

MaharashtraAhead

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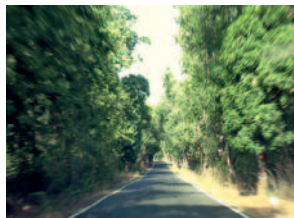
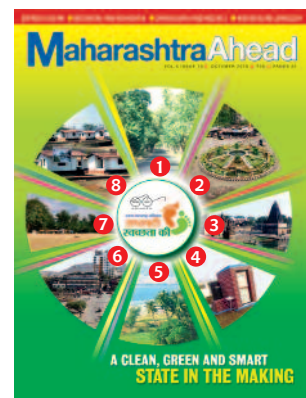


**A CLEAN, GREEN AND SMART
STATE IN THE MAKING**



PICTURE PERFECT MAHARASHTRA

Here are a few images of some of the cities that have taken successful steps towards cleanliness under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. A new era of cleanliness has begun in the State...



1

DAPOLI

By becoming open defecation free (ODF), Dapoli city has created an ideal for other Municipal Councils. Clean roads and green cover have made the city picturesque.



5

BEAUTIFUL KONKAN

A lot of good work is being done in the Konkan division under the mission. Many Municipal Councils and villages have become open defecation free.



2

MAHAD

The place was once famous for social reforms during the freedom movement. Today, Mahad is better known for its lead in cleanliness reform by becoming open defecation free.



6

SATARA

Keeping up with its historic legacy, Satara has put up a good show under the cleanliness mission. The city is now ODF and waste management is in progress.



3

WAI

Blessed by nature, cleanliness has added more beauty to Wai. The picture perfect city now hosts greater number of domestic and foreign artists coming in for shooting.



7

GUHAGAR

The seashore of Konkan is considered the cleanest. With Swachhta Abhiyan in place, Guhagar beach of Maharashtra has taken a leap to become a clean beach.



4

RURAL TOILETS

Awareness about sanitation has led to toilets being constructed throughout the rural areas of the State, leading to a decline in cases of open defecation.



8

VILLAGES WITH THE ODF TAG

Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan has transformed many villages. Freedom from open defecation has made the rural setting more beautiful.

A CLEAN, GREEN AND SMART STATE IN THE MAKING



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COVER STORY

A CLEAN, GREEN AND SMART STATE IN THE MAKING

Following the launch of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi last year, the State Government launched the Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. In its first year, around 20 cities have gone open defecation free



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FOREIGN VISIT ALLIANCE WITH AN EDGE

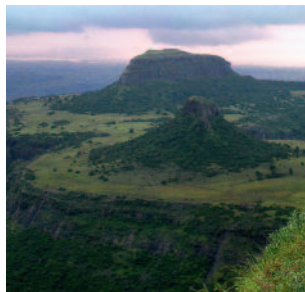
Chief Minister's four-day visit to Japan once again showed signs of greater economic engagement between Japan and India, particularly Maharashtra



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IN PERSON PRAKASH MEHTA

Minister for Housing, Mining and Labour and also Guardian Minister of Raigad says 19 lakh houses would be built in the next five years under Housing for All apart from redeveloping Dharavi slum



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FORTS THE TWIN TACTIC OF DEFENCE

With its interesting geomorphology, Maharashtra offered rulers the advantage of securing their bigger forts with smaller ones in the vicinity



30

NUMBER ONE SEEDS OF OPPORTUNITY

A high-value crop, pomegranate is of great economic importance. It has also been a boon for many farmers in Maharashtra. The fruit is symbolic of plenty



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CULTURE CURRY WHERE THE ANKLETS RING

Hupari near Kolhapur in Maharashtra has the distinction of being the land of the white metal. The silver jewels produced here find ardent buyers across the world



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FIELD VISIT "JALYUKTA SHIVAR IS THE WAY TO GO"

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited Marathwada, Ahmednagar and Solapur to have an on-the-spot survey of drought situation in the region



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SIMHASTHA KUMBH A HOLY DIP

The second and third Shahi Snan of Simhastha Kumbh Mela 2015 took place on September 13 and 25, respectively. Nashik and Trimbakeshwar saw devotees take holy dips in river Godavari



40

WANDERLUST WET AND WILD

Chikhaldara and Melghat are ideal summer hill town resorts in Amravati district with rare panoramic sights that exude charm. Blessed with rich biodiversity they are a must visit

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

TURNING SWACHH MAHARASHTRA INTO REALITY

Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the ambitious Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on October 2 last year. Indeed, our image not only depends on prosperity, but also on 'Swachhata'. Hence the Prime Minister exhorted people to fulfil Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a clean and Swachh India by October 2019. Following the footsteps of the Honourable Prime Minister, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has pledged to make Maharashtra 'Swachh' and open defecation free.

Maharashtra has always been a pioneering State for practicing Swachhata. Sant Gadgebaba Swachhta Abhiyan gained a huge success in the State. The State has received many national-level awards under Nirmal Gram Yojana. However, for Swachh Maharashtra there should be consistency in practices of cleanliness. Each of us should take pledge for Swachh Maharashtra. We all must get together to make Maharashtra clean, green and smart.



The Swachhatchi Saptapadi initiative for urban cleanliness in the State has given further impetus to the mission led by the Chief Minister. Under the initiative, a pledge for cleanliness was taken by urban local bodies. In the first stage, total 19 cities from the State reciprocated to the pledge by taking several initiatives for cleanliness. The initiatives taken by these cities proved to be their first step towards transforming State into clean and open defecation free by the year 2018.

Recently, Chief Minister visited over 40 drought-affected villages of Marathwada, Ahmednagar and Solapur to give solace to the farmers experiencing difficulties due to erratic rains. During the visit, he interacted with more than 30,000 farmers at their farms. Chief Minister assured the farmers that Government is always with

them. A special article related to this visit is part of the issue.

The Chief Minister's Japan tour proved to be very fruitful from industrial investment and social aspect. The tour has made the ties between Maharashtra and Japan stronger. In Japan, Chief Minister unveiled the life-size statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at Koyasan University. Various MoUs on Smart City, bullet train and trans-harbour link were inked during the visit. The article on the visit is also part of the issue.

Maharashtra's pomegranate, silver jewellery of Hupari, green destinations of Melghat and Chikhaldara and the Shahi Snan of Simhastha Kumbh Mela are other highlights of the issue.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Manisha Patankar-Mhaiskar

Editor-in-Chief, *Maharashtra Ahead*, DGIPR



“LET’S MAKE SWACHH MAHARASHTRA A PEOPLE’S MOVEMENT”

A dream of Chief Minister **Devendra Fadnavis**, Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan requires involvement of one and all. The Chief Minister in his piece for *Maharashtra Ahead* shares State’s strategy for the mega programme

Maharashtra is a State that is going through faster urbanisation. Almost half of its population lives in cities. The proportion is on the rise. Due to lack of planning at an earlier stage, the State is on the threshold of facing various ‘urban’ issues. The most important issue that has arisen due the concentration of unplanned and uncontrolled urbanisation in specific strips is that of sanitation. Taking cognisance of the same, we are implementing Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan on priority.

Government of India launched Swachh Bharat Abhiyan across the nation last year. The State mission is based on the same lines. We are implementing the seven elements of Swachh Bharat Mission given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi across the State. The ‘seven steps to cleanliness’ constitute firm resolve to participate, extensive public participation, 100 per cent use of toilets, waste collection—classification—transport, scientific processing of wastes, processing of drainage water and creation of Green Maharashtra. Effective implementation of these seven steps can bring a change in Maharashtra. The steps must be taken together and with

A FUND FOR CLEANLINESS

The funds that will be allocated under 14th Finance Commission to all the cities will henceforth include the funds for the implementation of sanitation mission. The distribution of concerned city funds will thus depend upon the actions taken for maintaining cleanliness of the city. Cities with excellent work done under sanitation are set to receive additional funds. Based on their performance, the cities with best cleanliness and sanitation efforts will be recognised.

