They came on a common platform for a development cause, leaving behind party differences.



A STOCK CRISIS

Fed up of disruptions in water supply and pipeline leakages, Kolhapur residents have urged the civic body to end their woes

Despite all 14 irrigation projects in the city having adequate water, residents in several parts of the city are facing 'man-made' water shortage. They have alleged that owing to flawed water management, their water woes are still continuing. Huge water leakages are adding to their hardship. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sambhaji Mhasavekar, retired

irrigation officer, says the situation is indeed grim. "In the last 40 years, the city has never experienced such a situation," he points out.

The city has Kalamba Lake on its south and Rankala Lake on its west. Besides, there is Dudhganga irrigation project at Kalambawadi, 45 km from the city and Radhanagari dam. These water bodies take care of water needs of city populace and sugarcane growers in the district. While Kalamba Lake caters to city's drinking water needs, water from Dudhganga Project is used for both drinking and agriculture purposes. Radhanagari dam water is supplied to irrigate farms.

Earlier, state government irrigation department would look after the water supply. Supply was regular that time. According to residents, problems started after the Kolhapur Municipal Council (KMC) took over the scheme. It is alleged that in one-and-a-half month after taking over the water scheme, KMC had to make eight announcements through newspapers informing people that water supply would be disrupted due to leakages on the main line.

Anil Belekar, a resident says, "Unlike in neighbouring Karnataka, city people have been facing problems like load-shedding, toll tax issue and water scarcity." Meanwhile, the civic body kept collecting water benefit charges from consumers. Shreerang Sutar, a social activist, says this issue could well turn into a legal battle.

Adil Pharas, a corporator, appears absolutely disillusioned. He says he is thinking of resigning as a corporator, as water supply officers seldom pay heed to public grievances. Jayashree Sable, another corporator, says discussions on this subject with KMC authorities have been fruitless. Mayor Kadambari Kawale says that her own area - Shivaji Udyam Nagar - also gets less water. The issue was raised at the KMC meeting where the corporators urged Vijayalaxmi Bidari, municipal commissioner, and C. M. Kagalkar, irrigation engineer, to sort out their problem.

Date : 24 January 2012



ON THE PATH OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The book, Mahayogi Gautam Buddha penned by a Kolhapur writer; deals with life and works of lord buddha and city's association with the great sage

Several social and political workers have failed in promoting Lord Buddha in true light and instead put him in caste confines. He was above caste and never claimed to have founded a new religion. He is a true scholar in philosophy of religion and science, says Subhash Desai, city-based writer, in his book on Lord Gautam Buddha.

Desai has penned the book- Mahayogi Gutam Budha - after travelling to Tibet, Nepal, Leh-Ladakh, Spiti valley Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Madhy Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa to gather details about the great sage.

In his book, Desai claims that the Buddha hierarchy had three Brahmin Buddhas and three Kshatriya Buddhas. Siddartha Gautam Buddha was the seventh. He was not against Brahmins but opposed the caste system in 500 BC.

Pointing out that Patanjali composed his yoga sutras 150 years after Buddha, the writer says it's possible that the sutras might have evolved out of 'Anapman yoga', controlling of breath practised by Lord Gautam Buddha.

Desai has quoted from a Swami Vivekananda's speech at the Chicago world conference of religion on 'I am a Buddhist because Buddhism is the culmination of Hinduism'. The swami is wrongly portrayed as a staunch 'Hindutvawadi', he says.

The writer has mentioned in the book that history of Kolhapur city goes 2000 years back as Buddha relics were found here during an excavation on October 27, 1887. To support his claim, he has published a map and a few papers from the Asiatic journal of British India.

Date : 16 December 2008



THAT'S SPORTSMAN SPIRIT

A rural level small trust from Kolhapur is producing worldclass athletes sans government support. The trust has been organising camps in villages and distributing free sports equipment to rural youth

Wonder kid Veerdhavel Khade went to Beijing to participate in Olympics. He bettered his national record but failed to bag gold. Veerdhavel Khade is just 16 and Mandar Divse is 24. They are a product of Bhavani swimming club, run by 'Pirajirao Ghatge Physical Education Charitable Trust'. The hard work put in by Pravinsinh Ghatge, trustee, and Col V. A. Desai, chief executive officer (CEO), is behind the success of this club. Their commitment has brought name for the city at international level by producing world-class swimmers.

While talking to Kolhapur Plus, Vikramsinh Ghatge, former MLA and chairman of Maharashtra Sugar Mahasangh, praised the work of trustees, the late Lt Gen S P P Thorat, Col A B Jadhav, Meghnath Nageshker and Col R R Jadhav and Col V. A. Desai.

Ghatge recalls the modest beginning of the trust in 1956 by Jaysinghrao Ghatge in memory of his father to find a new dimension of physical development, professional expertise, empowerment and career for urban and rural youths.

The trust organises three months' camps in villages. Single bar, double bar, horse riding, malkhamb and varieties of gymnastics are taught. A mobile unit has been working in Kolhapur, Konkan and Satara districts for the last 50 years. Free sports equipment is distributed to rural youths. Now, a small sports complex has come up in Nanibai Chikhali village in Kagal tehsil of Kolhapur district. A 400-metre track football, hockey ground gymnasium hall, kabbadi, kho-kho grounds and a swimming pool will be built at this complex.

Pravinsinh Ghatge said, 'The trust is committed to the great cause of nation building, empowering and energising the youth. More than generations have benefited by the work of the trust. It has opened floodgates of opportunities. This without government support is certainly worth appreciating.'



PURE ENTERTAINMENT

Tamasha, a local art form, was started even before the peshvai' period, especially to please the village god to get freedom from any curse

When there were no entertainment channels, no FM radio on mobile, or the pub culture, the only entertainment for villagers and people in small towns was to watch a tamasha. Tamasha culture was started even before the 'Peshvai' period, especially to please the village god to get freedom from any curse. The curse was believed to bring epidemics, floods, torrential rains, thunderstorms and earthquakes.

Noted filmmaker V Shantaram made two Hindi movies 'Pinjara' and 'Shahirnamjoshi' featuring tamasha artists hailing from Dombari and Kolhati communities. There were no sound system and the singer had to sing loudly so that the 400 to 500 audiences can hear it. Instruments like harmonium, dholki and daph were used to create music.

Before starting their play the artists worship Lord Ganesha and say a prayer, known as Gan, followed by Gavalan. In this form eight to ten women become gavalins, the main part being played by a man called mayshi, songadya. The story moves around lord Krishna who along with his companions teases the gavalins.

Double meaning words are indispensable in another part called as Batavani in which two friends meet after a long time and chitchat on current political and social issues. People like this part immensely.

The third part Vag comprises mythological stories, like story of raja Harishchandra Koliyache Band (revolt of fisherman), Swarajyachi Shapath (oath of freedom). Many of these vagas had become a source of inspiration for freedom fighters. There was no written script. The artists had the freedom to improvise on the stage.



CELEBRATION OF ELEGANCE

Yester year's Artist Manik Kalavant recalls the golden days of baithakichi lavani

Marathi movies in the 1960s that showed tamasha culture became extremely popular, for example, 'Sangtye Aika' set a box-office record by running to houseful shows for 125 weeks. The lavani "Bugadi mazi sandali ga, jata Sataryala," was on everybody's lips.

Many films followed suit. Marathi films 'Saval maza aika', 'Ek gao bars bhangadi' also became popular. People still remember artists like Hansa Wadkar, Sandhya, Leela Gandhi, Jayashri Gadkar (who recently got Chitrabhushan award), Usha Chavan, Usha Naik and Manik Kalavant, to name a few. Similarly, artists like Dadu Induriker, Bhau Babu Mang and Kalu Balu also became famous.

Post independence, many rich and prominent persons of the society started taking interest in this rustic entertainment form. However, they did not want to make their liking known to everybody. It gave emergence to 'Baithakichi Lavani'. The artists who could sing and dance would invite people to their house on a particular day.

Manik Kalavant is now nearing 70 years of age. While talking to Kolhapur Plus, she says, "I started performing in dramas at the age of 17. As popularity of baithakichya lavania increased, rich people from Baramati, Solapur and Belgaum started attending them. The mehfil (programme) would begin at 10 pm and last till 4 am."

"There were no taperecorders in those days so we had to recite the songs demanded by the people. The charges for per programme would be like Rs 4,000 per night, a huge amount in those days," says Manik.

"Any kind of misbehaviour was not tolerated. If somebody misbehaved he would be barred from the next baithak. People were offered tea and biscuits. Liquor was a strict no," she says.

Manik Kalavant later got married and now only remembers her golden past. For her, the real tamasha has died long back.



FIRMLY ROOTED CULTURE

There is a tradition to welcome Ganesh and his mother Gouri that goes back centuries

Urban and rural folks from Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts are all geared up to welcome the Lord of Wisdom and His mother Gouri Parvati. Gouri does not come alone, she is accompanied by her husband Lord Shiva.

Women, young and old, from every village in Maharashtra sing songs to please Gouri. These folk songs are known as Gourai, Zimma-Phugadi. Zimma is sung by a group of 10-15 women. It includes religious songs, recited by mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. The songs are description of costumes. Every village has a deity whose blessing are sought by singing these folk songs. There is a dance called Phugadi - two girls or elderly women dance by holding their hands. Apart from it special women dances are Ghoda Ghalne, Katvat, Sup Nachavane, Ukhane Ghene and Ghagar Ghumavane.

Gouri Ganesh Zimma Phugadi continues for four days. At some places it continues till Anant Chaturti. Gouri is welcomed amidst drumbeats. These people are known as Vajantris. They have a special status in rural area. When they participate in village religious festivals they are paid in form of foodgrain.

These dances continue for four days. After arrival of lord Ganesh, arrives Gouri. Then its turn of Shankroba, means Lord Shankar and Parvati. On the third day they go the river from where a procession is taken out. They are immersed in water. In Kolhapur, a wrestling akhada, known as Tatakadchi Talim, organises a competition of Zimma and Phugadi. Surbhi cultural group examines the event.



NO SHOWCASE THIS

Kolhapur's railway station is in need of urgent renovation. Despite more than Rs 15 crore spent on its upkeep, the condition of platforms is very poor

Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) earlier known as Kolhapur Railway Station has now a computerised reservation facility. Despite having this facility there are several grey areas in the station that remain an eye sore. Over the last twenty years, more than Rs 15 crore has been spent on renovation work. Expert feels that in the same amount a new modern three storied building and a new platform could have been erected. The condition of platforms are very poor. Platform number three has no shade which results in passengers get drenched when it rains. Platform number four has a pit line which is of no use and platform two and three are not connected with flyovers.

Krishnrao Solankee who is working for the welfare of rail passenger has written a number of letters to railway authorities. Earlier Kolhapur was part of the South Central Railway. Now it is managed by Central Railway.



DIL KI BAAT

Dextrocardia, simply put heart on the right side of the chest, is a rare condition. Here's one such case in your own city

Aren't we used to seeing people putting their palm on the left side of the chest and saying, it's coming right from here ? Well, most of us have our hearts on our left sides. In rare cases though, it's situated on the right side. And one such person lives in this city. Dextrocardia is the medical term for the condition, which means location of the heart in the right side of the thorax, the apex pointing to the right. It can be mirror image or isolated. Anatomist surgeon Marco Aurelio was the first to describe it in 1643. It has an approximate prevalence of 1/10,000 normal population. We present our recent experience with a case of situs inversus totalis (A condition in which there is complete right to left reversal (transposition) of the thoracic and abdominal organs) with dextrocardia.

Shobha Apradh, a patient with this condition, was successfully operated upon in the city last year. Dr. Anand Sancheti, cardiac surgeon from the city, performed this rare awake openheart surgery along with Dr. Sandeep Tambe, anaesthetist. Dr Sancheti said, he has

taken this inspiration from his guru Padma Bhushan Dr M R Girinath, a cardiac surgeon of international repute.



TROUBLED WATERS

City populace has urged the authorities to take stern steps to curb water and air pollution

All that glitters is not gold and all that is sweet may not be all good. Sugar, an everyday commodity adding sweetness to our lives, seems causing some serious damage to environment, thanks to waste released from sugar factories.

It is pertinent to note that recently, thousands of people living along the banks of river Panchganga suffered from gastro, jaundice and dysentery. Even today, many of them are receiving medical treatment.

With a view to resolving the pollution issue, some environmental activists and senior citizens have opined that the collector, in his capacity as district magistrate, should take stern action against units causing water and air pollution. They point out that the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) authorities cleared around four tonnes of dead fish from the Panchganga river. There also have been incidents of sugar factory molasses finding way into drinking water.

Apart from water pollution, air pollution caused by sugar industry is on the rise in western Maharashtra and it has become a major health hazard. Polluted air corrodes buildings, kills vegetation and is a leading contributor to rising levels of greenhouse gas emissions and related climate change. Experts in the field say that not many sugar factories stick to all globally accepted norms as far as water and air pollution are concerned. However, talking to Kolhapur Plus, M R Salger, incharge of cogeneration plant at Bidri sugar factory, says, "We have environment clearance. We have also installed new technology called electro static preceptor (ESP) for highpressure boiler to control ash emission. That would give us carbon credit." Arvind Chandekar, environment control officer, says that main pollution comes from distillery units and not from sugar production.

On their part, farmers wonder as to how the pollution levels keep escalating when all rules and regulations are abided by. They have demanded a probe into the issue to find out facts.

Meanwhile, people are joining hands to fight pollution. Villagers of Kabnoor and Korochi recently took out a morcha to a sugar factory in Shirol tehsil last week seeking closure of the factory boiler, which was emitting huge ash. During discussions with the agitating villagers, Ashok Mane, chief engineer, assured that the boiler would be closed and ESP technology would be used to curb pollution.



