

Shame on PMC; NGO to build public toilets in city

We will focus on women's needs, says president of Green Energy Foundation Sharmila Oswal

DNA Correspondent

A city-based non-governmental organisation (NGO) Green Energy Foundation (GEF) has announced the mission of building public toilets in the city that will be better in sanitation and hygiene compared to those built by the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC).

"The effect of unavailability of public toilets for women is severely limiting the mobility of this gender and their ability to work efficiently," said president of the foundation, Sharmila Oswal. "Our organisation will focus on the requirements of public toilets in the city, especially for women, as they are the most vulnerable lot."

The foundation has opted to start the project because suitable public toilets are not available for women and toilets are poorly maintained. The toilets that the foundation will build will be suitably constructed for women and will be regularly monitored.

"We will focus on cleaning and maintenance of water and



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sanitation facilities as badly maintained toilets can often cause infection, which can be avoided," said Oswal.

The foundation also plans to train its staff so that toilets are

maintained properly, cleaned and are repaired on time, she said.

"Regular monitoring, reporting and assessment and annual impact assessment will

be on the cards," she added.

Jonson Fernandez, associate vice-president of the foundation said, "We are in talks with the info-tech companies so that they can fund our proj-

The foundation has appealed to all citizens, organisations, institutes, industries and schools to join them in their mission of building clean and green public toilets

ect. We also got support from MLA Madhuri Misal, who has committed to give us six to seven locations to build these toilets and funds under her ward. Vandana Chavan, Sangita Tiwari and women organisations like Swamini, Kasturba, Ladies Diamond Group have also supported the issue."

The foundation has appealed to all citizens, organisations, institutes, industries and schools to join them in their mission of building sustainable clean and green public toilets. Those interested in volunteering for this project can email contact@greenenergyfoundation.in.

National grid for varsities on anvil

UoP VC Raghunath Shevgaonkar says information technology will bring paradigm shift in education in India

DNA Correspondent

Raghunath Shevgaonkar, vice chancellor of the University of Pune (UoP) said the role of information technology (IT) would bring in a paradigm shift in the education system in the country, saying, "The National Knowledge Commission project has a dedicated server available and in two years, all universities and colleges in the country will be connected to the grid."

He was speaking on 'IT for academic excellence' as part of the IT evangelist, late Dewang Mehta, memorial lecture organised by the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) here on Tuesday.

Shevgaonkar said the examination pattern should be changed. "The gross enrollment ratio of Maharashtra in higher education is 18%, better than the national average of 12%. The ratio of enrollment has to increase,



The gross enrollment ratio of Maharashtra in higher education is 18%, better than the national average of 12%. This has to increase, but students passing out should be employable by industry

—Raghunath Shevgaonkar, UoP vice chancellor

but students passing out should be employable by industry," he said. Delivering a lecture on 'Changing communication

EDUCATION CHALLENGES

paradigms: business beyond voice and text', Najib Khan, chief executive officer of Airtel Telemedia Services (West), said the country is about to witness a broadband explosion in this decade.

"Presently there are 10.5 million broadband users. Out of these, 33% were added last year. Telecom companies have been able to achieve 60% penetration and there are 15 main players in the industry," he said.

Anant Sardeshmukh, executive director general of MCCIA, remembered the role played by Dewang Mehta for the IT industry. A book by Deepak Shikarpur, IT sub-committee head of MCCIA, on IT for the common man was released.

Reaching out in obeisance



Devotees rock the cradle of Lord Rama on the occasion of Ramnavami at the famous Rama temple in Tulshibaug on Tuesday —Sankar Deshpande DNA

NGO seeks to sensitise corporates

Nari opens development centre in Phaltan to facilitate understanding of rural issues

DNA Correspondent PHALTAN

In an effort to sensitise corporates to problems in rural areas and motivate them to participate in the production of innovative technologies for rural development, the Nimbkar Agricultural Research Institute (Nari) has set up the Bajaj Centre for Sustainable Development (BCSD).

The centre, situated on the premises of Nari in Phaltan, Satara district, about 100 km from Pune, was inaugurated on Tuesday. Established in 1968, Nari undertakes research and development activities in agriculture, renewable energy, animal husbandry and sustainable development.

The centre will serve as a training and research facility for interaction between the corporate sector, civil society and local residents so that sustainable enterprises can be created using high-tech solutions.