The State Government will establish a Swachh Maharashtra Fund for the various works under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. This is a totally innovative initiative, said Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. "The Chief Ministers Sub-Committee of which I am a member has recommended for creation of a National Clean India Fund on the same lines. The Sub-committee has also recommended a sumptuous provision for sanitation in Central and State Budgets during next three years."



(From top) Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis sharing his views on Clean Mumbai, Clean India during a cleanliness programme and at a function organised by Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation in Mumbai

participation of people. It should not be the initiative of Government alone. The elected representatives and leaders of local self-government bodies should convey this mission to the people with firmness. Then and then alone the mission will be completely successful.

We shall not be able to develop in true sense unless we do not become complementary to environment. Environment-friendly development can alone bring total development. Sanitation is a multifaceted phenomenon and it nourishes environment. It is directly related to the lifestyle of human beings. While the cities become clean and beautiful, the lifestyle of common man will become better. A realisation of this must generate among citizens. It is essential that we inculcate a change in some of our basic habits. Citizens and elected representatives are both vocal about basic

Sanitation is a multi-faceted phenomenon and it nourishes environment. It is related to the lifestyle of human beings. When the cities become clean and beautiful, the lifestyle of common man becomes better. A realisation of this must generate among citizens. It is essential that we inculcate a change in some of our basic habits

facilities. However, awareness about sanitation is essential. Before getting smart, the cities should become clean.

Out of a total of 20,000 metric tonne waste generated every day in the State, 16,000 metric tonne is collected by the local self-government institutions. Out of this, only 1,300 metric tonne waste gets processed. The numbers give us an idea of the magnitude of the challenge ahead, and so, the Government definitely needs citizen efforts to mitigate the challenge successfully. That is why a spontaneous public participation is needed urgently for eradicating the water problem effectively.

While working on village sanitation, Sant Gadgebaba and Sant Tukdoji Maharaj had laid huge emphasis on public participation. The people of Maharashtra have always supported progressive ideas. I am confident that Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan too will receive a tremendous public support. **M**



A CLEAN, GREEN AND SMART STATE IN THE MAKING

Following the launch of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi last year, the State Government launched Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. The programme is being effectively implemented in the State with provision of toilet facilities to all. In its first year, around 20 cities have gone open defecation free with solid waste management in place

Launched on October 2, 2014, Government of India's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is being implemented across the length and breadth of the country with the aim of providing clean environment and good health to every citizen. To fulfil the dream of a clean, serene and eco-friendly India visualised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra too has started Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan on a huge scale and received enthusiastic response that is growing by the day.

Under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan, the State Government has focused on urban along with rural areas. As per 2011 Census, urban population of Maharashtra stands at 5,08,27,531 (45.23 per cent of the total population of the State). The total number of families in urban areas is 1,08,13,928. and about 29 per cent of these families lack toilets at home. Out of these, 73 per cent use public toilets and 27 per cent follow open defecation.



“ Money is not required for cleanliness, holiness and leading a life with self-esteem. Cleanliness is required for health. Cleanliness is not just taking a bath. It also means not spitting, not urinating

or defecating and not throwing waste at public places. These invite diseases and hence we must avoid the same.

—**Father of Nation MAHATMA GANDHI**

“ It is the duty of every Indian to maintain cleanliness. Clean and beautiful Bharat is a Nationalist Vigil. Mahatma Gandhi had given the mantra, Quit India and Clean India. With British Rule driven out, one of Mahatma's dreams was fulfilled. Now is the need to fulfill his other dream, Clean India. Cleanliness is not the duty of sanitation workers alone. It is the duty of 125 crore Indians.

—**Prime Minister NARENDRA MODI**



Maharashtra has a total of 265 local self-government bodies with 26 Municipal Corporations and 239 Municipal Councils. A very few of these are equipped with modern and scientific way of disposing solid wastes created every day. Due to this, the concerned municipal corporation and municipality areas face environmental problems and public health challenges. The effects of

(Below) Guhagar seashore and (facing page) temples at Wai, a place of historic importance at Panhala

remedial measures can be seen now. Increasing number of municipalities are becoming open defecation free (ODF) and following solid waste management techniques. According to the guiding principles of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan (Urban) is being effectively implemented with the provision of toilet facilities to all families following open defecation and solid waste management in the cities.

CLEANER SEASHORE

The two Gram Panchayats amalgamated to establish Guhagar Nagar Panchayat received Nirmal Gram Award in 2006. The number of toilets available to a population of 9,466 in Nagar Panchayat area included 2,271 individual toilets and 101 public toilets. Still, three spots on the sea shore were used for open defecation. On investigation, it was found that a reason for the practice was dirty and unusable toilets.

Cleaning and repairing of toilet was undertaken on priority. However, it was brought to the notice that many of the people followed open defecation by habit. The real challenge was to undo this habit. Morning processions and essay competitions were held to create a positive environment, but the problem persisted. A novel campaign of photography squad was then taken. The squad got the photographs in the morning and local newspapers carried the news of the campaign. The habitual offenders of open defecation were now under control. Along with toilets, Ward Number 3 was announced as a model ward for solid waste management. Today, composting of wet waste is being carried out and markets and tourist spots have waste bins.





A PICTURE PERFECT CITY

Mesmerising not only tourists, but also Hindi films with its natural beauty, Wai has done a commendable work in the field of cleanliness. By building toilets and generating awareness among local population to encourage use of toilets, Wai has provided a silver lining to its beautiful setting.

According to the 2011 Census, out of 7,580 families in Wai, 5,143 had individual toilets. The remaining 2,300 families were dependent on public toilets, while 135 families followed open defecation. In order to stop the families from open defecation, Wai Nagar Parishad considered the demand of citizens and provided financial assistance to the families interested in constructing their own toilets under a city-based cleanliness scheme. It also encouraged construction of public toilets for two to four families. Wai Nagar Parishad passed a



In Guhagar, measures like nominating local citizens to supervise cleanliness works have been taken. Wet and dry wastes were classified and composting of wet waste have been carried out



A TIME-BOUND ACHIEVEMENT

Government of Maharashtra initiated Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan from May 15, 2015, and a workshop for Konkan Division was held at Sahyadri Guest House, Mumbai on May 29. On the same day, Vengurla Nagar Parishad resolved to achieve 100 per cent use of toilets. With the target date set as October 2, 2015, it started publicity, with efforts made to inculcate the seven steps of cleanliness in the citizens.

Vengurla Nagar Parishad received a total of 396 applications for constructing individual toilets. After an on-the-spot survey, the target was set at constructing 204 toilets. According to the 2011 Census, the number was 264. On the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan website, 204 applications were verified. Till September 23, 2015, construction of 115 toilets was complete and 89 toilets were under construction. The President, corporators, Chief Executive Officer and staff made planned efforts. In order to prevent open defecation, Vengurla Nagar Parishad has started a campaign from September 18, 2015. A Good Morning Squad has been set up and the team is on patrol duty during morning hours at certain places. The people seen defecating are provided a notice with a stern warning. Positive changes are seen in citizens from this activity.

resolution and provided a grant of ₹10,000 from its own funds for each interested family. The grant of funds increased with the number of families using the toilet facilities. A draft outline was planned and implementation and supervision methods were developed. Carrying out the economic valuation of the Nagar Parishad budget, the extent of self-fund utilisation, dissemination and awareness generation was estimated and organised.