A CLARION CALL

At a geological meet held in the city, experts from different countries stressed the need for stepping up efforts to restore and maintain ecological balance

Experts from various countries emphasised the need for concerted efforts to protect environment. Scholars from Bangladesh, Iran, Sri Lanka and different states of India participated in a geological convention held in the city recently. They discussed problems in different parts of the world and tried to find solutions to them.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, M. Rakib Uddin from Khulana University, Bangladesh, said Cyclone Aila, a category-I storm that hit his country in 2009 caused huge devastation. Crops, livestock and fishery businesses over 460 sq km area were affected. "The cyclone had a deep socioeconomic effect on Bangladesh, about which the world community is not adequately aware of," he says.

Dr Mahindre Rupashinge, vice chancellor of Sabaragamuwa University, Sri Lanka, said there is a close connect between nature and human life. This correlation must be kept in mind in every endeavour.

S. B. Manglekar, A. S. Jadhav and J. S. Sawant from department of environmental science, Shivaji University, discussed future groundwater scenario in Kolhapur district, which, according to them, could be alarming. They stressed the need for protecting groundwater to ensure a better tomorrow.

They further said that in recent years in India, there have been issue, pertaining to groundwater contamination, thanks to pollution from natural and human activities. In Kolhapur due to a rapid growth in urbanisation and industrialisation has resulted in depleting groundwater levels besides affecting water quality Unless the problem is taken seriously, Kolhapurians are going to suffer in many ways, they warned.

Kiran Kumbhar, one of the participants, said groundwater in Ichalkaranji region is also polluted owing to textile industries. Data collected at 2,485 borewells and 107 wells over 35 sq km area is testimony to this. He called for efforts to detoxify water table.

A. V. Adnaik and S B Kulkarni spoke about landslide in Konkan. It happened at Pomandi, 15 km from Ratanagiri. They said geological structure of this region is disturbed due to damage to hills and hillocks.

In all, 150 research papers were presented at the conference.



A BRUSH WITH JOY

Sanjay Shelar, a painter from a nondescript village in Radhanagari Tehsil, has made it big. This son of a farmer is indeed reaping rich rewards

He never thought that that his art would pay such huge dividends. Son of a poor village farmer, Sanjay Shelar, painter from Sarawade in Radhanagari tehsil of Kolhapur district, feels that golden days for the painters are here. And he has a reason to feel so. Recently, one of his paintings was sold for over Rs 1 lakh.

After completing his primary education at the village, Sanjay went to the Kala Niketan Mahavidyalay to pursue a course in commercial art. Usually, commercial artists deal with advertisements, designing logos, photography and printing. But Sanjay did not take the trodden path.

Fortunately for him, he came in contact with some talented artists like Arvind Mestry, son of Kalamahrshi Baburao Painter. He hasn't looked back ever since.

Sanjay's 95 paintings, especially portraits, figures and landscapes, have so far gone into private collections in India (70) and abroad (25). In Mumbai, an art collector purchased Sanjay's painting titled 'Waiting' (that shows a beautiful woman waiting near a tree) for Rs 1 lakh.

Sanjay has been hon-oured by the Art Society of India, Bombay Art Society, Maharashtra state and South Central Zone Cultural Centre (SCZCC), Nagpur, with Chandrakant Mandre award and at Lokmanya Tilak art exhibition.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Sanjay said, in October, his solo exhibition would be held at an art gallery in Mumbai.

He said, he had never thought he would come such a long way, both publicity-wise and reward-wise.

In August, Sanjay would team up with young artists from Kolhapur-- Jayashree Magdum, Satish Garghe, Prashant Jadhav and Nikhit Parkhe-- for an expo at the Nehru Art Centre Gallery, Worli, Mumbai. Twenty-five paintings and 15 sculptures in metal and fibre would be displayed there.

Date : 22 July 2008



NO KIDDING, PLEASE

Use of domestic gas cylinders in autorickshaws poses a potential threat to schoolchildren ferried in them. Stern steps are needed to curb this tendency, Subhash Desai reports

Children are our future. However, are authorities tough on people allegedly flouting the safety norms for transport of school going kids in autorickshaws? If the current scenario is any indication, answer to the question is a no.

It is pertinent to note that some children travelling in an autorickshaw had a narrow escape recently, thanks to an alert motorcyclist who noticed smoke emanating from the shredwheeler.

Administration in action : Taking note of the public outrage over the issue, Laxmikant Deshmukh, collector,

recently called a meeting to resolve the cooking gas crisis. Vijaysingh Jadhav, district superintendent of police, D T Pawar, RTO, Sanjay Shinde, district supply officer, and representatives of LPG companies attended the meeting. It was decided to conduct raids to unearth use of cooking gas cylinders in autorick-shaws and at tea stalls and small-time hotels. It was also decided to take steps for creating awareness among people about curbing the misuse of cooking gas.

On February 8, smoke started emanating from the auto (MH 07/C-1404) ferrying school children near the Territorial Army unit at Temblai Hills. When the motorcyclist raised an alarm, auto driver Peter Vijay Shindreta, 38, stopped the vehicle and asked kids to alight immediately. Within minutes, flames engulfed the auto. Kids' belongings including schoolbags, study material and tiffins reduced to cinders.

There was a lot of commotion even as traffic police and fire brigade personnel reached the spot on being informed about the mishap. A lot of people gathered and anxious parents also rushed to the spot. Fortunately, children were all safe.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Rajarampuri police station sources said they have registered a case against the auto driver for illegally using cooking gas cylinder to run his vehicle. Traffic cops have now launched a drive to bring to book autorickshaw drivers using cooking gas cylinders.

While welcoming the drive, people in the city have urged the cops to keep a constant tab on autorickshaws to avert such incidents. According to them, usually such drives go on for a few days but things get back to square one slowly.

There is another aspect of this. Owing to misuse of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders, people in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts have been facing acute shortage of cooking gas for domestic use. Long queues for getting LPG cylinders are common in these districts.

On being contacted, RTO authorities inform that authorised gas kits are used but they are in a small number. They have informed that four squads have been formed to deal with illegal use of cylinders and in the last 10 months, action has been taken against 35 auto drivers for flouting the norms.

Date : 28 February 2012



FINAL JOURNEY

Devachi gadi, the only narrow gauge train in Maharashtra that carried devotees to Pandharpur, made its last trip. farmers had gathered in large numbers to bid adieu to this train

Hundreds of farmers who have travelled in the 'Devachi Gadi' bid adieu to this train on its last journey to Pandharpur at Miraj station on October 14. This only narrow gauge train in Maharashtra will be converted in to broad gauge soon. Started more than 82 small years back, this train carried Varkaris to Pandharpur in large numbers.

Many devotees have travelled from Miraj to Pandharpur in this train. Hence the train was called as 'Devachi Gadi. The fare was also minimum that suited the pockets of the people, most of whom were farmers. They bid adieu to this train on its last trip. They decorated the train with flowers and cane and coconuts.

This route will be converted into broad gauge from next year, till then there will be no train. People are happy too as they will have a comfortable travel on the 137 km long route in lesser time. The train was also called as Barshilight. It never met with an accident. When the train approached the station, passengers would jump and be on the main road. For children too it was an attraction. During rush time for Pandharpur Ashadi or Kartik Wari, devotees would sit a top the train and enjoy nature.

Date : 21 October 2008



A SUGARY SEASON

Sugarcane crushing season has started from Dussera. According to Maharashtra state cooperative sugar factory sangh, factories are expecting 752 lakh metric tonnes of cane this year

Things look buoyant with sugarcane crushing season formally commencing in the district with igniting of boilers on October 1. The

actual crushing at sugar factories started from Dussera. According to the Maharashtra State Cooperative Sugar Factory Sangh, 752 lakh metric tonnes cane crop would be crushed and 87 lakh metric tonnes sugar would be manufactured. Rains staying for a little longer period actually have delayed the crushing season a bit this year. Another factor was availability of manpower. Labourers from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are usually engaged for cane cutting in the district, As both these states had increased labour rates, number of people seeking the job this year reduced. Farm workers from Vidarbha and Marathwada also come to the Western Maharashtra in search of jobs. However, as the regions recorded good rainfall, there is enough work there. The labour problem is being experienced particularly in Kolhapur and Sangli districts.

As far as crushing goes, last year, out of 186 sugar factories in the state, 141 had successfully completed crushing. With a view to supporting sick sugar units, the state government is planning to give financial assistance of Rs 200 crore to 20 of them.

To overcome the labour problem, cane cutting machine has been introduced in the market. Affluent farmers and directors of sugar factories are showing interest in them.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, K P Patil, MLA and chairman of a sugar factory, says he is for observing utility of the machine before purchasing it since it's a big investment. Uday Patil and Sarjerao Desai, sugar mill supervisors, say that land holding of farmers in the district is less and these machines need large land plots. Unless a group of farmers comes together, the cane crop cutting by machine cannot take place.

It is pertinent to note that a mechanic in Bhudergad tahsil has invented a small cane cutting machine that runs on the engine of a motorbike. Such innovations may come in handy for small farmers.

Meanwhile, Raju Shetty, MP and Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana, addressed a meeting at Jaysingpur to discuss sugarcane prices. He has warned of an agitation if the state government failed to give reasonable rates to sugarcane growers.

Date : 19 October 2010



ALL FOR PROGRESS

It's been a brisk progress for Kolhapur in the last decade. And here's a 38-year-old at the helm of Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) affairs who dreams of taking the city forward matching the pace of leading cities in the state. Mayor Sagar Chavan has a number of plans lined up to give a further impetus to the city's growth.

Ever since his college days, Sagar was involved in active politics. He has inherited this trait from his father Pralhad Chavan, former mayor and city Congress unit president.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus on its 3rd anniversary, Sagar says as a first step towards realising his dream, he wants to see Kolhapur competing with Nagpur by 2012 with regards education, health, roads, ecology, drinking water supply and no load-shedding. "City's industrial growth has gained momentum and the new airport will attract national and international companies here. It also means more job opportunities for city youths."

One of the major projects going on in the city is of road development, he says. "Already 49 km roads are being built on build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis. On completion, it's going to change the face of the city" Sagar points out that some environmentalist groups had opposed chopping of trees for the project and moved the court. In its verdict, the court ordered the private company engaged for the project to plant trees to maintain ecological balance. "Things took quite some time to fall in place and as a result, the road project was delayed."

Referring to accidents on the city roads that claimed 19 innocent lives while road construction was in progress, Sagar says it is indeed unfortunate. "Skywalks, bridges and subways are needs of the city well now," he suggests. He is weaware of the public outburst for compensation to the mishap victims and agrees that they should get it.

According to Sagar, local leaders should rise above politics for development. "For city's progress, united and concerted efforts are needed." He also seeks cooperation from all MLAs and MPs as far as

development of Kolhapur goes. "Developmental issues should never be politicised," he opines.

About challenges, Sagar says garbage issue needs to be sorted out on priority. "We have allotted the work to a private company but yes, more and stringent supervision is needed on this front."

Another concern is swine flu. As far as treatment is concerned, the government medical college is taking care of it. He assures that on its part, the civic body will be taking every possible care so that children at all its schools are not affected.

The mayor doesn't forget to mention the cooperation they have been getting from the KMC administration. "Municipal commissioner Vijay Singhal and in fact, each staffer felt that we should demand more funds for development from both the state and the centre. They prepared proposals, submitted them and got them sanctioned."

Sagar recalls how they followed up various issues with the central ministers and got funds sanctioned under the Nagar Utthan Yojana. "It's 'always a teamwork. Without cooperation of each and every citizen, all-round development in true sense can never be achieved," he concludes.

Date : 7 September 2010



THE CLEAN UP IS ON

After identifying about 7,000 unrecorded constructions in the city through satellite images, the Kolhapur Municipal corporation has started drive against such illegal buildings

The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation, with the aid of geographical information system available through satellites, has been able to identify 7,000 unrecorded properties its limits. "It is interesting to note that many medicos, professors, lawyers are among those involved in building these illegal buildings," said an official from the

anti-encroachment department of KMC.

Kolhapur, the fastest developing city in South West Maharashtra, has been facing problem of illegal constructions since long. Till now it was not only difficult to identify such illegal constructions but also almost impossible due to corrupt practices adopted.

According to records with KMC, many citizens have evaded property tax even after five to six of construction. The satellite feeds will now make it possible for KMC to update its property date every six months, enabling it to serve notices to the tax evaders.

Most senior citizens have appreciated this move but feel that the top brass of KMC should move around more in the city because it is only then that they will realise how grave the problem of garbage, health, bad roads and drinking water is.

While serving a warning to encroachers on parking spaces and main roads. Vijay Singhal, municipal commissioner, has said that they better remove these encroachments themselves or the KMC would raze them and charge the expenses to the encroachers. "The KMC deploys workers, JCBs, bulldozers and dumpers during the anti-encroachment drives. The expenses incurred are in thousands everyday We would serve notices to the encroachers and if they fail to deposit the will amount of expenses, KMC not hesitate to file criminal cases against them," said Singhal.

Till now, most encroachments in central Kolhapur have been cleared, still those at Bhavani Mandap near the historic temple, Sai Mandir, Kalamba Road are standing stall.

Meanwhile, welcoming KMC's anti-encroachment drive, MLA Rajesh Kshirsagar and MLC Chandrakant Patil said that the rehabilitation programme should be speedily implemented.

In another development, the affected small traders called upon Satish Patil, minister of state for home and rural development. Patil assured them that the rehabilitation would be done as soon as possible.

Date : 18 January 2011



GAJANANA SHRI GANRAYA...

City is celebrating ganesh utsav with traditional fervour and enthusiasm. There is also an increased awareness about eco-friendly celebrations

Festive fervour has gripped the city during the Ganesh festival that started on Saturday. Besides several ganesh mandals, many households have warmly received the Lord of Wisdom.

Grand decorations and light arrangements of different Ganesh mandals are attracting hordes of devotees, especially in the evening. The city air reverberates with music in the evening as devotional songs are played.

Festivities had actually started ever since Gokulashtami when various mandals organised '**dahi handi**' programmes. Muslim brethren also celebrated Eid in the last week. The city has always been known for unity and religious harmony. Continuing with the rich heritage, people extended greetings to the Muslim brethren during Eid. Also, six masjids are celebrating Ganesh Utsav in Kurundwad.