Workshops, seminars and courses will be conducted at the centre to expose the participants to problems in rural areas. It is a residential building comprising a hostel for 20 participants, rooms for two faculty members, a kitchen, a dining hall, offices and a seminar hall with a seating capacity of 100.

It will provide a forum for professionals from different fields to collaborate and generate solutions to rural problems. The eco-friendly design is equipped with passive cooling, rainwater harvesting, solar pumping, solar and biomass water heater. The design allows ample natural light in the rooms. The kitchen waste and hostel effluent will be used for making fertilisers for Nari research farms.

The concept and design of the building was done by Nari director, Anil Rajvanshi. The plans and architectural drawings were prepared by archi-



Director of Nari, Anil Rajvanshi speaking at the inaugural function. From left: Nandini Nimbkar, Madhur Bajaj, Sanjay Kirloskar and Zia Quraishi

itects from the US, Megan Cook and Ross Karsen, who came for internship to Phaltan.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, vice-chairman of Bajaj Auto Ltd, Madhur Bajaj, said such efforts by Nari were needed to inspire a reverse trend: from city back to villages. He felt that the corporates needed to support such ef-

forts to empower villages so that they did not need to migrate to cities.

Chairman and managing director of Kirloskar Brothers Ltd, Sanjay Kirloskar, said if opportunities are created in villages, urban poverty will reduce.

Managing director of Cummins Generator Technologies

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India Ltd, Pradeep Bhargava, said industry is a part of society and its social responsibility does not end with giving money for projects. "They need to be an active part of the rural development process by joining hands with NGOs," he opined.

Chairman and managing director of Nimbkar Seeds Private Ltd, Zia Quraishi; former director of IIT Bombay, SP Sukhatme; president of Nari, Nandini Nimbkar; and others were also present at the event.

Forum for knee pain patients

DNA Correspondent

A forum of patients suffering from knee pain will be launched in the city on Friday following an initiative by Sushrut Medical Care and Research Society of Hardikar Hospital.

The forum will take shape at Garware assembly hall in Garware College.

Veteran physician, Dr HV Sardesai, will be present and will talk on how to keep the knee joint healthy.

The information was revealed to media persons at a press conference by Dr Madan Hardikar, orthopaedic surgeon at Hardikar Hospital.

Govt flip-flop on uniform for nurses

New state order prefers white skirts over salwar-kameez

DNA Correspondent

For over 20,000 nurses of different government hospitals across Maharashtra, its back to white skirts during duty hours, instead of the peach coloured salwar-kameez.

The state government, in an ordinance issued on February 28 this year, claimed that the Maharashtra Nurses Federation (MNF) has directed all nurses that wearing white skirts was mandatory while on duty.

However, the MNF is opposed to the government order claiming that the nurses are not comfortable with such



The MNF has filed a petition on March 30 this year

"Western outfits".

The federation has moved the Bombay high court challenging the state government's order on the issue. The MNF filed a petition on March 30 this year and the first hearing of the case is scheduled for April 27.

The nurses want to follow Indian tradition and are more comfortable while attending patients in the hospitals in salwar-kameez

The president of MNF, Anuradha Athavale, said on Tuesday that the nurses have been demanding that the state government must do away with white skirts as uniform for on duty nurses and instead they be allowed to wear salwar-kameez.

She claimed that the state government had issued a government resolution (GR) in 2004 allowing female nurses to wear salwar-kameez.

"But, in a new ordinance issued on February 28 this year, the state government has contradicted its own GR by making white skirts compulsory. The federation has, therefore, appealed to the high court, which has stayed on the new GR," she said.

According to Athavale, the nurses want to follow Indian tradition and are more comfortable while attending patients in the hospitals in salwar-kameez.

City without chief health officer for want of signature

Dr Pardeshi was holding the office, vacant for 2 yrs, as acting chief

DNA Correspondent

The appointment of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) city chief health officer is pending for last three weeks for want of a signature.

Even though the civic body's women and child development committee has approved the proposal of appointment, its chairman is yet to sign the appointment letter.

The post that carries the responsibility of city's health is vacant for past two years, ever

since the then incumbent Dr Pramod Dhaigude resigned from the post.

Dr RR Pardeshi is holding the office as acting incharge of the health department since March 2009. After the PMC administration proposed to make a regular appointment of a chief health officer, it conducted interviews for the post and selected Pardeshi in January 2011.