Under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan, every family is being provided an additional grant to the extent of ₹12,000 from the Government. This gave a boost to the ongoing scheme at Wai, and Nagar Parishad started implementing the scheme with a new fervour. To search open defecation spots in the city, the Nagar Parishad organises a Good Morning Squad of more than 40 sanitation workers to stop the practice completely. The squad



(From top) A view of clean Satara and Malkapur getting the certification of open defecation freedom

visits all the spots every morning and at night and penalises following open defecation. Warning is issued to persons defecating in open and told about its hazards. This is bringing positive results. In order to achieve its objective, the Nagar Parishad has appealed to many social institutions and local citizens to join the movement and has implemented various initiatives. Regular and effective repair and maintenance of individual

and public toilets are being undertaken.

A NEW IDENTITY

Malkapur is a Nagar Parishad with 5,339 homes. According to the 2011 Census, 1,130 families used to defecate in the open. Launched on October 2, 2014, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan brought a positive change and today Malkapur Nagar Parishad has achieved open defecation freedom. The Nagar Parishad had organised an Integrity Marathon for awareness about open defecation. This marathon underlines the importance of cleanliness and saw participation of students, teachers, Government staff, officials and common people.

Awareness was also created for cleanliness of home and surroundings, avoiding use of plastic bags and giving up open defecation. Now Ghantagadi (wheel barrow) moves through every street of the city between 6.30 and 11.30 am, collects solid waste and places it in seven waste containers and 12 bins. The roads are cleaned before and after the weekly market during evenings. Efforts are being made to construct individual toilets for families. The Nagar Parishad area has 17 building as public toilets with a total of 72 seats. There are three mobile toilets in the city. Hence, the families without individual toilets use public and mobile toilets. With these efforts, Malkapur city has achieved complete open defecation freedom. The public toilets are provided with adequate water and care is taken for their cleanliness. The Nagar Parishad has started a toll free number 1800 233 2938 for complaints regarding these toilets.

Apart from making the city free of open defecation, Malkapur has provided attention to cleanliness of roads, bus stands and public places. It has undertaken de-sedimentation from water supply wells in the city. Undoubtedly, Malkapur is bound to have a new identity as a clean city with adequate water and clean roads.



CLEAN MATHERAN

The arrangements for public toilets, proportion of individual toilets and awareness campaign carried out by Matheran Giristhan Nagar Parishad have led to 100 per cent toilets for natives. Vehicles are not allowed in Matheran city and, hence, mobile toilets do not exist. However, as an emergency, a two-seater toilet that can be carried by a person has been provided by the Nagar Parishad. The toilet is immediately cleaned after use. It has been mentioned in the Implementation Review of Swachh Maharashtra (Urban) dated September 5, 2015 that 18 families were found with open defecation within Matheran limits. The Nagar Parishad conducted inspection through four supervisors to check the claim, but they could not find any citizen following open defecation.

CLEAN IS BEAUTIFUL

The beauty of Panchgani has always enthralled inland and foreign tourists. Now another feather in its cap is of being free from open defecation. Panchgani has achieved this through construction of public and individual toilets.

The main difficulty about public toilets was the dirtiness. The Nagar Parishad concentrated on the problem and a contract for cleanliness was awarded. Today, the contractor undertakes cleanliness of toilets and urinals twice a day with water and disinfectants. The Nagar Parishad has appointed some of its own permanent staff for supervision of the work. Adequate water is made available at all public toilets. Due to good facilities, citizens are now using public toilets. The Parishad



As per 2011 Census, 104 families from Panchgani did not have toilets. An awareness programme was undertaken so that people construct toilets at their homes



“Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is receiving good response from citizens. We tried to convince them on the importance of toilets in health and development. We were successful. The citizens are now convinced that the city will

be clean if every home has a toilet. Any initiative can be successful with public participation.”

—AWADHOOT TATKARE, MLA (Shrivardhan) and President, Nagar Parishad, Roha

“Due to strong and effective implementation of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the city is striding fast to cleanliness. Families without a toilet facility are now participating in the mission. Eager for cleanliness, they themselves are coming forward and filling up the forms and presenting proper documents in time.”

—BHARATI SAPKAL, President, Nagar Parishad, Mahad



“The city has established public toilets on a large scale. Therefore, open defecation cases have reduced. The response from citizens on the construction of individual toilets has been exemplary.

We went from home to home and worked on distribution of forms and collection of documents.”

—SAVITRI HOMKALAS, President, Nagar Parishad, Chiplun



has also appointed a twin staff squad for penal action under Open Defecation Act. The squad does inspection between 6 and 8 am and mentors the public. With so many efforts, it is seen that even when people lack toilets, they do not go for open defecation. Nagar Parishad has appealed to the people not to go for open defecation and laid down strict controls for the same.

AWARENESS BRINGS CHANGE

Under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, many cities decided their target and began on the path of freedom from open defecation. Every Nagar Parishad and Nagar Panchayat had information on the families not using toilets. The municipalities had to work on three levels—space, finance and awareness. Despite the limitations, 20 of the State achieved open defecation freedom within a year.

Satara Municipality has achieved open defecation freedom as per targets. According to the 2011 Census, 542 families from Satara City did not have toilet facilities and it was necessary to make toilet facility available to them. The spaces where individual toilets could not come up, the option of community and public toilets have been established.

At present, 5,892 families in the city are using Satara Nagar Parishad Public Toilets. For this, 868 community toilet seats are available at 119 buildings. There has been a valuable contribution from President, Vice President and corporators in building the clean status of the city. They helped in individual toilet construction in their ward and Nagar Parishad officials in spreading awareness about using public toilets. The practice of open defecation was stopped and with the



(From top) The placid Venna Lake at Mahabaleshwar and verdant Chiplun reflects Clean Maharashtra

help of corporators, open spaces converted into public gardens.

Satara Nagar Parishad has designed a specific inspection system through public participation. The sanitation inspector, with help of sanitation supervisor, prepares a route plan and time table every week. Every community toilet is cleaned once in two days. A daily report is made and the contractor has to obtain the signature of local citizens on the report. These reports are compiled at the Health Department every evening. As sanitation inspector himself is inspecting the work, such toilets are now being used more by the citizens. This has brought an end to the practice of open defecation in the city.

SPICK AND SPAN

Mahabaleshwar now has much more than natural beauty and delicious strawberries. The 'best hill station' since the time of British Raj, it is today known for its impressive sanitation habits. The population of Mahabaleshwar as per 2011 Census



The number of families using public toilets in Mahabaleshwar is 79, and compared to total number of families, the percentage is 4.32

SOCIAL SENSIBILITY

Preserving its identity as a village, Bhagur has placed an ideal before all municipalities in Nashik district. According to the 2011 Census, only 24 families in Bhagur lacked toilets. However, the city developed and the number of families without toilets increased. At the same time, the people who were using public toilets felt the need for individual toilets. Building individual toilet as one part and use of a toilet as other was agreed by Bhagur Nagar Parishad. The target was set and it was decided to provide individual toilets to the 24 families. Emphasis was also laid on the creation of public and community toilets and their use.

There are around 150 toilets in service all over the city. Out of these, around 70 are for women and 80 for men. When the actual survey started, the President along with the Chief Officer and staff went through the city and collected information as per the 2011 Census guidelines. Meetings were held to listen to people and to resolve their issues. With increased confidence, the natives came forward to assure the administration of completion of work in a month. The officials convinced the people about the disadvantages of open defecation.