The upbeat mood is evident in the city markets. Gift shops, shops selling pooja material and music houses are doing a brisk business. "Sales of cassettes and CDs of devotional songs and Ganpati bhajans have picked up during the festival," says a shopkeeper. Even roadside vendors selling flowers and small decorative items are having a nice time.

Anil Belekar, a jeweller, says silver idols of the famous Lalbagcha Raja (Mumbai) and the Dagdusheth Ganpati (Pune) are in big demand every year during Ganeshotsav and this year is no exception.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Laxmikant Deshmukh, collector, says the city is living up to the tradition of peaceful religious festivals. He has called upon citizens, especially youth, to spread the message of unity and peace during the 10-day festival.

Bhagvant More, special inspector general of police (Spl IGP), has lauded the six mosques that are celebrating Ganesh Utsav. It is a

wonderful gesture to put across the message of unity and religious harmony, he says.

There was time when Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols were largely in demand. However, nowadays many people are keen on purchasing clay idols. Janu Kumbhar, an idol-maker, asserts that the number of people asking for earthen images of Lord Ganesha has increased over the years.

Awareness about eco-friendly Ganesh Utsav is indeed growing in the city. With environmentalists and eco organisations leaving no stone unturned to spread awareness about celebrating Ganesh Utsav with wisdom, people are now going in for idols decorated with natural colours. There is also more awareness about not polluting water bodies during the immersion ceremony.

Date : 14 September 2010



BLOOMING BIG TIME

Blessed with sylvan surroundings and myriad hues, the valley of flowers in uttranchal is indeed one of the nature's best creations. Wait, our neighborhood, too, is throwing greener pastures for nature-lovers. A similar flower valley at kas plateau near Satara has a mesmerising magic. Subhash Desai unfolds the bliss of solitude

On earth or at the Garden of Eden, they are always adored for their sheer beauty. Their magnificence adorns the surroundings. The nature, at its best, showers ecstasy and splendor in form of flowers. The blossom draws nature-lovers and so does the Valley of Flowers - nestled in the Western Himalayas - known 'for its sylvan surroundings and myriad hues. Beauty knows no geographical boundaries; it needs an eye to capture it.

Not many are aware that our neighbourhoods, too, are throwing greener pastures for nature-lovers. A similar Valley of Flowers, in the Sahyadri ranges of the Western Ghats at Kas Plateau located between Satara and Mahabaleshwar, is no less charming. It is slowly emerging as a famous tourist hub. Monsoon is indeed the best season to visit the

place as flowers bloom this time around.

However, with visitors thronging in, it may not take too long for the beautiful place to get spoilt. Foreseeing environmental hazards to Kas plateau, nature-lovers' group, Ranvata, has taken upon itself the responsibility to protect environment in the area besides slowly popularising the place. Identifying its rich bio-diversity; endemic plants and rare animal species, the group will also work towards environment conservation. Nature-lover himself and medico Sandie Shrotri heads the group. "It's no less beautiful than the Valley of Flowers. From my medical profession, the beauty of nature pulls me here. Yet environmental issues worry me. We have taken up the task of introducing place to nature-lovers and at the same time, conserving its bio-diversity besides keeping the surroundings clean," Shrotri says.

According to him, Ranavata is motivated by the other groups, which have been doing their bit. The group has good professionals and nature lovers like senior adviser vice-admiral Manohar Awati (Retd.) Vasudev Kulkarni, Dabholkar, Gopal Bodhe, Sharad Abhyankar, Vinayak Shrikhande, Arunrao Godbole, Vibhas Amonkar, Nand Shaha and Avinash Dhakane on its panel.

The place is gradually emerging has a popular tourist hub, Vasudev Kulkarni, a member says. "It was a little known place a few years ago. We want to popularise it more but at the same time want to keep its sanctity. Visitors should be scientific in their ways and environment-friendly," he adds.

The place has a beautiful pond, informs Shrotri. "The flowers in the pond are mistaken as lotuses and or water lilies but they are mere fast-growing water plants called 'Kumud', floating herbs. Orchid's richest variety is found here. Birds too are beautiful and some rare species are spotted. Gray Tit, Blue Jay, Lora, lark, eagle, and kite are all here. Kas is also a host to many reptiles, mammals. The place is blessed with a number of waterfalls, temples and caves," Shrotri concludes.

Date : 14 September 2010



MUJHE BHI JEENE DO

Rampant tree felling is posing a serious threat to environment. Nature-lovers in the city have urged authorities to initiate steps to keep it under control

Wanton felling of trees in the region has become a serious concern for the administration and the environmentalists. Despite the state government making efforts to create awareness among people, the picture is grim in some urban parts.

One of the major reasons behind cutting of trees in urban areas is growing constructions. Several trees are chopped to clear the decks for malls, multiplexes and skyscrapers.

In the city, buildings coming up on Goa road cost around 15 big trees their lives. Many eyebrows were raised as to how it escaped notice of the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) officials concerned. When Shahu stadium in Khasbag area was built, 20 60-year-old trees were allegedly cut.

No doubt there have been rules and regulations in place to curb tree felling. However, their strict implementation is needed, opined the environmentalists here.

As far as tree cutting in cities is concerned, the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd (MSEDCL) is often blamed.

When contacted, MSEDCL officials said that their men chopped tree branches below the overhead power supply lines. The trees are cut to bring them two to three feet below the power lines. However, it is alleged that the contractors appointed for the job cut tree more than what is asked for.

Environmentalist Uday Gaikwad studied 14 roads in the city. He measured 2,950 trees of which eight were of rare species. Rain trees were in large number. The trees, planted in 1970, need proper trimming. But it's seldom done.

The city civic body has earmarked Rs 220 crore for cement roads. However, a lot of trees face threat during the work. Nature

lovers in the city have urged the officials concerned to take necessary steps to ensure that illegal tree felling in the region is curbed.

Date : 29 July 2008



BACK TO THEIR ORIGINS

Bhedik Shahiri, a cult group, explains the creation of the world through songs. This form of art is popular among the rural masses of the district

How the universe was created ? Is the age-old question asked by scientists as well as philosophers. World-renowned Cambridge Mathematician Dr. Stephan Hawking tries to solve the question with the concept of Black Hole. Some scientists say it has come out of a Big Bang. But for religious mind it is the creation of God.

For Indian mind, universe came in to existence out of union of Shiv and Shakti. One cult in Maharashtra, known as Bhedik Shahiri also deliberates on the subject. They have two music groups who argue whether Shiv is superior and cause of the creation of world.

The two sides are known as Kalgi and Tura. The combination of the two. Kalgi-Tura, is very popular among rural population in Maharashtra. The poets have written on deep philosophical questions. Each poem lasts for an hour. Here Kalgi boasts to have

Shakti, female part more powerful than men and Tura pleads that Brahma is superior to female in world.

Ultimately, both parties agree that both Shiva (male) and Shakti (female) are important. Anand Giri, chief of Surbhi Group at Apti village in Panhala tehsil of Kolhapur district, is devoted to this Kalgi-Tura bhedik heritage of singing. He says, "This cult is still alive in Karnataka, Malva, and Madhya Pradesh. In Karnataka, even women take part in singing."

During Peshwai period, Ram Joshi, Parshuram, Saganbhau, Honaji Bala, Prabhakar and Anant Fandi were very famous 'Shahirs'. Poet Haibati was born in Satara district, Shambhu in Sangli district and their Muslim friend Raju Tamboli became their companion.

Poet Digambar wrote spiritual themes, like six tigers, five threaded bag, daughter, her eighteen children. The hidden meaning is six vices, begging bowl, Maya and 18 puranas.

Anand Giri, Shahaji Giri, Pandit Kanale, Vishwas, Patil, Ratan Hulaswar had organised 25 mahotsavas of south Maharashtra Bhedik Shahirs. Thousands of people attend the mahotsavas though it is an old folk dance and music form.

Surabhi group also spreads social message through their poetry like 'Lek Wachava Abhiyan' - save girl child.

Date : 29 July 2008



FINAL SETTLEMENT ?

While banks in district are preparing the final list of farmers who will be benefited by loan waiver, some people think the move will protect cheaters

The loan waiver for small and marginal farmers announced by the Central Government is not just a mere announcement, it seems. For, banks in Maharashtra are preparing the final list of farmers who will be benefited by this move.

However, MLA Raju Shetye, leader of Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana is not convinced and terms the loan waiver as a bogus scheme. He says "The loan waiver is beneficial for those who have not repaid the loans. On the other hand sincere farmers will be made accountable. Those who had taken loans by fraudulent ways will be given waiver." Shetye has declared a huge morcha on the district collectorate in the first week of July demanding loan waiver for all the farmers in the state.

The banks have declared that dairy farming and lift irrigations schemes have been dropped from the list and hence they will not get the benefit of the waiver. This will mean a loss of Rs 30 crore for Kolhapur District Central Co-operative Bank. With this, 10,000 farmers are out of the list.

Newly-appointed District Collector Chandrakan Jadhav, who

hails from the district and has a good knowledge of farmers' problems, has ordered banks to expedite the work of preparing the final list of beneficiary farmers. According to him, only 20 percent work is complete. Banks are now inquiring into disbursal of loans to persons who have no agricultural lands in their name. Sarjerao Ghatge, a landlord in Bhudergad tehsil, says, chairpersons and bank directors should be held responsible and be punished for the fraud.

Last week, Shetkari Kamgar Party had submitted a memorandum to DV Walvi, additional district collector of Kolhapur, in which it demanded waiver for dairy farming and sincere farmers. The party has also warned of agitation in front of collector's office if the demand is not met.

Neelima Gaikwad, DDR of operative department, Hatkangale tehsil, is optimistic about the outcome. According to her, the government decision will help improve the ailing co-operative sector in the state and all the district banks and credit societies will become financially strong. She also suggested that the NABARD, district banks and credit societies should reduce the interest rate to two per cent each, then only the farmers will become strong enough to survive.

Date : 24 June 2008



SHAHU JAYANTI CELEBRATED

This year's Rajashree Shahu award was given to Bhalchandra Munekar, planning commission

The birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shahumaharaj was celebrated with traditional fervour and enthusiasm in the district. This year Rajashree Shahu award was given to Bhalchandra Munekar, member of Planning Commission. Harshwardhan Patil, district guardian minister presented the award. comprising Rs. 50,000 cash and memento, to Munekar at a function held at Shahu memorial hall Babasaheb Kupekar, speaker of the state assembly.

Speaking at the function, Munekar said 'If we want to take our state and nation on the road of equality and development we have to follow the path shown by Mahatma Phule, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj

and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. I am a humble follower Phule-Ambedkar Shahu. For me, Shahu Award is equivalent to a Nobel," he said.

N D Patil, senior leader of PWP DiLip Jadhav, district collector and Nanasaheb Gath; president of 'Lilly Parishad, also spoke.

Date : 1 July 2008



WOMEN'S OWN

The number of girls coming to the city for education and jobs is increasing constantly. There aren't many good hostels for them to stay though

With the city moving on the progress path, people from nearby areas keep pouring in to pursue their education and also in search of jobs. Nowadays, women, too, are working along with men in almost all fields and aren't averse to staying away from their homes in pursuit of careers.

The city has three industrial zones - Shirol, Gokul Shirgoan and Shivaji Udyam Nagar - that throw open a lot of employment opportunities. Women who come here to do jobs prefer to stay at hostels to putting up at their kin's place.

The Shivaji University and some NGOs have built some women's hostels. The District Secondary and Higher Secondary School Head-masters' Organisation has also run a hostel near the race course round ground. It offers good lodging and boarding arrangement as well as medical assistance. However, managing their finances is also a major issue for those who are new into their jobs. As many of them are not able to pay high charges of private hostels, the university's ladies' hostel emerges as a good option. The inmates of this hostel felt that the facilities there should be upgraded. The building is 30-year-old and is not in the best of shape.

The Shivaji University has launched hostel project for women. Its cost is estimated at Rs 1.50 crore. The new hostel would accommodate 500 girls. The work is in progress and expected to be

finished in a few months.

In spite of this, it remains a fact that the city needs more women's hostels as the number of women coming to the city for education and jobs is increasing.

Date : 1 July 2008



THE BITTER PILL

A probe panel has found 10 persons guilty in the outdated medicine scam that has rocked the zilla parishad here. Outdated drugs seized from four godowns included polio vaccines worth rs 28,350

The issue of outdated medicines stormed the recently-held general body meeting of Kolhapur Zilla Parishad (ZP) even as the office-bearers decided recover the scam amount after fixing the responsibility persons concerned.

This could, probably, be the first event in the history of zilla parishads in Maharashtra when two district health officers (DHOs) and pharmacists were found guilty. It was noticed that dated medicines worth Rs. 2.59,524 were stored in four godowns.

The irregularity came to the fore after an NGO, Parivartan, visited four godowns of ZP and found the outdated medicines there. A four-member enquiry committee was later formed to look into the matter. Recently, the probe panel submitted its 200-page report to Sangram Kupekar, chairman of the ZP's health committee.

The report, which was read at the general body meeting, held 10 persons guilty. They are : Dr. D. A. More, DHO, Dr. H. H. Chavan, ex-DHO, Dr. C. J. Shinde, additional DHO, Dr. R. B. Mugade, Harshala Vedak and pharmacists N. H. Sonvane, R. S. Pole, S. S. Munde, R. J. Kurane and A. A. Kulkarni. The scam amount would be recovered from them.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Nansaheb Gath, ZP president, said that two persons have already been placed under suspension. However, Dhyrashil Mane, ZP member, reacted saying that only the lower rung

employees were punished.

Sanjay Patil of Parivartan said, "It is shocking that ZP had not maintained a record of medicines for the last 10 years. It is also possible that every year medicines were purchased and sold out in open market. It is a serious thing that nobody knows whether the outdated polio vaccines were administered to kids." Outdated polio vaccines worth Rs 28,350 were found in the godowns.

Asmita Hilge, a lawyer, said that criminal cases should be registered against the guilty Mere suspension is not enough, she added.