As per the rules, the proposal to appoint Pardeshi was sent to the women and child devel-

opment committee of the civic body for ratification. The committee approved the proposal, but its then chairman Ratnaprabha Jagtap refused to sign it.

As the proposal was not signed by Jagtap yet, it could not be sent to the general body (GB) for final approval and the appointment could not be made, a civic official said.

Independent corporator Ujwal Keskar had raised the issue in the civic body GB meeting recently.

Labourer kills friend's wife, commits suicide

DNA Correspondent

A 28-year-old youth, Sharad Jadhav, allegedly murdered his friend's wife before committing suicide on Monday morning at Malwali village in Maval taluka of the district.

The woman has been identified as Archana Tukaram Panchal (19). Archana's husband, Tukaram has registered a case at the Lonavla police station.

According to the Lonavla police, Jadhav and Tukaram were friends for the last two years and were working as construction labourers in Lonavla. Last year, Tukaram got married to Archana and the three of them used to stay in the same house.

"On Monday at 8 am, Tukaram went to work and Jadhav and Archana were alone in the house. At 10 am, Jadhav allegedly hit Archana on the head with a hammer

and stabbed her with a sharp-edged weapon, following which she died on the spot. Later Jadhav hanged himself from the ceiling. We were informed after the local residents found the two bodies in the house," the police said.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Man in custody for murder

Rohit Mohanlal Dhoka (32) of Nana Peth was on Tuesday remanded in police custody till April 15 for allegedly killing an autorickshaw driver, Anil Gulab Salunke (40), over a petty scuffle. The other accomplice in the crime and the victim's friend, Sachin alias Surya Vitthal Bhujbal, is still at large.

The police arrested Dhoka after he was caught by a Race

Course security guard and local residents near the campus on Monday night. According to the prosecution, the arrested suspect and his friend Bhujbal had a scuffle with Salunke over Rs600 autorickshaw rent, hired by Salunke. Both the suspects took Salunke in an autorickshaw to Race Course area and got drunk. Under the pretext of attending nature's call, they asked the victim to come out of the auto and attacked him with a sharp-edged weapon.

Burnt body found

The burnt body of a woman was recovered from an isolated ground near a traffic check post on Turf Club Road in the wee hours of Tuesday. Senior inspector of Wanavdi police Shivajirao Kanase said, "Our team rushed to the spot after receiving information of foul smell coming from the area."

Residents protest against bust desecration

Two policemen deployed near Ambedkar Chowk suspended for absence at time of incident

DNA Correspondent

Tension gripped Dapodi and Pimpri areas on Tuesday morning after anti-social elements desecrated a bust of Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar at Ambedkar Chowk in Dapodi.

Local residents discovered that the bust was desecrated on Tuesday morning. They gathered at the spot and organised a *rasto roko* to express their anger. Movement of vehicles on the road was barred from 7 am till evening.

A resident of Dapodi area, SK Kamble said, "We were aghast when we saw the bust desecrated this morning. I am so disappointed by this shameful deed. Dr Ambedkar was not only the leader of Dalits, but a leader of our country. We should give him respect as he made a great contribution to the country." The police said a case has been registered against



Angry residents staged a *rasto roko* at Dapodi on Tuesday —Naresh Natu DNA

unidentified miscreants for desecration of the Ambedkar bust at Bhosari police station.

Timely intervention by the police and leaders of political parties ensured that the situation did not go out of hand. The Pimpri-Chinchwad mayor, Yogesh Behl, rushed to the

spot and appealed to people to maintain peace.

A large police team led by deputy commissioner of police (zone III) Dnyaneshwar Chavan, assistant commissioner of police Sudhir Chaugule, Bhosari police station inspector Sudhir Aspat and

other officials reached the spot and controlled the situation.

Chavan said, "We have suspended two police constables, who were deployed near the bust. But when the incident took place, they were not there."

Timely intervention by the police and leaders of political parties ensured that the situation did not go out of hand

In Pimpri, some residents gathered stones to pelt at vehicles. However, the police arrived at the spot on time and prevented any trouble.

The corporator of Dapodi, Sani Ovhal, told DNA that the incident was the handiwork of elements that wanted to create a controversy just a couple of days before the birth anniversary of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar. "The miscreants must be identified and arrested immediately," he demanded.

The city unit president of the Republican Party of India, Anand Ovhal, too sent a letter to the police demanding arrest of the culprits involved in the incident.