Nagar Parishad organised an event for cleanliness in May and created an ideal for the city. The corporators and citizens decided to come together to clean the area every Friday. The Nagar Parishad has been implementing this initiative for past five months continuously. Sahyadri Satellite Channel has also taken note of the efforts.

was 13,405. It had a higher percentage of public and individual toilets compared to the population. The 2011 Census showed that 50 families from Mahabaleshwar did not have toilet facilities. During July 2015, a survey was undertaken on individual toilets through municipality and on the instruction of Principal Secretary (2), Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra. The survey found that it was mandatory to construct 57 individual toilets. Out of these, only 11 families constructed toilets at their own expense, said the survey. An encouragement programme to curb open defecation and construct individual toilets through personal meetings was then started.

Mahabaleshwar today has 27 public toilets—95 seats for women and 104 for men. The number of families using group toilets is 79, and compared to total number of families, the percentage is 4.32. The Nagar Parishad is keen to bring the percentage to zero. **M**

—Praveen Kulkarni



Minister for Water Supply and Sanitation, Babanrao Lonikar during a cleanliness drive

SANITATION MILESTONES

Last year, Maharashtra set on the path of cleanliness and freedom from open defecation. **Kumar Khedkar** accounts the achievements the mission recorded in State's villages in one year



Maharashtra has always been a national torchbearer State in case of rural cleanliness. Sant Gadge-baba Rural Cleanliness Movement became a role model for public participation for the nation. Total Cleanliness Movement and Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan have been implemented in the State with joint participation of both Union and State Governments. On October 2, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the ambitious cleanliness programme, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan all over India. Governor of Maharashtra, Ch. Vidyasagar Rao started the mission in the State by administering oath of cleanliness in Mantralaya. Going by the several events over last ten years, everyone in Maharashtra has cultivated the habit of cleanliness. However, the national importance attached to the idea of cleanliness by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the strong support provided by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at the State level have been responsible for the movement to gain momentum and strength in past one year.

In last one year, the Water Supply and Sanitation Department has carried out a time-bound planning to eradicate open defecation from the



“Toilet is a must for every family and people must inculcate clean habits for their own health. Keeping an eye on the villages carrying out excellent work in the area, I visit every such village and encourage the residents.”

—BABANRAO LONIKAR, Minister for Water Supply and Sanitation

State. All the Zilla Parishads are putting in their best efforts to make the programme successful. It has been observed in a review that the movement has received greater acceptance from the people of Western Maharashtra and Konkan. Marathwada has also seen acceleration in cleanliness.

According to the target set for the mission, India is to be freed from open defecation by 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, i.e. October 2, 2019. Maharashtra has accepted the challenge and State's strategy is in place. In the initial results, more than 2,000 Gram Panchayats in State's various districts have got freedom from open defecation.

Minister, Water Supply and Sanitation, Babanrao Lonikar has taken on himself the task of explaining the importance of cleanliness to

(Clockwise from below) A newly built toilet in Nandurbar and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at Pandharpur, the concluding destination of the sanitation procession



everyone in the State. He emphasises that toilet is a must for every family, and people must inculcate clean habits for their own health. Keeping an eye on the villages carrying out excellent work in the area, he visits every such village and encourages the residents.

RURAL SANITATION

A total of 125,24,797 families live in rural Maharashtra. After several efforts, there is a change of heart in the community as far as cleanliness goes. A total of 74,50,833 families now have their own toilets, putting rural sanitation in Maharashtra at 59 per cent. The number of families that still do not have toilets is 50,73,964. A detailed annual action plan is ready so that all of these families get toilets by 2019. The project implementation plan has been submitted to the Centre, and Zilla Parishads in the State are on the job of achieving the target of open defecation freedom (ODF).

Kolhapur Zilla Parishad has carried out exemplary work at State and National levels in terms of Nirmal Gram. Since 2003, the district



has in place a total sanitation movement. Till 2006, 15 Gram Panchayats of the district had received Nirmal Gram Awards from President of India. The recognition enhanced the enthusiasm among the Gram Panchayats. In 2007, Panhala taluka became first Nirmal Gram, accelerating the sanitation mission. Through 2008, a total of 601 Gram Panchayats from the district became Nirmal Gram—making 80 per cent of Kolhapur as Nirmal Gram. By the end of 2013, 1,002 Gram Panchayats out of 1,029 in the district, and six *talukas* out of 12, were honoured with Nirmal Gram Awards.

During last ten years, the sanitation drive has touched every home in rural Kolhapur. Therefore, the new Government norms took lesser time for implementation. The district's Water and Sanitation Mission Cell carried out a micro-survey of basic sanitation in 2012. Accordingly, 25 Gram Panchayats with zero sanitation target were immediately declared open defecation free. The planning to make 64 Gram Panchayats—with 1-10 toilet construction target—ODF till August 31, 2015 was also successful. Besides, 287 Gram Panchayats

Talukas that celebrated freedom from open defecation this year include Mahabaleshwar and Jawli from Satara, Gaganbawda in Kolhapur, Devgad, Malwan, Vengurla, Sawantwadi and Kanakavali from Sindhudurg

with a target of less than 50 individual toilets were set as a target for ODF till October 2, 2015, making a total of 376 Gram Panchayats to be declared open defecation free this Gandhi Jayanti. The district now aims to make 269 Gram Panchayats, with a target of 50-100 individual toilets open defecation free by December 31, 2015. The remaining 225 Gram Panchayats with more than 100 toilets plan to achieve open defecation free by March 31, 2016. Rajarshi Shahu Rural Sanitation Mission is being implemented in the district so that sanitation becomes a peoples' movement.

A district with serene sea shores and laced with hills and natural beauty, Sindhudurg is equally famous for tropical horticulture and crops such as Alphonso mango, cashew and black plum (*jamun*). Very soon, it will also be known as an open defecation free (ODF) district. Devgad taluka of the district celebrated ODF Festival on September 22, 2015. By October 2, 2015 other talukas, Malwan, Vengurla, Sawantwadi and Kanakavali celebrated the sanitation feat. Out of the 431 Gram Panchayats in the district, 417 will be free from unhygienic conditions. Currently, in the rural areas of the district, individual toilet facility does not exist, affecting around 5,000 families. To bring the facility to these families, Zilla Parishad and Gram Panchayat are working together. Rajesh Kumar, Principal Secretary, Water Supply and Sanitation is monitoring day-to-day sanitation status of the district and mentoring it too.

Satara, which has been bestowed with pious and laden with stories of eminence and valour, is set to create history even in the field of sanitation, as 275 Gram Panchayats and two of its talukas, Jawali and Mahabaleshwar became open defecation free by October 2, 2015.

SANITATION PROCESSION

On the occasion of the annual palanquin procession of Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj and Sant Tukaram Maharaj, the Water Supply and Sanitation Department of Government of Maharashtra organises a sanitation procession. A ten-year-old practice today, the objective of the sanitation procession is to establish the importance of sanitation in the minds of rural population. The State Government organises various entertainment programmes on the route of the procession. A number of tableaus with slogans for sanitation from various districts of the State and folk art performers carry out the work of spreading awareness on sanitation. The programme ends at Pandharpur in the presence of Chief Minister, who then honours

the officers, staff and artists with certificates.

Once the palanquin processions leave from Dehu and Alandi, the sanitation tableau joins them at Pune. This year, the inaugural programme was held at Vidhan Bhawan, Pune at the hands of Divisional Commissioner. The artists and tableaux from Akola, Amravati, Pune, Parbhani, Washim, Beed, Osmanabad, Ahmednagar, Sangli, Latur, Satara, Solapur, Kolhapur, Nanded, Hingoli, Jalna, Thane, Raigad and Aurangabad participated in the procession. At every halt of the procession, the artists presented programmes on sanitation. On July 12 this year, on both the routes of the procession, there were more than 200 artists, 25 officers and staff, and 12 tableaux. The artists explained the importance of a toilet, clean water, waste management, waster water management and topics from environment and Gram Sabha.