Date : 8 July 2008



BULLISH TREND

Cattle bazaars at Murgud and Khasundi witness turnovers of lakhs of rupees. Subhash Desai reports

For a cultivator, it's no small task to purchase a bull to plough the field and a cow or a buffalo for the supplementary dairy business. Usually, a pair of good bulls costs around Rs 1,25,000. No wonder then that farmers tread as cautiously as an urbanite would while buying a high-end car.

Animal bazaars at Murgud in Kolhapur district and Khasundi in Sangali district draw hordes of farmers. The animal bazaar at Murgud has been going on ever since the British Raj. Since it's a bordering village, farmers from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka also frequent it along with their Maharashtra counterparts.

Transactions here run into lakhs of rupees even as hundreds of animals are sold and purchased. With the hike in milk rates owing to various factors, cattle rates have also gone up. Earlier, a cow or a buffalo would be available for Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000. Today, it comes for no less than Rs 40,000.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Santosh Bhosale, an educated farmer, says Municipal Council now looks after the animal bazaar at Murgud.

The civic body has provided basic amenities like adequate water and sheds, which is a good thing for farmers. It's also a source of income for the municipal council.

Sanjay Gurav, a farmer from Kagal, says last the price for a pair of bulls was Rs 1,25,000. Vishnu Patil, progressive farmer from Yamge village, bought the pair. He further says it's not about the price factor only Farmers have to take good care of the animals.

Another big cattle bazaar in South Maharashtra is held at Khasundi in Khanapur tehsil of Sangali district. It is held annually during Sidhanath Yatra. Ananda Salunkhe, a farmer, says this is probably only place in the country where people pray to god for getting the best pair of bulls. "Even when our animal is stolen, we pray offering wooden bulls to god and people believe that their prayers are then answered," he concludes.

Date : 14 June 2011



DIWALI DHAMAKA

*It's time to take a break from otherwise hectic schedules and chill out. City is celebrating Diwali with a lot of fervour; **Subhash Desai** reports*

The Festival of Light is here and zest is in the air. Every home will be soon adorned with glittering lamps and dazzling smiles. In today's fast-paced world, festivals like Diwali indeed bring a whiff of fresh air.

It's time to take a break from otherwise hectic schedules and chill out with friends and kin. Calorie charts and fitness schedules will be pushed back for a while. After all, Diwali is time to relish sweets, done best of the costumes and have fun to the hilt.

City markets are all abuzz. People dealing in readymade garments, white goods, jewellery, sweets and crackers have their hands of Many people reserve their purchases for the festive period. Several property deals are also sealed on Dussera and during Diwali and Dhanteras is considered auspicious to buy gold.

With government employees and even some private sector personnel getting special festival allowances, the mood is upbeat.

Shops in the city have put on display attractive Aakash Diyas in a variety of shapes and sizes. Shopkeepers at markets like Paan Line, Mahadwar Road, Rajarampuri, corporation square, Bhavani Mandap and Bajar Gate are doing brisk business. Gundu Chavan, a shop owner near the corporation building says, "We purchase Aakash Diyas from Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Nagapur, Tamil Nadu and Bengal. This year, we are having good business this time around.

Rangoli adds to the grace of the festival. Almost every zousehold spreads this colourful welcome to guests. Shops selling rangoli also have customers flocking in. Along with rangoli, people often buy rangoli stickers.

Keeping Diwali in mind, sugar factories are giving sugar at subsidised rates to its members. Pulses, edible oil and dry fruits are in demand and grocery merchants are witnessing good sales. Almost all major sweet vendors have set up special counters to cater to the Diwali demand. Juicy sweets are beckoning customers from showcases.

According to people dealing in firecrackers, awareness among people is growing and most of the citizens are shunning crackers with high decibel levels. Nowadays, people go in for fancy items, which is a good development. On their part, environmentalists are spreading the message of Green Diwali.

Two and four-wheeler showrooms as well as shops selling television sets, music systems and refrigerators are getting customers in bulk. Electronic good and gizmos are also in demand since Diwali gifting is gaining wider proportions. Apart from traditional gifts like sweets, dry fruits and chocolates, many people are opting from electronic gadgets and gizmos to gift them to their relatives and close friends.

Readymade garment stores and cloth shops at Shahu Market, Gandhinagar and Rajarampuri are attracting customers. Gujar Lane, which is famous for gold and ornaments is also glittering.

What are you waiting for, then ? Pick up your shopping bag and have fun!

Date : 25 October 2011



SOOTHING STROKES

With his painting skills vivek shinde has coloured a sleepy village in Kolhapur district with glory

He hails from Bachani, a small village, which not many have even heard of. With his achievements, Vivek Shinde, an artist, has brought laurels to this nondescript place.

Fighting all odds, Vivek has grown to become a name well-known in art circles, book publishing and greeting card companies nationally

His work so far is worth a mention. Eighty calendar designs for a Sivkashi-based company, 400 greeting card designs printed in Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai and 200 books having his cover pages designs. His paintings have been appreciated widely in Mumbai, Pune, Delhi and Bangalore. He has indeed progressed by leaps and bounds.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Vivek says his exhibition of 20 oil and acrylic landscapes received a good response in the city. The expo was held in the first week of March. He has been holding painting exhibitions since 2000. The subjects of his paintings, almost invariably, have rural background. Using transparent water colours, he has been successfully creating the effect of different textures in acrylic and oil painting on canvases.

This art diploma-holder from Kalaniketan Art College attributes his success to eminent artists in the city including G Kamble, S Vilas and S Nimbalker.

A Pune-based publisher is set to come out with a book - Water in water - based on Vivek Shinde's landscapes.

Date : 17 March 2009



OPEN YOUR EYES

Experts say that awareness about eye care needs to be spread in the district, particularly in the rural parts

People in Kolhapur district, in general, are not too conscious about eye care. The awareness is not there especially in rural areas. Even in urban parts, according to medical experts, many people with diabetes or hypertension don't essentially go for regular eye check-ups.

With a wide use of computers, the problem has only worsened. Now many youngsters are also complaining about eye disorders. According to eye specialists, the number of school-going children having to use spectacles is growing.

Dr. Atul Joglekar, also an ophthalmologist, says earlier, advanced diagnosis, treatment and surgical facilities for eye disorders was not available in this part of the state. However, now it is.

"It's important to spread awareness about eye care. Prevention is better than cure. The role of schools and non-government organisations is crucial in this regard." he adds.

Accidental injuries to eye are also now treated in Kolhapur. Retina can be affected by diabetes or can get detached due to injury or spontaneously leading to blindness. Previously, the patients have to rush to big cities like Pune or Mumbai to get the treatment.

"Everyone, kids and old people in particular, need to take proper precautions to protect eyes. It's a vital and delicate organ. If timely steps are not taken, one's vision might be affected forever," says Dr Shanware, an eye specialist.

***Take care :** Don't strain your eyes. Take breaks at regular intervals if you have to sit in front of computers for hours. Wash your eyes at least twice a day, especially after travelling long distances. Yoga exercises for eyes help greatly. Don't use eyedrops/medicines without consulting your physician.*

Date : 17 February 2009



YES WE CAN !

He makes no secret of his admiration for barack obama. Laxmikant deshmukh, kolhapur collector, says he too is resolved to make a difference in his own capacity

Many found Barack Obama's presidential and congressional speeches very balanced and striking the right chord. Here's an admirer

of the new president of America. Laxmikant Deshmukh, Kolhapur collector, has drawn his inspiration from the now-famous Yes-we-can and is determined to make a difference in the district administration. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Deshmukh says, "I am inspired by Obama's message 'yes we can' and am going to implement it as the district administration head."

An IAS officer of the 1996 batch, Deshmukh has also authored 10 books. Earlier, he was the director of sports. He dreams of implementing the Panchayat Yuva Khel Abhiyan, a sports drive, for which the Union government has earmarked Rs 50 crore. In all, 2,880 villages in the state are selected under it. In Kolhapur district, the campaign will be launched in 120 villages and 500 sport centers would be opened. Five sports - kabaddi, volleyball, kho kho, football, Mallakhamb and Yoga - would be taught at these centres. Local sports coaches would be appointed.

Deshmukh is also planning to make the revenue department high-tech right from the talathis to clerks. The district superintendent of police had informed Deshmukh that there was no remarkable progress in 'Tanta Mukta Gaon' (dispute-free village). The latter has now decided to visit each and every village during his tenure here to pursue the scheme.

"I want to start a marathon race here on the lines of Pune and Nagpur and also take Kolhapuri chappals to different parts of the globe," he says.



CRAFTING SUCCESS

Asmita Potdar, a schoolteacher from the city, has bagged a national embroidery award

Asmita Arun Potdar, a schoolteacher, has done the city proud by bagging a prize at the national embroidery competition. The cash award of Rs 1 lakh will be given at a function to be held in Delhi soon.

The Minister of Textiles, Government of India, had organised the competition. Asmita won the coveted award bestowed on master craftsmen. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Asmita says, she took early interest in embroidery "I started doing it when I was 12. The award has

come as a big satisfaction and encouragement," she says.

"Embroidery is popular all over the world. For Indian women, the art is an expression of their emotions, ideas and religious attitude," she adds. This is not the first award she has bagged. Besides a national merit award in 1999 and winning an all-India embroidery contest in 2005, she has several statelevel awards to her credit.

Asmita is a creative teacher who keeps motivating students and honing their artistic skills. Under her guidance schoolgirls have drawn 105 water-colour paintings on the life of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi. She also egged them on to draw paintings on the life of Mahatma Gandhi and Sant Gadge Baba. All these paintings were on show at an expo.

Elaborating on the art, Asmita says, "A one metre grey cotton cloth is needed. It is washed and fixed on a wooden ring to make designs using needles. Stitching starts with dark colours and faint colours are introduced with long and short stitches." In her recent work on a Rajasthani farmer, Asmita has used 40 different shades of threads. It took her six months to complete. She used to work for four hours everyday. What about teaching the art to college girls? "Frankly, not many have the patience needed to pursue the art," she smiles.

Meanwhile, colleagues and students of Maharani Laxmibai Girls' High School have congratulated her on her achievement.

Date : 3 March 2009



POLL FEVER MOUNTS

While south samrat nagar centre in the city has the highest number of voters-1,758, Chikewadi in Radhanagari tehsil has the lowest at 28

This time around, there's a slight change. Some areas in Sangli and Walva tehsil have been included in the Hatkanangale Lok Sabha segment

Battlelines are being drawn as the general elections are drawing closer. While various parties are busy on their poll strategies, campaigning details are being worked out.

The Kolhapur district administration is gearing up for the Parliamentary elections in two constituencies - Kolhapur and

Hatkanangale. While 15,78,809 voters are expected to exercise their franchise in Kolhapur, the number is 14,66,314 in Hatkanangale. They will cast their votes at 1,769 and 1,582 centres in Kolhapur and Hatkanangale, respectively.

This time around, there's a slight change. Some areas in Sangli and Walva tehsil have been included in Hatkanangale Lok Sabha segment.

The number of voters at South Samrat Nagar centre in the city is 1,758, the highest in these two Parliamentary constituencies while it is the lowest, 28, at Chikewadi centre in Radhanagari tehsil.

Voting will be held on April 23 and counting of votes will be done on May 16. The will fate of the candidates thus be sealed in the ballot boxes for around three weeks.

Talking to Kolhapur Plus, the officials monitoring the process said they are all prepared for the elections. New poll guidelines say that the government establishments including school and college buildings will not have any election material displayed.

When asked about poll expenditures, they said, every candidate is supposed to submit details of expenditures to the district election officer who will forward the same to the Election Commission.



WHAT A SHOW !

Thousands of shepherds gather every year at Pattankadoli in district for a five-day festival. It makes Kolhapur, Sangli, Belgaum and Vijapur districts reverberate with drums, trumpets and songs

Scores of people from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka recently gathered in the city to hear predictions about their crops, rain and health. Farande Baba, a 70-year-old whom the shepherd community members revere, guided them.

The annual event that takes place at Pattankadoli village, 20 kms from here showcases a typical tribal culture. Most of the people who pour in are from the shepherd community. They gather near the Vitthal Birdev temple.

The five-day programme makes Kolhapur, Sangli and Belgaum and Vijapur districts in Maharashtra and Karnataka reverberate with

shepherd's drums, trumpets and songs.

Kailash Chandra Malhotra, a research scholar from Kolkata, has studied the shepherds' culture in detail. Born in Rawalpindi, Malhotra came to Kolhapur to study life and culture of the shepherd community. He visited almost all districts of Maharashtra and stayed with the community members.

Malhotra's research reveals that even today, roughly half of the community populace lives in jungles. Their children are often deprived of education. With the grassland reducing, they are facing problems not only to feed goats but also families.

Since time immemorial, they have been worshipping Birdev and seek his blessings. They adore Ahilyabai Holker as a deity. The Rani of Indore was known for her generous donations to religious cause. Erstwhile Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj arranged an intercaste marriage between princess of Kagal and Yashvantrao Holker of Indore. It was a social revolution a hundred years ago.

The shepherd community had a deep knowledge of herbs in jungles. Their other occupation is selling woolen blankets. They keep singing songs to break the monotony of daily routine. The songs, usually, deal with the glorious past of the community.

The traditional shepherd dance with loud drum is called 'Gajnrutya'. It's performed during the five-day festival that falls in October. Farande Baba comes on foot from Anjangao to Pattankadoli to guide them. He is received with great enthusiasm and taken to the temple in procession where he guided them. People listen to him with all devotion.

This year he predicted a global conflict and told them that red color grains would be costlier. He asked them to serve the humanity and god would save them.

Date : 18 November 2008



FOR YOU, LITTLE ONES

The zilla parishad here has decided to run a 21-day project for under nourished children in the district

It's a special day November 14, the birth anniversary of Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, first Prime Minister of India popular as Chacha Nehru among kids. It's observed as Children's Day. It's now a proud

day too as the tricolour reached the surface of the moon. November 14 is also the World Diabetes Day.

The zilla parishad (ZP) here came up with a special gift for kids on Children's Day this year. It has decided to implement a 21-day programme for undernourished children in district whose per capita income is highest not only in the state but also in the country. This is a positive development as the administration often pooh-poohed the fact that undernourished children were in alarming number in district. On the contrary they used to say it was in Gadchiroli district of Vidarbha.