The State Government, with some social institutes and UNICEF, has developed a community-led open defecation freedom village action plan

(Clockwise from right)
A newly built toilet, a clean village and a villager with his new toilet in Maharashtra



Present at the last destination of the sanitation procession at Pandharpur, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis praised the work done by artists and said that such initiatives help programmes become public movements. Minister for Revenue Eknath Khadse was also present on the occasion. The procession is being admired at National level as a development dialogue.

Public participation is essential for the success of sanitation programme in rural areas. At the same time, it is also essential to assimilate and plan the programme accordingly. With Maharashtra always welcoming innovation, under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Rural) as well, the Government has created a novel method in alliance with some social institutes and UNICEF through Water and Sanitation Assistance Institute. The method has been named as Community-led ODF Village Action Plan, and is implemented once a village is selected. A sanitation programme then evolves through participation of people. Sanitation work for a full year is conducted at the village. **M**

—The writer is Information, Education and Communication Adviser, Water and Sanitation Assistance Institute



“CLEANLINESS IS THE ROUTE TOWARDS MAKING INDIA THE WORLD POWER”

The first year of cleanliness mission registers good response from one and all, driving Maharashtra on the path of perennial sanitation and prosperity

The country that boasts of youth excelling in Information Technology and many other fields globally also has people who defecate in the open. The lack of sanitation has led to acute health issues, hampering the progress of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi identified that sanitation is the only way for India to become a World Power. Therefore, as soon as he took oath as the Prime Minister, he initiated the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on October 2, 2014 and gave an oath to the people of

(From left) Secretary Urban Development Manisha Mhaikar, Chief Secretary Swadheen Kshatriya and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis in Mumbai recognise the best performers of Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan

India to make the country clean by 2019. At an event organised to commemorate the first year of the mission in Maharashtra, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis expressed confidence that the dream will become a reality in the State before 2018. His decision to appoint three women, who have relentlessly insisted on building toilets at their homes, as State's sanitation ambassadors is a step in the direction of bringing complete sanitation to Maharashtra.

The appeals made for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan through Swachhata Saptapadi (seven steps of cleanliness) by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis have received good response from everyone, right from film actors to young and old in the State. In this one year, schools, colleges and social institutions launched sanitation initiatives in various spheres. Municipal Corporations, Nagar Parishads and Nagar Panchayats took the 'seven steps' oath to make cities free from open defecation. Nineteen Municipalities and two wards of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation achieved freedom from open defecation in the first year of the mission. The officers of these Municipalities and Presidents of Nagar Parishads and those in charge of sanitation at Harit Kumbh and

Pandharpur Ashadhi Yatra were felicitated for excellence of work by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at a programme organised on October 2 at Sahyadri Guest House, Mumbai. A website, www.swachh.maharashtra.gov.in was also launched by the Chief Minister.

The celebrations held at Sahyadri State Guest House have set the tone of a new era in Maharashtra. Swachh Maharashtra is not just a campaign anymore; it is a movement. Elected representatives, administrative officers and citizens are joining the cause of clean Maharashtra enthusiastically. Harit Kumbh at Nashik and Ashadhi Yatra at Pandharpur are two success stories of the campaign. The mega events witnessed Maharashtra achieving higher sanitation standards while providing basic civic amenities to millions of pilgrims. The service made people realise the importance of sanitation, encouraging them to be part of it. In fact, every human being desires sanitation and understands the importance of cleanliness. Swachh Maharashtra thus gave one and all an appropriate direction to realise both.



Funds from 14th Finance Commission will be allocated to the cities only on the basis of their sanitation quotient. There is also a huge challenge for disposal of solid waste and chemical waste

(From top) Officers in-charge of sanitation in various districts of Maharashtra being felicitated for their excellent work on October 2 in Mumbai

An initiative of Manisha Patankar-Mhaikar, Secretary, Urban Development Department, Swachhata Saptapadi movement too received a zealous response. Workshops were organised at Konkan, Nagpur, Pune and Nashik, where officers and activists were given the oath of sanitation. The officers effectively followed up. The efforts soon led to 19 cities achieving freedom from open defecation within a year. Manisha Patankar-Mhaikar said that the campaign got accelerated only after August 15, but expressed confidence that by December 2015, Maharashtra will have at least 47 cities with the tag of open defecation freedom. "Open defecation freedom is an important step in the direction of making our cities sanitised and hygienic. To successfully achieve the target throughout the State, the task has been divided into seven phases. We are aiming open defecation freedom in the State by October 2, 2017 by making 265 cities ODF every quarter. The initial achievements of the resolution itself show the strong foundation of Maharashtra."

Speaking at the event, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis underlined that the dirtiness has increased, as one has forgotten the teachings of Sant Gadgebaba and Rasthtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj on sanitation, and each small effort towards sanitation made by anyone is actually a welfare initiative in itself. "Development is not just about wide roads and large projects. Development is calculated from standard of living. Therefore, the funds from 14th Finance Commission will be allocated to cities only on the basis of their sanitation quotient. There is also a huge challenge of disposal of solid waste and chemical waste. We need to view these wastes not as a challenge, but as an opportunity. If the wastes and waste water are processed and recycled, they can be put to use again," said the Chief Minister, adding that modern technology will be made available to the State by the Centre for the purpose. "Nothing is waste, everything is wealth. Cleanliness is the route towards making India the World Power," he said.

In his appeal, Chief Secretary Swadheen Kshatriya said, "The work of the three newly appointed woman ambassadors of sanitation is exemplary. If the District Collector and the Divisional Commissioner accept the guardianship of the sanitation mission, we will see a huge change. Everyone needs to work and contribute to the open defecation freedom movement. Public participation is curicial for the mission." **M**

—Rajaram Devkar





Sanitation ambassadors: Sangeeta Narayan Awahde, Chiatali Makode and Suvarna Rajendra Lokhande

THE CHANGEMAKERS

Three women stepped out of the crowd to make their families and society realise the significance of sanitation. Meet the sanitation ambassadors of Maharashtra

Sangeeta Narayan Awahde from Saykheda, Washim had to struggle for 13 years to construct a toilet at her home. Due to the miserable financial condition of the family she was married into, she could not get a toilet even after continued requests made to the in-laws. With no land for tilling, the sole livelihood of the family was labour. The condition continued for years and women were forced to defecate in open. A realisation and strong desire to break free from the misery of open defecation changed everything when the mother refused to share it with her young daughter. It was then she decided to sell her *mangalsutra* to build a toilet. *Mangalsutra* is the most important jewel of a married Indian woman, and it requires courage for one to renounce it while the husband is alive and face the community. The determined lady, however, got the support of her husband and soon the family had a toilet of its own.

The tough stand of Sangeeta Narayan Awahde brought her recognition from Woman and Child Welfare Minister Pankaja Munde, who gave her a



Women are most vulnerable when it comes to the pressures created by open defecation. Not only unhygienic, the practice leads to embarrassment and security issues. It is no wonder that the pioneers of the change in the State are women

new *mangalsutra*. Awahde was earlier chosen as the sanitation ambassador for Washim district and Amravati division. Today, she travels to various villages with her husband to talk about building toilets in homes. Now the whole village supports her, and *bhoomipujan* of thousands of toilets has been done by her.

The story of Chiatali Makode is equally interesting. Coming from a small hamlet, Mozar in Yavatmal, Makode had a toilet at her parental home. However, she was shocked at the lack of a toilet at her future in-laws' residence. She requested her parents to provide her with a toilet in place of other gifts on her wedding. The parents obliged and a ready-made toilet with a water closet, a wash basin and mirror standing around one foot tall was one of the wedding gifts she got. The case made Makode not just outstanding, but also State's second sanitation ambassador.

The family of State's third sanitation ambassador, Suvarna Rajendra Lokhande from Sinnar, Nashik was extremely poor. However, her viewpoint on sanitation was totally liberal and bold. Enduring the embarrassment of open defecation for years, she made it a point that her daughter does not face it tomorrow and be victim of stigma and health problems. She decided to take a loan from a local women self-help group to construct a toilet at her home. The move established Lokhande as a role model in Maharashtra. **M**

—Rajaram Devkar



एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR CLEANLINESS?

Sanitation and cleanliness are important for everyone. It requires each one of us to make our city, our country clean. The time to act is now

In past few months, many projects have been initiated under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. Cities are embracing cleanliness. Toilets are being constructed. No longer confined to State Government, the mission belongs to social organisations, communities and individuals, who are keeping no stone unturned to make Maharashtra clean. Though the efforts of each section are quite visible, we all must get together to make it successful. With the following pledge even you can contribute to the mission.

PLEDGE

Under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan, I take the pledge to make Maharashtra clean. These seven vows are now an inseparable part of my day-to-day life.

- I pledge not to spread uncleanness.
- I will segregate dry and wet waste before handing over it to those disposing it.
- I will try to maintain cleanliness at public places and stop those not doing so.
- I will use individual or public toilet and encourage others to do so.
- I will not spit at public places.
- I will try to create awareness about cleanliness at personal level.
- I pledge to make Maharashtra green.



The team of engineers and workers busy building a toilet at Zari in Peth taluka

“WE ARE PART OF A COUNTRY THAT NEEDS TOILETS URGENTLY”

The said realisation encouraged a group of engineering professionals from Nashik to think beyond home and office and construct toilets at Zari in Peth taluka of Maharashtra. The group that includes Vivek Pendse, Pravin Joshi, Sunil Sawant, Vijay Jadhav, Raju Lothe and Rahul Vavikar, deputed in the region for the work of Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan, decided to associate with the cause of sanitation. Committed to build 65 toilets at Zari, the group has so far constructed 15 toilets.

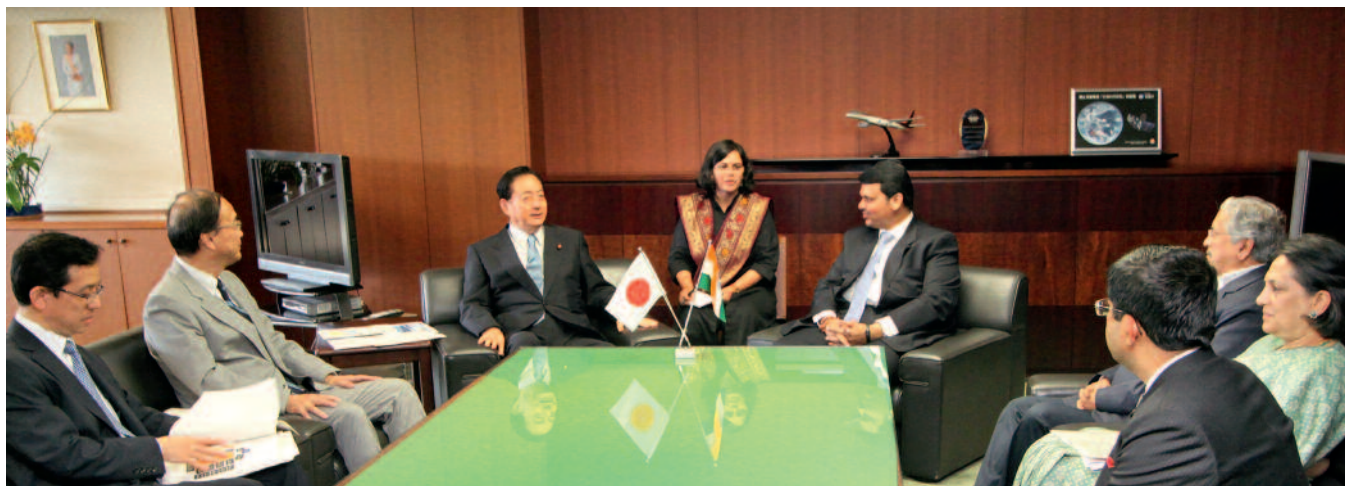
The group of engineers are posted in Nashik for the work of Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan. They are committed to build 65 toilets in Peth taluka

If all Government efforts find support from public in such an impressive manner, there is no one coming in the path of development. The effort is a big step towards building a clean State.

SHARE IT WITH MAHARASHTRA AHEAD

To spread the message of cleanliness and celebrate the commendable work done by citizens for Swachh Maharashtra, Maharashtra Ahead has launched a column. So, like the efforts put in by the group of engineers from Nashik, next month, it could be your story encouraging everyone out there. If you too have an initiative under Swachh Maharashtra, send us the details and pictures of the work undertaken at the following address. We will take forward your effort through our readers.

Write to us at Editor, Maharashtra Ahead, Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, 17th Floor, New Administrative Building, Opposite Mantralaya, Mumbai-400 032.
E-mail: maharashtraahead.dgipr@gmail.com



Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in a meeting with Japan's Minister for Land, Infra, Transport and Tourism, Akihiro Ota in Tokyo

ALLIANCE WITH AN EDGE

Chief Minister's four-day visit to Japan once again showed signs of greater economic engagement between Japan and India, particularly Maharashtra. Tokyo is all set to play an increasingly crucial role in the transformation and development of Maharashtra

After US, Germany, China and Israel, it's the turn of investors from Japan—the world's third largest economy—to express their intent to associate with the ambitious Make in Maharashtra programme. During the four-day visit to Japan, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was able to effectively project Maharashtra's pre-eminence in attracting domestic and foreign direct investments to Japanese investors.

The Chief Minister lured Japanese investors explaining that Maharashtra accounts for 15 per cent of national exports, 30 per cent of the national FDI, which includes 7 per cent from Japanese FDI. "The three Ds—demography, democracy and demand—are in favour of investment in India and Maharashtra is the most preferred destination," he said. Besides, the Chief Minister led delegation comprising Minister for Industries Subhash Desai explained a slew of investor-friendly decisions taken by the State Government since it assumed office in October last year. Some of the said decisions include drastic reduction in the number of approvals to 37 from 76, relaxation in River Zone Regulations, amendments to the Factories Act, removal of inspector raj and cut in industrial tariff. The objective is to roll out a red carpet to global industries and remove red tapism.

In a bid to kick start Japanese investments, the State Government has announced to have a one-stop shop to monitor all of its upcoming projects. A special desk will be set up in Mantralaya to oversee these projects. As a major breakthrough, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) reiterated its commitment to fund a slew of infrastructure projects of over ₹60,000 crore. These projects include Mumbai Metro network expansion

and Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) project. JICA's long-term loan is expected at a low interest rate.