However, Sangramsingh Kupekar, Kolhapur ZP health committee chairman, realised seriousness of the problem and decided to implement the 21- day programme to address it. Under-nourished kids will get milk, sugar, vitamins, curd, boiled eggs, multivitamin drops and syrup to meet their nutritional needs. Besides, the mothers will be given stipend of Rs 60 per head everyday. Each health center in district is allotted Rs 25,000 for this.

A few cheers have also come along for some desolate children. Under Tushar Gandhi's guidance, an organisation - Anna, Vastra, Nivara (AVANI) - freed around 150 children working as labourers in different fields. Anuradha Bhosale, AVANI Vice President, said, parents of 98 percent of these children were drug addicts. The kids had to work to support their families. They were deprived of primarily education. The organisation is now supporting their education.

There are a few other non-government organisations (NGOs) working for children. Sadhna Zadbuke, director of Samvedana, has been leading a dedicated group working for AIDS-infected children. Such children are exploited every where in society she said. However she appreciated state government's effort to establish child right commission.

Sheetal Bhagvat founder of Harshnil Manav Seva Kendra claimed that she has adopted ten orphan children and giving them food, shelter and education through public donation she complained for having no government donation.

The many NGO's specially run by well women are working very for deprived children in Kolhapur district but the child and women welfare department of state government is worried about the increasing bribery cases on the clerks and even officers. Very little time is left for them for welfare of the children.

Date : 18 November 2008



HOW TO WRITE NEWS



KOLHAPUR DIARY

Hospital raided

A team led by C B Pawar, District Civil Surgeon, recently raided a hospital at Peth Wadgaon in Kolhapur district. There were complaints that illegal sex determination tests were conducted there. The raid team sealed the sonography machine at the hospital. Reports have it that papers pertaining to 44 abortion cases were found during the raid.

Man drowns

A 48-year-old man drowned at Senapati Kapshi village recently. The man, identified as Anant Ramchandra Hawal, was found dead in the lake near the village bus stand. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Further investigations are in progress.

People's plea

Residents of the city have urged the civic body to maintain cleanliness during the monsoon. According to them, heaps of garbage

in different parts of the city may pose health hazards during the rainy season. They have called upon the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMCO) officials concerned to look into the matter.

Freak mishap claims life

A 35-year-old man was killed in an accident at an unfinished bridge near the Temblai railway gate, in the absence of any sign-board, the motorcyclist took the road leading to the half-done bridge and fell on the ground. He died on the spot. People in the area have demanded inquiry into the mishap even as a case of accidental death has been registered.

Date : 5 July 2011

Tributes paid to Vivekananda

The 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at various places in the city on January 12. Kolhapur Investors' Association organised a lecture of Subhash Desai. Ravindra Rathod presided over the programme while Prakash Sanghvi, Mahesh Dharmadhikari, Manish Zavar and Ashok Potnis were prominently present. NSS wing of Commerce college held screening of a documentary on Vivekananda. V V Patil was in the chair.

Developmental issues discussed

Manukumar Shrivastav, district guardian secretary, recently called a meeting of officials to take stock of developmental works. The meeting was held at Tararani hall. Addressing the officials, he said that 78 per cent of the funds sanctioned were used and expected the remaining amount would be spent before the end of the current financial year.

Health check-up camp

A health check-up camp was held in the city recently under the auspices of the Indian Territorial Army 109 Infantry Battalion. The camp was aimed at extending medical facilities to people in the region. Col Vijay Manvel, commanding officer, told Kolhapur Plus that around 11,00 men, women and children benefitted from the camp.

Date : 17 January 2012

Traffic cops' drive

City traffic police recently launched a drive against vehicles displaying registration number plates not in line with the rules. Action was taken against a number of people during the drive. While many of them had displayed their vehicle registration numbers in fancy manners, others had put their names on the plate instead of numbers. The drive was launched following incidents of using vehicles with bogus number plates for crime.

Kavale congratulated

Kadambari Kavale is being congratulated on her election as Mayor of the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) recently. Kavale was elected unopposed as the 37 Mayor of the city. She has expressed her resolve to strive for all-round development of the city and sought cooperation of one and all in his endeavour.

World Health Day observed

A rally was organised in the city recently to mark the World Health Day. It was aimed at creating awareness among people about Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Prominent among those who participated included V R Londhe, district sessions judge, Yogesh Rane and Dr Arun Kovale besides nurses and NCC cadets.

Traders' protest

Retailers and merchants in the city kept their shops and establishments closed for a day recently to register their protest against the move to open retail markers for foreign players. The protesting traders said local businesses would be badly affected if that happened. According to reports, business worth Rs 10 to 15 crore was affected due to the bandh.

Date :

SU students' meet

'Shodh Marathi Manacha', a two-day programme for students at the Shivaji University (SU), concluded here recently. Sushilkumar Shinde, Union Energy Minister, inaugurated it. Addressing the students, Suhas Kakade, US-based industrialist, called upon the Marathi to break the shackles and progress. Manikrao Salunkhe, SU

Vice Chancellor, P N Patil, MLA, Satej Patil and Malojiraje, Shahu Maharaj were prominently present.

City lad shines

Aniruddha Arvind Kandekar of the city has completed his M.Tech. in mechanical engineering from IIT Kharagpur. The 25-year-old did his SSC from the Maharashtra High School and HSC from New College in the city. All through his academic career, he was in the first 10. Aniruddha said he drew his inspiration from R S Patil, his maternal uncle who was at IIT Madras in the 1980s, and his cousin Nishant Patil, an alumni of IIT Mumbai. He attributes his success to his father Arvind and mother Anisha. He said he wanted to use his knowledge for industrial development of Western Maharashtra.

Patrakar Din

Various programmes were held recently in the city to mark Patrakar Din. The Kolhapur Marathi Patrakar Sangh honoured veteran journalists Sopan Patil, Prabhakar Kulkarni, Shivaji Yadav, Anil Velhal and Charu Joshi and newspaper distributor Nana Natu with 'Jeevan Gaurav' award. Rajiv Sathe was in the chair. At another function, Dilu Damle, senior scribe, guided the gathering. At Shivaji University, Manikrao Salunkhe, vice chancellor, presided over the Darpan Day programme while Subhash Desai was the chief guest. Prakash Kalme, head of journalism department, also spoke.

Spinning mill at Dindnerli

A spinning mill will soon start at Dindnerli in Karveer tehsil of the district. P N Patil, MLA, said the mill would generate jobs for 1,500 people in the region. A mill had its trial run recently.

2,157 trees to be chopped ?

An internal road project of the civic body is set to affect 5,000 trees. In the first phase of the project - to be implemented on build-operate-transfer basis, 2,157 trees would be chopped. The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) has issued a public notice seeking objections/suggestions. Environmentalists in the city are demanding planting of new trees before the chopping starts.

Date : 20 January 2009

No power, no water

Residents of Kolhapur had to struggle for water recently. The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) officials say the water supply was disrupted due to load-shedding and heavy water leakages. As the water level in Panchganga River has gone down, Balinga, Shinganapur and Kasba Bavda pumping stations were closed.

40 television sets damaged

Forty television sets were damaged at Nanibichikhali village in Kagal tehsil after lightning struck an electricity pole. Fortunately, four people who were standing nearby escaped unhurt. The district witnessed thunderstorms at many places.

Jyotiba Yatra

Lakhs of devotees attended the Jyotiba Yatra near Panhala, 20 kms from the city. The yatra is held on Chaitra Pournima. Besides from different parts of Maharashtra, devotees from states including Andhra Pradesh, Karnatak and Goa came in large numbers. To maintain law and order, 83 police officers and 900 policemen were posted.

Date : 14 April 2009

'Kahani Ghadyalachi' released

'Kahani Ghadyalachi' (Story of a watch), penned by Datta Umaranikar, was released recently. Umaranikar has written a number of books on scientific subjects. Speaking at the book release function, Sunilkumar Lavate, principal of Mahaveer College, said the book was useful for both children and elderly people. Satish Lalit and Rahul Kulkarni were prominently present.

Film festival inaugurated

International film festival was inaugurated under the aegis of Baburao Painter Film Society here on June 3. Veteran Marathi actor Sulochana, Sachin Khedekar, Amol Gupte, Kiran Shantaram, Bhanu Athayya and district collector Deshmukh were prominently present on the occasion. Athayya was awarded 'Jeevan Guarav Puraskar' at the award.

Sowing operations begin

Farming community in the district is busy with sowing seeds as monsoon is drawing closer. This pre-monsoon sowing is called 'dhulwaf perani'. Agriculture department sources have informed that stocks of seeds and fertilisers are enough to meet demands of farmers in district. Kolhapur district is famous for production of cane crop and paddy. Total area under kharip crop in the district is 3,89,600 hectares.

Brown sugar seized, 3 held

Kolhapur police arrested three persons and seized brown sugar, worth of which is Rs 20 lakh in international market, from them. Acting on a tip-off, the cops rounded up the trio at the central bus stand. They had hidden the material in pouches stuffed in water bags, police said.

Vivekananda Kendra unit

A new branch of the Kanyakumari - based Vivekananda Kendra was inaugurated here recently. Senior journalist Subhash Desai was the chief - guest on the occasion. In his speech, Desai stressed the need for following Swami Vivekananda's message of respecting all religions.

A book on Vivekananda and Swatantryaveer Sawarkar was released at the programme. Prominent among those present at the programme included Paras Oswal, Suhas Deshpande and Nanivadekar.

Marriageable youth meet

For the first time in Kolhapur, Kar-A-Haj Charitable Trust has organised a three-day free get-together of marriageables from Muslim community living in Maharashtra and Karnataka. The get - together commenced from June 8 and will conclude on June 10. At the programme, pictures and biodatas of the eligible candidates are being displayed on an LCD projector screen. On the first day, a slideshow presentation was made on the marriageables. On second day, the first session will be dedicated to providing details on divorced people, while in the second session, information will be displayed on physically handicapped marriageables and those in the age group 30-60.

On the third day, marriages will be solemnised for needy couples and for those whose marriages have been fixed during the first two days.

Akbar Bhusari, President, and Haji Mangole, Vice-president of Kar-A-Haj Charitable Trust have appealed people from Muslim community to participate in the get-together.

Date : 9 June 2009

Ratnappa Kumbhar remembered

Rich tributes were paid to late Ratnappa Kumbhar, freedom fighter and member of the constitution committee, at various programmes held in district to observe his ninth death anniversary. A life-size statue of the leader was unveiled at Panchganga sugar factory at Ichalkaranji. At Sangaon in Kagal tehsil, programmes were held at a high school and a primary school. A medical camp was held at Shastrinager.

Yoga camp at Sangli

A Yoga camp is being organised at Sangli. Famous Yoga guru Swami Ramdeo is guiding the participants at the camp that started on December 26 and will conclude on December 31.

Voters'double entries dropped

The election commission has asked the district administration to cancel as many as 70,000 names from the voters' lists as they had double entries. Shivajirao Kadabane, Deputy Collector, told media persons that these people are likely to get show-cause notices.

Silver jubilee programme

Various programmes are being organised to mark the silver jubilee of D Y Patil college of engineering. A get-together of past students was held at Kasbabavada. The varsity sources told Kolhapur Plus that the college - founded on August 6, 1984 will be holding several programmes in the silver jubilee year. The college has got ISO 9001 certification.

Shyamrao Desale passes away

Shyamrao Yadavrao Desale alias Desale Kaka, a prominent citizen of the city, passed away recently. He was 73. An engineer by profession, he originally hailed from Dhule. He leaves behind wife and two daughters to mourn the loss.

Date :

Nursing students affected by Dengue

Total 19 girl students of nursing course at government hospital CPR are under treatment for dreaded dengue fever. A special section has been opened to treat them. Alleged uncleanliness in the hospital premises is being reported as the cause. 'According to hospital sources, their condition is improving.

Prasad by post

Now you can get Prasad of Shri Mahalakxumi at your doorstep by post. You have to deposit Rs 60 in any branch of the post offices in Goa or in Maharashtra, Supritendent of Post Nivasrao told mediamen. He said that people will get photos, khismis kaju, kunkum and haldi as prasad.

New train

Kolhapur Rajkot new train for Diwali winter has been introduced. Reservation has started -,since October 5. This train will run between Rajkot and Kolhapur between October to January eight times per month, told sources from the Railways.

Clean chit for registrar

Former suspended registrar of Shivaji University S N Desai was suspended in a bribery case in university appointment. This happened in 2005-6. Mumbai High Court has given him a clean chit.

Protest against municipal taxes

The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) administration has served notices to citizens of Kolhapur for house tax. They have been increased four times, *for ex.* a shop of 300 sq. feet is charged Rs. 20,000 per year.

Citizens and NGOs are protesting against this hike and have appealed people not to accept the notices.

Bhavgeet and rangoli competition

On the occasion of 'Dasara Mahotsav, Government of Maharashtra organised Bhavgeet and Rangoli competition at Deval Club, Kolhapur. The prizes declared by District Collector and President of Dasara Mahotsav Dilip Patil were Rs 3,000, Rs 2,000, and

Rs 1,000 thousand for Rangoli completion and Rs 1,000, Rs 700 and Rs 501. Other prizes were worth Rs 251 and Rs 101.

Kala Academy formed

In the name of late Kalamaharshi Ganpatrao Wadangekar an academy has been formed at Shahaji Law College Stadium, Kolhapur. Students will be taught diffeent forms of art, Ashok Wadangekar told Kolhapur Plus.

Date : 14 October 2009

Philosophers meet

The Maharashtra Taywadyan Parishad (a state philosophical conference) would celebrate its silver jubilee function at Shivaji University campus, Kolhapur on November 6,7 and 8, co-president of the Parishad J R Dabole told Kolhapur Plus. He said noted thinker Raysaheb Kasbe would be the president for three days while PWP leader Prof N D Patil is the president of reception committee. There would be about 170 participants from all over Maharashtra. The subjects that would be discussed are 'methods of philosophy' and 'philosophy of revolt'. Maharashtra minister of non-conventional energy Vinay Kore is one of the main patrons of the conference.