JICA would start public consultation on Mumbai Metro shortly and fast track funding for the ₹11,000 crore MTHL. It has already expressed its desire to provide 80 per cent or ₹8,800 crore of the finance as loan. The State Government proposes to start bidding for MTHL by December end. The State-run Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) has already taken a decision to implement MTHL project on cash contract basis and not on

“It was a great pleasure to meet Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade & Industry Yoichi Miyazawa. An MoU was signed between METI and GoM for public-private cooperative actions towards further development of Maharashtra”

—Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister

build-operate-transfer basis. JICA's assurance comes close on the recent decision by MMRDA to sanction the expenditure of ₹35,400 crore for the development of 118-km Metro network in the city. This includes 40-km Dahisar–Charkop–Bandra–Mankhurd metro-2 corridor (₹12,000 crore), a 40-km Wadala–Ghatkopar–Thane–Kasarvadavali Metro-4 corridor via Wadala GPO and RA Kidwai Marg (₹12,000 crore), a 27-km Dahisar–E–Andheri–E–Bandra–E Metro-5 corridor (₹8,100 crore) and a 11-km



(Clockwise from top) Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis with Fumiko Hayashi, Mayor of Yokohama, during the function organised by MTDC, unveiling the statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at Koyasan University, and Minister of Economy, Trade & Industry Yoichi Miyazawa in Japan

Jogeshwari-Vikhroli Link Road Metro-6 corridor (₹3,300 crore). Further, MMRDA has accepted two detailed project reports, one for the 16.5-km Andheri-E to Dahisar-E Metro corridor and the other for the 18.6-km Dahisar to DN Nagar Metro corridor, prepared by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation. The reports have recommended these two corridors, estimated at ₹4,737 crore and ₹4,994 crore respectively, for State approval.

Japanese Minister for Land, Infra, Transport and Tourism, Akihiro Ota has assured the Chief Minister of support to Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, and agreed to study the proposal for the train to go via Nashik. Shinkansen, a network of high-speed railway lines in Japan, will be at the forefront to provide

HIGHLIGHTS: MAHARASHTRA-JAPAN, SEPTEMBER 8 TO 13, 2015

PORITE CORPORATION TO INVEST ₹200 CRORE

The Chairman of Porite Corporation Masanori Kikuchi in a discussion with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis submitted a proposal of investment of ₹200 crore to set up a metallurgy powder factory at Talegaon MIDC. The investment of ₹200 crore will be in two phases.

JAPAN TO COOPERATE FOR BULLET TRAIN

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had a meeting with Japan's Minister for Land, Infra, Transport and Tourism, Akihiro Ota in Tokyo. He requested Minister Ota for support from Shinkansen (a network of high-speed railway lines in Japan) for Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train. He also suggested the development of Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL) as the bridge of India-Japan friendship.

DR. AMBEDKAR STATUE AT KOYASAN UNIVERSITY

This year, 125th birth anniversary of the architect of Indian Constitution, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is being observed. It is matter of great pride and honour that Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis unveiled the life-size statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar at Koyasan University in Japan. An MoU was also signed between Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University and Koyasan University. The association has made the cultural ties of both States stronger.

CM INVITES JAPANESE TOURISTS

At Visit Maharashtra Buddhist Tourist Circuit in Osaka, many Japanese tourist operators were present. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis spoke

about development of Ajanta and Ellora caves and assistance given by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). After successful completion of Phase 1, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis stressed the need for further cooperation for balanced infrastructure development and amenities. He also spoke on Maharashtra beaches, forts, forests and wildlife, and invited Japanese to visit the State and explore further.

JAPAN DESK TO BE SET UP IN STATE

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that the State Government will set up a special Japan Desk in the State along with Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) to monitor all projects involving Japanese companies and provide solutions to every problem and query of the companies. The desk will work as one-stop shop for all Japanese companies. The Government will set up Japanese Industrial Park at Supa with the help of JETRO. JETRO will support investment activities in and around Supa Industrial Park and support promotion activities of Government of Maharashtra.

MAHARASHTRA: FACTORY OF GLOBE

On the first day of the Japan tour, at Maharashtra State Investment Promotion Seminar, organised by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation and Jetro Industries at Osaka, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis promoted the State as Factory of Globe and invited Japan investors to invest in Maharashtra and set up production units. The available tech-savvy manpower could support industrial development and be a boon for investors from across the globe.



(From top) Vice Minister for International Affairs of MLIT Toshiya Morishige and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in the bullet train, at Yokohama port, with JICA's chief representative Hideaki Domochi and praying with monks at Koyasan in Japan

OTHER KEY MEETINGS

- Daikin Air conditioning India Chairman and CEO, Toshio Nakano and Junichi Omori met Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in Osaka, Japan.
- Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Minister for Industries Subhash Desai met Yuichi (Ken) Kitao of Kubota, one of the oldest agricultural manufacturing companies of Japan.
- Chief Minister met Soft Bank Group Chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son. Further, MIDC and Mizuho Bank signed an MoU in presence of the Chief Minister to accelerate investment activities in India. The MoU will support Japanese companies' efforts to promote economic expansion in India, particularly in Maharashtra.
- The Chief Minister and Minister for Industries visited port of Yokohama, which handles 27 million tonnes of cargo. Devendra Fadnavis also attended a meeting with dignitaries at Yokohama port and reviewed the development work being carried out.
- Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis met Shigenobu Nagamori, CEO, NIDEC Corporation, who assured to send a team to Maharashtra to explore investment opportunities. NIDEC makes electric motors for hard disk drives, appliances and automobiles.
- The Chief Minister addressed a function organised by Association of Friends of Japan. The organisation agreed to work as a facilitator in Japan to bring investment in Maharashtra.

aid in the development of Mumbai–Ahmedabad bullet train.

Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry has signed an MoU with the State Government for public-private partnerships for development in Maharashtra. Both the sides agreed to increase cooperation in the development of Mumbai, Nagpur and Pune Metro networks and smart city in Navi Mumbai SEZ. Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) has agreed to support investment activities in and around Supa Industrial Park. Porite Corporation has proposed to set up a metallurgy powder factory at Talegaon MIDC with an investment of ₹100 crore in phase I and another ₹100 crore in phase II. Three companies, ElecTrike, A2Care and A S BRAIN Co. handed over letter of intent to the Chief Minister. ElecTrike has expressed its desire to manufacture eTrike (electric tricycle), while A2Care, a pharmaceutical company that also manufactures water treatment products for river and dam water, has firmed up plan to enter Maharashtra. A S BRAIN Co. has offered to start hospitality, infrastructure and IT projects in the State.

In his meeting with Shigenobu Nagamori, CEO, NIDEC Corporation, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis asked him to send a team to Maharashtra to explore investment opportunities. NIDEC Corporation manufactures electric motors for hard disk drives, electronic appliances and automobiles. The Chief Minister also met Soft Bank Group Chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son. MIDC and Mizuho Bank have inked an MoU to accelerate investment activities in India.

In tourism, Maharashtra and Japan have agreed to promote Ajanta and Ellora caves in Aurangabad and Lonar crater in Buldhana district. The emphasis is on developing the Buddhist Tourist Circuit.

Chief Minister's four-day visit has once again shown signs of greater economic engagement between Japan and India and, more importantly, Maharashtra. Tokyo is all set to play a crucial role in the transformation and development of Maharashtra. [M](#)

Juggling three important portfolios of Housing, Mining and Labour effectively and being the Guardian Minister of Raigad, State Cabinet Minister **Prakash Mehta** has taken many key decisions in last one year. Under the ambitious scheme, Housing for All by 2022, the State Housing Department intends to build 19 lakh homes in Mumbai and take up long pending projects like Dharavi Slum Redevelopment and others. He also has rural housing and labour reforms on his priority list. In an interview with **Mrudula Varaskar**, the Minister shares the key initiatives taken so far and the way forward. Excerpts:

Q. Tell us about the scheme, Housing for All by 2022.

A. Housing for All is an initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi under which Government of India will provide a grant in aid to the State for providing housing units to eligible beneficiaries by the end of 2022. The scheme, Prime Minister Awas Yojana has four verticals for providing assistance in the range of ₹1 lakh to ₹1.5 lakh to the eligible economically weaker section and lower income group (EWS/LIG) beneficiaries for construction of new house as well as upgrading those who



“THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO ACQUIRE LAND THROUGH MHADA, CIDCO AND MMRDA, AND DEVELOP THE HOUSES ON PPP BASIS. WE WILL OFFER INCENTIVES LIKE TAX SUBSIDIES, MORE FSI AND TOWNSHIP MODELS”

already have individual housing. The Housing Department is in the process of obtaining sanction of the State Cabinet for implementing the scheme and is contemplating to provide assistance in the form of State's share. We will unveil the format of the scheme to be implemented in the State.