Social worker on hunger stir

A social worker of Radhanagari tehsil, Pralhad Eknath Ekavade has begun his indefinite fast to protest against privatisation of historical Radhanagari irrigation dam and hydroelectric project. Nayab tahsildar Sunita Munde visited the sight and requested Ekavade to end his fast. However, he refused the request. His plea is that the private company has done tree cutting and is building a huge rest house cum hotel at the dam sight.

MNS activist arrested

Kagal Police have arrested Maharashtra Navnirman Sena district vice-president Amar Eknath Shinde for allegedly abusing and beating a MSEB worker for not providing new electric supply to Abhijit Patil at Kasba Sangaov In Kagal tehsil. Assistant mechanic from MSEB Ismail Anim Mulla had filed a case against him in police station for creating hindrance in government work.

Date : 30 September 2008

City road issue

People of the city have decided to take up the issue of pathetic roads with the judiciary. Kolhapur Citizen Charter and Architect-Engineers' Association have jointly passed a resolution about moving the high court on the issue of bad roads. They are demanding that a private company should be assigned the work of constructing city roads on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) basis. They feel that the move would go a long way in improving condition of the roads, which are currently posing all sorts of problems for commuters.

For a better tomorrow

In its bid to check addiction among school-going children, the state government is taking some stern steps. Satej Patil, Minister of state for home, has informed that the government would be laying emphasis on making educational complexes tobacco and cigarette free from November 14, birth anniversary of the first Prime Minister of India celebrated as the Children's Day. While hailing the decision, educational experts in the city have stressed the need for ensuring strict implementation of the move for positive and quick results.

Clerk in ACB net

Sleuths of the Anti Corruption Bureau caught a clerk red-handed while accepting bribe recently. Reports have it that the clerk demanded bribe of Rs 2,800 from a person for passing a medical bill at a Sangli hospital. The person reported the matter to ACB. On the basis of his complaint, a trap was laid and the clerk was nabbed while taking money. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Further investigation is in progress.

Sugarcane gutted

Sugarcane crop over 40 acres of land was reduced to cinders in a blaze that broke out the other day. According to reports, some unidentified persons set the farm ablaze at Kameri village in Sangli district. Informing that the culprits haven't been identified, police said investigations into the case are on. A case has been registered against unidentified persons under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Canal breaches

Several farmers at Sarvade village in Kagal tehsil on Kolhapur district had a tough time following breaching of a canal of the Kalamawadi irrigation project. Water entered their fields affecting sugarcane crop. The extent of damage caused to the crop was being assessed at the time of filing of this report. Hit hard by the incident, affected farmers are expecting that they would get suitable compensation in the case.

Succor for depositors

Here's some good news for around 62,000 depositors of the cash-starved Bhudargad urban credit cooperative society. To bail out these aggrieved members, the state government has announced a special package of Rs 15 crore for the credit cooperative society. Reliable sources have informed that depositors who have their money with the society (up to Rs 10,000) will get refunds. They have heaved a sigh of relief following the solution to their long pending problem.

Date : 15 November 2011

Good response to Times expo

The exhibition of home appliances organised by The Times of India here received good response. Laxmikant Deshmukh, Collector, was present at the inaugural function of the expo held at Irwin Christian High School ground in the city between November 23 and 27. Several prominent citizens visited the expo that had various products under one roof.

Police recruitment

In all 151 candidates were selected for the post of police constable in the district during the recently held recruitment drive. Total 8,813 candidates had applied on-line for the post. Of them 151 were finally short listed after tests and interviews.

Scribes felicitated

A function was organised in the city recently to felicitate veteran journalists. Several senior journalists were feted for their contribution to the field of journalism. Financial aid was also extended at the programme for the Press Club of Kolhapur for developmental activities for scribes in the region.

Date :

Rs 35 lakh for Natya Gruha

The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) commissioner has sanctioned Rs 35 lakh for works to be carried out at Keshavrao Bhosale Natya Gruha, famous drama hall in the city. It is pertinent to note that several organisations and even political parties had drawn the civic administration's attention to shortcomings at the theatre and demanded immediate steps to remove them.

Shahu Award for Shivajirao Bhosale

Shivajirao Bhosale, former vice chancellor of Dr Ambedkar Vidyapeeth, has bagged the prestigious Rajarshi Shahu Award. The award comprises Rs 1,00,000 cash and memento. The award will be presented at a function to be held at Shahu Smarak Bhavan on June 26, informed Laxmikant Deshmukh, collector and president of the trust.

'No bogus fertilisers'

Shanker Totavar, district agriculture development officer, has warned people not to sell bogus fertilisers. The official has said that the Government has not given anyone the permission to produce bio-fertilizers. Action will be taken against people indulging in such acts, he adds. It is pertinent to note that some factories were recently raided where bogus fertilizer was allegedly produced and packed.

Date : 23 June 2009

Diwali musical meet

Musical and dance programmes were organised in the city to mark Diwali. One such programme - Meera Ek Rangi Zali - enthralled music lovers. Reema Kulkarni and Nitin Munishwar presented Sant Meerabai's bhajans at the programme organised in memory of Vasant Jadhav. Dr Sanjay Jadhav, who compeared the programme, threw light on various aspects of Meerabai's bhajans during his commentary. The audience applauded as the singers regaled them with one bhajan after another. 'Govind Guna Jaana, They Matavaale Baadal 'Paayoji Maine Raam Ratan Dhan Paayo...' and 'Cage Badnaami Meethi...' were especially appreciated. The concert concluded by Bhairavi. Giridhar Kulkarni (tabla), Deepak Surywanshi (harmonium), Krishna (violin) and Shivaji Sutar (special musical effects) accompanied Reema

Kulkarni and Nitin Munishwar. Nupur Jadhav presented Kathak dance on Meerabai's bhajans. Her performance was also highly appreciated.

Business brings cheers

Traders and businessmen here were all smiles as Diwali drew people to markets in large numbers. According to initial estimates, the city saw a turnover of whopping Rs 80 crore in four days of the mega festival. On Padowa alone, turnover of Rs 50 crore was registered. Sale of white good and vehicles topped the list followed by jewellery and readymade garments.

Some sweet news

With the Gadhinglaj market offering rate of Rs 3,071 per quintal for jaggery, producers of the stuff have heaved a sigh of relief. Production of jaggery started immediately after monsoon takes a break. This time around, escalating labour rates and higher prices of raw material used in the business were concerns for jaggery producers. However, the satisfactory rate they are now getting has alleviated their concerns.

Date :

Book released

A book on Kallappa Awade's life and work was released at a programme held recently at Ichalkaranji in district to celebrate 80th birthday of the former MP. Sushilkumar Shinde, Union energy minister, and D Y Patil, Tripura Governor, were present at the function. Shinde felicitated Awade on his birthday.

Photo exhibition

The Press Club, Kolhapur organised an exhibition of press photographs recently. The expo was held at the art gallery of Shahu Smarak Bhavan. A photograph by Satapa Chavan was adjudged the best among those displayed at the exhibition. Sushilkumar Shinde, Union Energy Minister, visited the expo and feted Satapa Chavan during his visit.

Dr. Pawale appointed

Dr. Dattatrya Antu Pawale has been appointed as the first medical superintendent of Chattrapati Pramila Raje Hospital,

popularly known as CPR. It is pertinent to note here that health department has handed over the hospital to medical education department. Earlier, civil surgeon would be incharge of the hospital.

BSNL move flayed

The Hindu Youth Foundation has opposed the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL's) plan for the OBCs. Members of the foundation staged demonstrations in front of the BSNL customer service centre here protesting against the plan. They said that the plan could create rift between different castes in the society.

Date : 12 July 2011

Rainfall satisfactory

The district has recorded satisfactory rainfall this monsoon. Recently the region received heavy rains and around 10 Kolhapur type (KT) weirs were sub-"merged. Water level in Panchiiganga and Bhogavati rivers has also increased. Reports we it that Gaganbawada tehsil has received maximum rainfall in the district since June this year.

New train hailed

People in the region have welcomed starting of a new train from Kolhapur to Hyderabad. The train will start everyday except on Saturday at 7 am front Chhatrapati Shahu terminus here, inform the central railway (CR) authorities.

Support for Anna

The agitation of anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazare has got sup-port in the city like it has all over the country To express their solidarity with the veteran Gandhian who is fighting for a strong Jan Lokpal bill, citizens recently organised a morcha to the district collectorate. Hundreds of youths and senior citizens participated in the morcha.

'Science education must'

Science education can make India a superpower, according to Vijay Bhatkar, eminent scientist. Speaking at a programme in the city recently, Bhatkar said India has a bright future ahead considering the

progress the country has made in science and technology. However, he added that science education should be coupled with conscience for a peaceful world.

Date : 23 August 2011

Armyman dies in road mishap

An armyman lost his life in a road accident near Ajara In district t he other day. Yuvra) Yashvant Patil lost control over his motorbike and it hit a roadside pole. So strong was the impact that Yuvraj died on the spot. He was posted at Srinagar and had come to city on holiday. His two brothers are also serving in the army.

6 Sanghatana activists booked

Six Shetkari Sanghatana activists were booked at Islamapur in district for allegedly trying to set the tehsil office ablaze. The activists were agitating for fair price for sugarcane crop. Meanwhile, Raghunath Patil, Sanghatana leader, has owned responsibility of the incident.

Police plea to KMC

As the octroi has been abolished in the city, police have requested the Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) to allow them use the octrof check-posts for nakabandi. They have assured to hand them over back to KMC whenever it required them. Cops said if unattended, anti-social elements might use the check-posts.

'No clean chit'

Manikrao Salunkhe, vice chancellor of ShivaJI University, said it is not true that the Bombay High Court has given a clean chit to suspended registrar in a bribery case. It is pertinent to note that the university lawyers had insisted that his wages from 18.9 2007 to 30-9-2007 should not be paid till hearing of the petition is over.

KIT silver jubilee

The Kolhapur Institute of Technology (KIT) will celebrate Its silver jubilee this year, said Amarsingh Rane, chairman. A souvenir would be published to mark the occasion. Various programmes will be organized during the silver jubilee year.

Guru Nanakjayanti celebrated

Guru Nanakjayanti was celebrated at Gandhinagar with great farvour and enthusiasm. A procession was organised here on the day. Sindhi Panchayat distributed fruits to patients at the government hospital. Wahe Guru Friend Circle arranged a lungar where hundreds of people were served food.

Date : 18 November 2008

Book on Vivekananda

A book on Swami Vivekananda, written by Subhash Desai, was released at a function held at Shahu Smarak Bhavan here recently. Rajan Gavas, noted Marathi novelist, Swami Kadsidheshwar, former MLA Anand Desai, Sal Desai. Adv Prakash Hige and Dr V N Magdum were the guests of honour. In his address, Gavas said, "Desai has depicted the tremendous work done by Vivekananda in the last decade of his life." The writing is based on the newspaper reports published in Europe and America. A PDF CD of the book was also released.

Protecion for temple

Vijaysingh Jadhav, Kolhapur district superintendent of police, has informed that special force has been deployed for protection of the famous Mahalaxmi temple in the city. A police officer, two assistant police inspectors and 40 policemen will be posted at the temple. The decision has been taken following the government's decision to protect religious places.

Vasant Dalvi no more

Vasant Dalvi, professor of law at Gokhale College and former principal of Law College, passed away after a brief illness recently. He was 83. Dalvi was also chief officer of Wadgaon Municipal Council and secretary of an art institute.

Bike thief arrested

Kolhapur Police have rounded up a man in connection with motorcycle theft. A number of bike thefts were reported from different parts of, the district. The arrest of the thief may throw more light bike thefts. A case has been registered in this connection under relevant

sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Further investigations are in progress.

Date : 28 July 2011

Sports buffs back Veerdhaval

Kolhapur's golden boy Veerdhaval Khade has qualified for the next year's London Olympics in the swimming category. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, his father Vikram Khade says, "Veerdhaval has become more experienced and matured. We now have great hopes from him now." Sports buffs in the city have also backed the swimmer hoping that he would bring laurels for the country. Veerdhaval would participate in four different swimming events.

Dinkar Patil no more

Dinkar Aba Patil, former MLA from Tasgaon in Sangli district, died of old age recently. He was 82. The end came on Thursday last at the Mission Hospital where he was admitted.

People's plea to Patil

Senior citizens have called upon Satej Patil, Maharashtra Minister of state for home, to initiate steps to curb incidents of housebreaking and thefts in the city. They have pointed out that there has been a spurt in such cases in the recent past and many incidents happened during the day, which is a matter of concern. They have urged Patil to form special mobile squads to nab the culprits.

New NCC policy

Here's good news for rural students. The National Cadet Corps (NCC) is all set to give preference to rural youths. They would also be given more facilities. Mai Gen Yashvant Singh, NCC chief, announced this at a recently held meeting at NCC Bhavan in the city. Citizens have hailed the move saying it would help rural students make all-round progress.

Date : 2 August 2011

Rainfall satisfactory

With the region receiving adequate rainfall, water level in dams has increased. Nine dams in western part of the district are filled to its capacity. Farmers' mood is upbeat following satisfactory rainfall.

Tehsilwise rainfall figures since June 1 are as follows. Karveer - 312mm, Kagal - 231mm, Panhala - 403mm, Shahuwadi - 496mm, Hatkangale - 223mm, Shirol - 86mm, Radhanagari - 1,534mm, Gaganbawada - 2,700mm, Bhudargad - 584mm. Gadhinglaj - 350mm, Ajara - 567mm, Chandagad - 1,141mm; total 8,027mm.

Moneylender booked

Action has been taken against an unscrupulous moneylender in the district recently. Reports have it that on the basis of a complaint lodged by a poor couple from Hupari in Kolhapur district, Amit Dhanapal Sapate was arrested under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Further investigations are in progress.

Cops on alert

In the wake of the recent Mumbai blasts, an alert has been sounded at Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli district headquarters. Security has been stepped up at the famous Mahalaxmi temple here, at the railway station, at masjids in Mirai and at vital bridges and flyovers.

Maratha Mahasangh meet

In pursuance of its demand for reservations for the Maratha community, the Maratha Mahasangh organised a meeting here recently. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, Vasant Mulik of the Mahasangh says youth of the community have been facing problems in getting admissions and securing jobs. Reservations will solve their problems.

Date : 19 July 2011

Blood donation camp

Sant Nirankari Charitable Foundation, under the auspices of Baba Hardee Singh Maharaj (Nirankari Baba), conducted a blood donation camp at Shivaji Mandir Hall in Shivaji Peth here recently. In all, 455 blood units were collected. Chandrakantdada Patil, MLA, was the chief guest at the inaugural function. 'Mukti Parva Satsang' was also held to along with drawing and painting competitions. Speaking at the function, Amarlal Nirankari threw light on the history of Nirankari Mission.

Shinde memorial lecture

C. Rangarajan, former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and chairman of Prime Minister's economic advisory council, was the chief guest at the first Dr A D Shinde memorial lecture here recently. N J Pawar presided over the programme held at Siber College.

Flyover inaugurated

A flyover bridge here was formally thrown open to public the other day. The inaugural ceremony was held in presence of Maharashtra ministers Harshawardhan Patil, Hasan Mushrif, Jaidatta K Shirsagar and Satej Patil. It is pertinent to note that some social activists, supported by opposition parties in the state, had used the bridge the day before. However, the issue of inauguration of the bridge has now been laid to rest following the official function.

Date : 6 September 2011

Dacoity at Ichalkaranji

Dacoits struck at a farmhouse in Ichalkaranji recently. Reports have it that the dacoits barged into the farmhouse owned by Dadasaheb Khot and grabbed gold ornaments weighing five-and-a-half Colas and Rs 10,000 cash. They also attacked Dadasaheb and his wife Indubai injuring them seriously. On the basis of Khot's complaint, police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and further investigations are in progress.

Man ends life

A person committed suicide at a quarter of the health subcentre in the district recently. Kalandar Jamshed Sayyad, 37, hanged himself to death in the health subcentre quarter at Waghapur in Bhudargad tehsil. It is gathered that his wife was working as nurse there. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Date : 30 August 2011

Kolhapur jawan killed in J&K

Kshore Shankar Nirmalkar, who hailed from Kolhapur district, was killed in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) recently. Body of the 28-year-

old jawan was flown to his native place Kovad. He was cremated with full state honour. Kishore leaves behind wife, father and sister to mourn the loss.

Unique painting exhibition

A exhibition of Pune-based physically-challenged artist, Hari Ram Kohli, was organised in the city recently. The artist paints holding the brush in his mouth. His paintings were displayed at the expo held at Bhavani Mandap. At the concluding programme, wheelchairs were distributed among 100 physically-challenged people in district.

Kenyan student sentenced

A Kenyan student was sentenced to four months' rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fine of Rs 2,000 for staying in the city after the expiry of his Visa. Rajaram police had registered a case against Adil Makiguna Daud under the Foreign National Act, 1946. After hearing both sides, P N Jamadar, first class magistrate, found the student guilty.

Shiv-Shahu award announced

The Shiv-Shahu award instituted by city based Shiv-Shahu March Kolhapur has been announced. This year, the award has been conferred on Rajani Karkare, Gyani Batheja, Vijaymala Pawar, Kumar Nerlekar and Yunus Sheikh.

Social workers honoured

Adarsh Foundation held a state level award giving ceremony at Shahu Smarak Bhavan here recently. People from Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara districts attended the function. A souvenir was released on the occasion. Thirty people from different fields were given Adarsh Puraskar comprising shawl and memento.

Sugarcane truck seized

Gadhinglaj police seized a truck carrying sugarcane crop from Gadahinglaj to Karnataka the other day. The Karnataka Government has already said it would not allow cane crop from Maharashtra into its state. On this backdrop, the Kolhapur collector has ordered cops not

to allow sugarcane transport to Karnataka. The sugar commissioner has also instructed sugar factories on the border to inform about such transport in the wake of reports that sugar factories are facing shortage of cane.

Date : 2 September 2008

SU convocation ceremony

The 45th convocation ceremony of the Shivaji University (SU) was held here recently. Former vice-chancellor of Mumbai University Senhalata Deshmukh was the chief guest while SU vice-chancellor Manikrao Salunkhe was in the chair. Out of 47,506 students, 32,265 received degree certificates. Indumati Chavan, a student of Geography department, won this year's President's gold medal.

Employment drive

The district employment guidance centre organised a convention of unemployed youth at the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC), Kagal. Fifteen industrialists attended the meet that was attended by 600 girls and boys seeking jobs. Eligible candidates were interviewed and 122 out of 242 were selected.

Plea to solve border dispute

An all-party conference urged the Union government to solve the Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute pending for the last 53 years. A resolution to this effect was passed at the meet held at Keshavrao Bhosale Natyagriha the other day. Prominent among those who addressed the gathering included deputy chief minister Chhagan Bhujbal, Bhai Vaidya, N D Patil, Nivedita Mane, MP Sadashivrao Mandlik and N G Patil also spoke .

Lokotsav in city

Lokotsav was organised in the city to mark installation of the statue of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj in the Parliament premises on February 17. Rallies and sports events were held at several places and firecrackers burst. Thousands of people participated in the Lokotsav.

Date : 3 March 2008

Chain snatchers' gang busted

Cops have succeeded in nabbing three chain snatchers operating in the city recently. Vijaysinh Jadhav, district superintendent of police, has informed that a team of Shahupuri police arrested the trio and seized gold ornaments worth Rs 9.55 lakh. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). It is pertinent to note that there have been growing incidents of chain snatching. With the arrest of the gang, people hope that such cases would now reduce.

Workshop on energy audit

A workshop on 'Energy Audit - Do it yourself' was organised here recently. The participants discussed various ways of energy auditing. The workshop was held under the joint aegis of the Maharashtra Energy Development Agency and Petroleum Conservation Research Association in association with the Institution of Engineers, India.

Three killed in mishap

Three persons were killed when a truck knocked a motorcycle and a pedestrian on the National Highway No. 4. Reports have it that the truck (MH-09/CA-30) coming from Karad knocked Manik Kamble, Subhash Kamble and Satish Pawar dead. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Y B Chavan's birth centenary

A programme will be organised to mark the birth centenary of Y B Chavan on March 13. The programme will be held at his birthplace in Sangli district. President of India Pratibha Patil will inaugurate the birth centenary programmes in Mumbai.

2 lakh students for SSC

Total 2,03,734 students from Kolhapur division will appear for the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination starting from March 15. They will appear for the exam from 434 centres. In all, 527 physically challenged students will write their SSC papers from the division this time around.

Date :

Distt dam water position

As the rainfall has not been up to the mark this year, almost all irrigation projects in the district are filled only around one-third of their capacities. The water levels of different dams are as follows (All figures in TMC). Radhanagri (83.29), Tulsi (58.80), Warana (55.6), Dhdhganga (42.5), Kasari (49.80), Kadvi (17), Kumbhi (14.51), Patgoon (53), Chikotra (13.81), Chitri (29), Jangam Hatti (19.37), Ghatprabha (19.63), Kode (06). The Panchaganga river water level is 12 feet at Rajaram Bandhara and 25 feet at Narsihwadi.

Cine poster exhibition

An exhibition of cinema posters designed by G Kamble would be organised at Baburao Pendharkar Kala Dalan between July 22 and 25. G Kamble, the legendary cine poster artist, was popular in India and Pakistan for his black and white posters. He made a number of posters during his 50-year career and the best would be on display at the expo, said Baban Kamble, the artist's son.

Morcha on August 6

Veteran leader from the region, N D Patil has declared that Irrigation Federation will organise a morcha to Mantralaya in Mumbai during the Assembly monsoon session on August 6. The morcha would start from Azad Maidan, Patil informed while addressing a meeting of farmers and lift irrigation scheme society representatives of Kolhapur, Sangli, and Satara districts. He called upon the farmers to participate in the morcha in large numbers.

Rare frog spotted

The Bombay Natural History Society, that has been studying the western ghat for the last few, spotted rare species of frog last week. Patgoa in Bhudargadh taluka, 125 km from here, has a dense forest where the rare Malabar Gliding frog was spotted. The green frog with reddish legs lives on trees. This species is very rare in the world and has been found in the district for the first time.

Magdum elected

Vishvanath N Magdum, noted surgeon from the city, has been elected President of the Kolhapur Surgical Society (KSS). This

organisation has been working in the medical field for the last 30 and has 75 surgeons as members. 'This year, we would update the knowledge of our colleagues through workshops and seminars,' Magdum said.

Date : 22 July 2008

Rotary Club gets charter

The Rotary Club of Horizon got a charter from the Rotary International recently. The charter presentation and installation ceremony was held where Bazil D'Souza, immediate past governor, installed Niteen Kulkarni as president and Kaustubh Nabar as secretary. Ashok Naigaokar, noted Marathi poet and humourist, was the chief guest. Assistant governor Nasir Borsadwala and past assistant governor Raosaheb Gondil also spoke.

Kaustubh Nabar proposed a vote of thanks. Prominent among those present included Ramaa Parandekar, Aslam Shaikh, Kaustubh Kagalkar, Narendra Zanwar, M B Shaikh, Bhau Naik, Rajubhai Doshi, Sachin Menon, Rajiv Parikh, Vikram Bhosale and secretaries and presidents of other clubs in the society.

Kolhapur-Sangli four-lane road by 2011

The state government has okayed the proposal for a four-lane road from the city to Sangli. Rs 1.45 crore have been earmarked for the road to be completed on build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis. Uday Bhosale, deputy engineer, said the road would have two two flyovers and two railway over bridges. At present, Kolhapur-Sangli road has a heavy traffic and a number of mishaps occur there. With the new road, the things would be streamlined.

Bhosale further said, the length of the road would be 40.11 km. It is proposed that toll tax post would be at Tamadalage village. Passersby would have to pay road tax for 24 years. Forty-two hectares of land would be acquired for the project. The work is expected to start in January 2009 and finish by 2011.

Street Play on Population Day

Radio Mirchi, Kolhapur organized a street-play on World Population Day. All the radio jockeys of Kolhapur Radio Mirchi and their team educated people on controlling population and what will be

the adverse effects over population. Areas covered were Bindu Chowk, RTO office, Shivaji University, Bhavani Mandap and Central Bus Stand. People gathered in large numbers to watch the play. The team comprised RJ Anaya, RJ Prajakta, RJ Vinayak, RJ Omkar, RJ Sachin, RJ Neel, Mayur Ranade, Shraddha Joshi and Ganesh Salian.

Congress workers jubilant

The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) victory spread a wave of joy among the Congress workers here. P N Patil, Congress MLA, said, "Only Congress can lead India on the path of progress. The message has gone loud and clear."

Prakash Avade, Ichalkaranji MLA, said, "The victory reflects the confidence people have in the Prime Minister." Congress MLA Malojiraje described the success as 'quite expected' NCP's Nikam said it would help the UPA in the forthcoming elections.

However, Communist Party of India and Bharatiya Janata Party leaders described July 22 as 'black day in the history of Indian democracy'.

Police chief expresses concern

Anami Roy, director general of police (DGP), said the drought-like situation might result in the increase in crime. Talking to media persons during his recent visit to the city, he said troubled people might indulge in petty crimes. Cops are observing the situation keenly, he added. The DGP was here for a brief period after returning from Sangli where he had gone to inaugurate police training centre.

About the police housing project, he said it would be completed soon. Out of the Rs 180 crore sanctioned for it, first installment of Rs 60 crore has been given, he added.

Collector Dilip Jadhav, special IG of police Ashok Dhivare and DSP Chandrakant Jadhav were also present.

Dhote, Kore join hands

Jambuwant Dhote, ex-MP and founder of Vidarbha Janata Congress, has announced an alliance with Jan Surajya Party of Vinay Kore to form a third front in the state. A rally would be organised at Wardha in Vidarbha on August 9, Kranti Din, Dhote told reporters at Warananagar, 40 kms from here. Kore and Kolhapur Mayor Uday

Salokhe were present. Vinay Kore hoped that the third from would change political equations in Maharashtra.

Dairy raided

Food and Drug Administration of Kolhapur district conducted a surprise raid on Shevanery Dudh Dairy at Bhairewadi near Kurunwad at Shirol tehsil in Kolhapur district and confiscated 280 litres milk adulterated with cotton-seed oil and liquid glucose. This material is used to increase milk fat and degree. Santosh Narke, owner of milk collection center who was responsible for collecting 500 litres milk per day, was arrested. Police also found 12 kg glucose liquid, 30 liter cottonseed oil bags and Murri cotton-seed refined oil worth Rs 1,200. People in Kurandwad are demanding a through inquiry into the matter.

Gandhi library opened

The message given by Mahatma Gandhi is still relevant in present times, said Sharad Patil, Director of Gandhian Study Centre of Shivaji University, addressing the inaugural function of Mahatma Gandhi Library in the city. Samaj Prabodhani has started this library. Vishwanath Magadum presided over the function. Mahatma Gandhi's an autography "My Experiment with Truth" was distributed 26 students of 10th and 12th standard were felicitated on the occasion. Senior freedom fighter Mudash Ingikar, Shankarao Nalwade, Yashwant Nikam and Jayashree Chavan were present.

Date : 29 July 2008

City wonderkid in Beijing

Veerdhaval Khade, 16-year-old swimmer from the city is in Beijing to participate in the Olympics. He has qualified for 50 metres, 100 metres and and 200 meters free-style events. The sports-lovers here organised a goodwill march to extend support to Veerdhaval. Members of several sports organisations and sports persons participated in the march.

I-Day programme

The Independence Day will be celebrated at a programme at the collectorate here on August 15. The district guardian minister will hoist the national flag at the programme to be held at 9.05 am. The collector

has requested private and government employees to arrange their I-Day functions before 8.35 am or after 9.35 am so that people could attend the programme at the collectorate.

LPG cylinders seized

The district supply office team raided 93 hotels in the city and confiscated 143 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) domestic cylinders being misused for commercial purposes. This was informed by Subhash Borker, district supply officer. He told that people who have supplied the domestic cylinders to those booked would also be punished.

Red ribbon train in city on 22nd

The Nehru Yuva Kendra, under the Sports and youth welfare ministry, Government of India, has organised a rail exhibition - 'Red Ribbon' with a view to creating awareness among youths about the acquired immuno deficiency syndrome (AIDS). The train would arrive in the city on August 22. The activists will visit 48 villages in the district spreading awareness through cultural programmes.

Swabhimani Sanghatana registered

The Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana leader and MLA Raju Shetty has informed that the party has now been registered with the Election Commission of India, Delhi. Talking to Kolhapur Plus, he said he has decided to contest five seats in the Parliament and 40 in the Assembly elections. "Our aim is to fight against corruption and give farmers their rights," he said.

Aid to physically challenged

Two non-government organisations recently extended aid to 1 physically challenged. Informing this through a press release, the district information office said, Dilip Jadhav, district collector, distribute 20 hearing aides, four tricycles and four crutches to physically challenged at the function held under the aegis of the Apang Punarvasan Sanstha and the Red Cross Society. Sanjay Chiplunkar, V V Patil, Pratap Puranik, Arvind Baste and Shrinivas Malu were present. The collector appealed to NGOs to come forward to help physically challenged.

Meritorious students honoured

The Dhirubhai Ambani Foundation, Mumbai, felicitated three meritorious students and the topper among physically-challenged category at a programme organised at Shau Smarak Bhavan here recently. Vijay Singhal, Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) commissioner, was the chief guest. The students were given a bicycle and cash award of Rs 3,000 each while physically-challenged student got Rs 6,000. Under the scholarship programme of the foundation, deserving standard XII students were given financial assistance, Arun - Bhende, chief executive officer (CEO), informed. Prasad Devdhar guided students on environment at the programme.

Arts institute completes 75 years

Established by late artist Dattoba Dalvi in 1933, Dalvi's Art Institute, Kolhapur was the only educational institute in fine arts after J J School of Arts, Bombay. The institute celebrated its platinum jubilee. Thousands of art students have learnt from this institute. Noted artist settled in Germany Vishwanath Nageshkar, landscape artist A G Kazi, A B Tendulkar, Dr Nalini Bhagavat and Bhimarao Yadav are among the list of Dattoba Dalvi's students. Dattoba Dalvi was landscape artist, portrait painter, expert in composition. He was the only educated artist was noted for Tattoo work. Usha Wader, Mohan Sarnaik, Anjali Bhosale and now Asmita Jagatap are the principal of Dalvi's Art Institute. Courses in drawing and painting, fine arts, interior decoration and arts master vacation are taught in the institute. Dattoba Dalvi's son Jaysingrao is a famous sculpture and a painter. His son Ajay is also a painter and teaches in his grandfather's institute.

Date : 12 August 2008

Tributes to Manekshaw

Major General (retd) Shivajirao Patil paid homage to Field Marshal General Sam Manekshaw, who led India to victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak war. Patil said, the leadership qualities that Manekshaw exhibited would always be remembered. Colonel (retd) Vishvas Desai of Gorkha Regiment described Manekshaw as 'a great General who created history' and a soldiers' General'. On Saturday, one army officials paid rich tributes to Manekshaw at the condolence meeting held at the territorial army headquarter in the city.

IT college opened

A new college of information technology and management was saugurated here recently. Vittha I Kamat inaugurated the college Phule Anant Dixit was in the chair. In his speech, Kamat said earlier youth from the city were not quite willing to take to business. The scenario has changed and Jyoti College of IT and aranagement would help them pursue their careers, he added. Jyoti Deshpande welcomed the - guests and Sudesh Deshpande made the introductory remarks.

Date :

Partial response to bandh

The bandh called to protest revoking of land allotment order to Amamath Yatra Shrine Committee in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) received partial response here. The bandh was called by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Barring stray incidents of stone pelting, the protest was peaceful. Stones were pelted at two Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT) buses in the morning. Sixty people were arrested in this connection and later released, police said.

DPDC meeting held

A meeting of the district planning and development committee (DPDC) was held at Maharani Tarabai hall in the collectorate recently. Harashwardhan Patil, district guardian minister, chaired the meeting. Speaking at the meeting, Raju Shette, MLA and Swabhimani Shetakari Sanghatana leader, demanded complete loan waiver for farmers. Earlier, he held a meeting with local leaders to discuss appointment of special executive magistrates.

Shamkant Padhye passes away

Shamkant Ganesh Padhye, senior journalist and editor of a local weekly, passed away here recently. He was 86. His father Ganesh Padhye had started the weekly in 1942 and since 1964, Shamkant Padhye was its editor. He was also a well-known artist educated at J J School of Art, Mumbai. He was a founder member of Kalaniketan Art College here. He leaves behind wife and three sons.

Power generation plant

Foundation stone for the first ever cooperative electricity generation project was laid at Shri Datta Sahakari Co-op Sugar factory at Shirol, 40 kms from here. Vinay Kore, non-conventional energy minister, Rahul Asthana, chief secretary of energy department, Parthsarathi and S R Patil were prominently present.

Date : 8 July 2008

Ratnappa Kumbhar remembered

Rich tributes were paid to late Ratnappa Kumbhar, freedom fighter and member of the constitution committee, at various programmes held in district to observe his ninth death anniversary. A life-size statue of the leader was unveiled at Panchganga sugar factory at Ichalkaranji. At Sangaon in Kagal tehsil, programmes were held at a high school and a primary school. A medical camp was held at Shastrinager.

Yoga camp at Sangli

A Yoga camp is being organised at Sangli. Famous Yoga guru Swami Ramdeo is guiding the participants at the camp that started on December 26 and will conclude on December 31.

Voters' double entries dropped

The election commission has asked the district administration to cancel as many as 70,000 names from the voters' lists as they had double entries. Shivajirao Kadabane, deputy collector, told media persons that these people are likely to get show-cause notices.

Silver jubilee programme

Various programmes are being organised to mark the silver jubilee of D Y Patil college of engineering. A get together of past students was held at Kasbabavada. The varsity sources told Kolhapur Plus that the college- founded on August 6, 1984 will be holding several programmes in the silver jubilee year. The college has got ISO 9001 certification.

Shyamrao Desale passes away

Shyamrao Yadavrao Desale alias Desale Kaka, a prominent citizen of the city, passed away recently. He was 73. An engineer by

profession, he originally hailed from Dhule. He leaves behind wife and two daughters to mourn the loss.

Date : 30 December 2008

Nursing students affected by dengue

Total 19 girl students of nursing course at government hospital CPR are under treatment for dreaded dengue fever. A special section has been opened to treat them. Alleged uncleanliness in the hospital premises is being reported as the cause. According to hospital sources, their condition is improving.

Prasad by post

Now you can get Prasad of Shri Mahalakshumj at your doorstep by post. You have to deposit Rs 60 in any branch of the post offices in Goa or in Maharashtra, supritendent of post Nivasrao told mediamen. He said that people will get photos, khismis kaju, kunkum and haldi as prasad.

New train

Kolhapur Rajkot new train for Diwali winter oas been introduced. Reservation has started since October 5. This train will run between Rajkot and Kolhapur between October to January eight times per month, told sources from the Railways.

Clean chit for registrar

Former suspended registrar of Shivaji University S N Desai was suspended in a bribery case in university appointment. This happened in 2005-6. Mumbai High Court has given him a clean chit.

Protest against municipal taxes

The Kolhapur Municipal Corporation (KMC) administration has served notices to citizens of Kolhapur for house tax. They have been increased four times, for ex a shop of 300 sq. feet is charged Rs 20,000 per year.

Citizens and NGOs are protesting against this hike and have appealed people not to accept the notices.

Bhavgeet and rangoli competition

On the occasion of 'Dasara Mahotsav', Government of Maharashtra organised Bhavgeet and Rangoli competition at Deval Club, Kolhapur. The prizes declared by district collector and president of Dasara Mahotsav Dilip Patil were Rs 3,000, Rs 2,000, and Rs 1,000 thousand for Rangoli completion and Rs 1,000, Rs 700 and Rs 501. Other prizes were worth Rs 251 and Rs 101.

Kala Academy formed

In the name of late Kalamaharshi Ganpatrao Wadangekar an academy has been formed at Shahagi Law College Stadium, Kolhapur. Students will be taught different forms of art, Ashok Wadangekar told Kolhapur Plus.

Date : 14 October 2008

Weaving a success story

An Ichalkaranji based institute is all set to start a textile college in Zambia in collaboration with the Copperbelt University. The college is expected to start in 2010 offering a great opportunity to students in four countries.

A delegation of the institute had gone to Zambia. They had meetings with the Zambian minister of finance, the commerce minister and the Copperbelt University vice chancellor. The Zambian government has offered 30 acres of land for the project. The building will have all educational facilities for students.

City drama group excels

A play staged by Bahurupi Kalamanch, a drama group from the city, won the second prize at the state-level children's play competition held in Pune. The play, written by Dhananjay Sardeshpande and based on a story of Vi Sa Khandekar, has been selected for the final round of the competition that will begin in Mumbai from February 25A

Chattrapati's statue at Parliament

A full size bronze statue of Late Chattrapaii Shahu Maharaj would be unveiled at the Parliament in New Delhi on February 17.

President Pratibha Patil will unveil the statue. Prime minister Manmohan Singh is likely to remain present. Thousands of Kolhapurians would also attend the function.

Workers injured

An accident took place at Shirol Industrial Estate in which 15 building workers were injured. The incident occurred when the slab of a showroom collapsed while work was in progress. A big crane, three ambulances and hundreds of social workers rescued the workers. Those injured have been admitted to D Y Patil Hospital.

Illegal sale of wheat

Gargoti police have seized eighty bags of wheat, meant for sale at ration shop, while they were being illegally transported to open market. The truck in which they were taken has been also seized. Further investigations are on.

Animal disease

Gadhinglaj tehsil in Kolhapur district has been in the grip of buffalo pox disease, affecting 3,000 buffaloes. Human beings are also affected as 114 farmers are undergoing treatment. This dreaded disease has spread in 21 villages of the tehsil. Animal husbandry department doctors are visiting the affected places.

Insurance for farmers

Union Agriculture Ministry and a London-based Micro Insurance Agency have included Kolhapur district for their project. Former chairman of NABARD Dr Yashvantrao Thorat and company officials recently visited Kolhapur. Farmers would be benefited against natural disasters and they would get help from Bill Gates Foundation.

Anand Yadav felicitated

President of 82nd All India Marathi Literature Sammelan, Anand Yadav was felicitated at Kolhapur recently. Yadav was born in Kolhapur district. Many dignities were present at the felicitation ceremony.

Date : 17 February 2009

Art expo organised

An exhibition of landscape paintings and Plaster of Paris (PoP) carvings of a local artist, Shivaji Mhaske was held recently. The headmaster of Nehru high school has been organising expos not only in Maharashtra but also in different parts of the country. His recent exhibition here got a good response.

Mango masti's here

Here is some delightful news for mango-lovers. Aphanso, the king of mangoes, has arrived in the city market. The mango that comes here from Ratnagiri district in Konkan is famous for its sweetness. Currently, the rate per dozen is Rs 200 to 300. In spite of it, the mangoes are in great demand.

Sulochana Chavan felicitated

Eminent singer who was famous for her 'lavis', a folk song type, was felicitated with Eminen Gaurav award recently. The award, instituted by Kalpataru organisation, was presented to her at a function held at Keshvarao Bhosale Natya Gruh.

Date :



Bio-Data

Name : DR. SUBHASH KESHAVARAO DESAI

Education : B.A. (Hons.) Psychology; M.A. - Philosophy (B.J.C.); Ph.D. Shivaji University (Science and Religion)

Editor, Printer, Publisher of : (a) Editor Pranav Magazine 1965 to 1974 (b) Weekly Shinhavani 1974 - 1984 (c) Daily Sinhvani 1984 to 1990 (d) Editor, Udyam Varta. 1998 (e) Editor Dyndoot Magazine 2001 (f) Editor, Gayatri Bulletin, Bangalore 1982 (g) District Correspondent - Indian Express And Daily Loksatta- 1982- 1984- 1988 (h) Correspondent, Daily Samna - 1994 (i) Correspondent, The Press Trust of India 1999-2009 (j) Columnist The Times of India Since 2008. More than seven Thousand Articles on different subjects published in Marathi Print Media and for Akashvani, kolhapur. Participation in seminar on "Sahyadri" Doordarshan chanel, Mumbai.

Author of 30 Books and Edited 20 Books.

Translation of Best seller book of Cambridge Scientist Dr. Stephan Hawking 'A Brief History of Time' in Marathi. A Seat of Soul ñ Garry Zukove, The Sleeping Prophet ñ Edgar Kessy

Articles and Photos published in 8 to 10 language on the popular yearly calendar ñ Kalnirnaya, Mumbai and Mahalaxmi, Kolhapur.

Director of Gulmohar Art Gallery.

Research Papers were presented and published in National and International Conferences in India & Abroad - Nairobi, Indian Science Congress Bangalore 1984, World conference on Religions MIT Pune, 2007; International conference by Vivekanand Centre Kanyakumari at Kochin; Indian Philosophical congress New Delhi at Jamiya Islamia University 2003; Indo- French Cultural Conference Paris 2001, WCP 2013 Greece, Indian Philosophical Congress at Rambhau Malagi Prabodhini Mumbai 2009

Visits : Expedition of Mount Kailas and Mansarovar in 1986 and 2001, Europe, Tibet, Nepal, Greece.

Awards and felicitation received :

1. Maharashtra Journalist Association award for excellence in journalism
2. On the eve of 50th anniversary of Maharashtra state (1st May 2010) public felicitation by the guardian minister of state. For special contribution in field journalism and literature
3. Public felicitation by Governor of Tripura Padmashri Dr. D. Y. Patil at Kolhapur on 20th Oct. 2010 for research books on Gautam Budha and Chatrpati Shivaji Maharaj.