Q. Owning a house is everybody's dream, but with soaring prices, it is difficult for most of the people. How do you plan to make it easy for them?

A. Under Housing for All by 2022, the State Government plans to build 19 lakh houses in next five years. We will achieve this by partnering with public and private sectors and credit-linked subsidies. The Government intends to acquire the land through MHADA, CIDCO and MMRDA, and develop the houses on PPP basis. We will offer incentives like tax subsidies, more FSI and township models, among others.

Q. How do you plan to strengthen the Housing Regulatory Authority?

A. The authority will soon have powers equivalent to a civil court. Once it comes into effect, it can ask to transfer 10 per cent of the total project to buyers, who can sell it in the market

“Housing for All will see 19 lakh houses built in next five years”



IN THE PIPELINE

■ Houses for mill workers:

6,948 houses have already been built on the mill land available to MHADA. 23 houses have been allotted to heirs of martyrs of Samyukta Maharashtra Movement and 5,573 given to mill workers. On other nine mill lands, 6,794 apartments are under construction. Giving half of the houses to mill workers

under Urban Development's MMRDA housing complex is under consideration.

■ **Police housing:** The Housing Department is considering a partnership between MHADA and Maharashtra State Police Housing and Welfare Corporation to develop houses on a large scale.

■ **Redeveloping BDD and BIT chawls:** The discussion for

in case the developer fails to complete the project. It will also have the power to sentence defaulters to prison and fine them. The State Government has already published the draft rules inviting suggestions, and will soon finalise it in consultation with the Law and Judiciary Department.

Q. As Minister of Labour, how do you plan to support Make in Maharashtra?

A. Our effort is to create a conducive business environment for Make in Maharashtra. By 2025, 300 million young workers are



affordable house for all BDD residents is in final stages. Proposal for redevelopment of BIT chawls is with the Centre, which will create 1 lakh affordable houses.

■ Dharavi Rehabilitation

Plan: Talks are in final stages with the Chief Minister to divide Dharavi in four parts of which one part will be developed by MHADA and the rest under Dharavi Rehabilitation Project

■ Redevelopment of refugee camps:

The department will soon finalise the policy on Sion Koliwada, Chembur and Thane's 60-year-old refugee camps in dilapidated conditions

■ Mahatma Gandhi Footpath

Rehabilitation Scheme: The department is following up on bringing 25,000 houses for footpath dwellers under Housing for All by 2022.

expected to join the workforce, and in next few years, 25 per cent of the world's labour will come from India. Maharashtra has a large human resource that needs good working conditions and adequate standard of living. We have recently amended the Factory Act to increase overtime work limit to 115 hours in a quarter from 75 hours and to allow women workers to work in night shifts. Also, now workers can take leave after completing 90 days instead of old limit of 240 days. We also want to improve sections 2 and 25 under Industrial Dispute Act, which will increase the compensation amount for

“WE HAVE RECENTLY AMENDED THE FACTORY ACT TO INCREASE OVERTIME WORK LIMIT TO 115 HOURS IN A QUARTER FROM 75 HOURS AND TO ALLOW WOMEN WORKERS TO WORK IN NIGHT SHIFTS”



KEY DECISIONS FOR LABOUR DEPARTMENT

- Setting an independent body for loom workers
- Exemption from section 18 of Maharashtra Shops and Establishments Act to keep shops open all round the year
- Stringent time limit in issuing licences to contractors
- Completion of Labour Department's BPR, computerisation of the department and launching a portal for online services
- Revamping of Mathadi Advisory Committee
- Establishing an independent three-party body for sugarcane workers

workers and extract steady and regular flow of work from them.

Q. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis met Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh for promoting mining in Gadchiroli. Tell us more.

A. Now we have the support of Centre to start iron ore mining in Gadchiroli and promote steel industries. We plan to start projects in the district in alliance with private companies and transform the region socially and economically.

Q. What changes has the mining sector seen recently?

A. We have amended the Mining and Minerals (Development and

Regulation) Act 1957 and Mining Laws, 1960. As per the new GR, the permissions given to 73 mines have been extended to 50 years. We are also working on setting up District Mineral Foundation in all the districts.

Q. As Guardian Minister of Raigad, how do you plan to develop the district?

A. Raigad has a unique place in State's history due to the Raigad Fort. The Chief Minister has announced a package of ₹50 crore for renovations and maintenance of the fort. Here, I will focus on mining and tourism for economic development.

Q. The Government soon completes one year. What is the roadmap ahead?

A. For the housing sector, we intend to create a housing stock for EWS/LIG category under Housing for All with appropriate policy decisions that will boost the real estate segment too. For labour sector, we are making suitable amendments in various labour laws such as Shops & Establishments Act, Contract Labour Act, Mathadi Act, Security Guards Act, among others. Housing for All and Make in Maharashtra are great initiatives and we will work hand in hand with concerned departments to make them successful. **M**



(From left) Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis meeting farmers in Latur and Girish Bapat, Minister, Food and Civil Supplies, during a foodgrain distribution event

THE STATE MAKES ITS FARMERS FOOD SECURE

Since August 15, Maharashtra has been providing foodgrains to the farmers of 14 drought-affected districts under National Food Security Scheme, reports Archana Shambharkar

Completing the pre-requisites such as sowing for the ensuing crop, the farmers of Maharashtra were waiting for a good rainfall. However, lesser rainfall than usual deprived them of reaping a good yield. To ensure that the producer of food for the entire world does not starve, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis took an important decision.

The decision was to provide foodgrains to the farmers of 14 drought-affected districts of the State under National Food Security Scheme. From this Independence Day, all eight divisions of Aurangabad, five divisions of Amravati and Wardha from Nagpur came under the ambitious scheme. With a view to prevent farmer suicides and provide financial assistance to encourage farmers during the calamity, the Chief Minister had made the announcement in Legislature on the same. Farmers not included in the scheme, but above poverty line (APL) card holders are to be given rice at ₹3 per kg and wheat at ₹2 per kg under the scheme.

After the announcement, the foodgrain distribution scheme was launched at the concerned district headquarters by the Guardian Ministers. At taluka level, the launch was



“The State has completed a large proportion of Aadhar card registration. About 87 per cent of the registration is done. The card will have the name of the person, Aadhar card number, bank account number and mobile number of a ration card holder.

—Devendra Fadnavis
Chief Minister



done by concerned MLAs. The beneficiaries are provided 5 kg foodgrains per month per person. With this, 68 lakh farmers from 140 talukas of 14 districts, namely Aurangabad, Jalna, Nanded, Beed, Parbhani, Osmanabad, Latur, Hingoli, Amravati, Washim, Akola, Buldhana, Yavatmal and Wardha have been brought under the cover of food security.

Permission from the Cabinet was obtained to provide the benefits of foodgrains on par with National Food Security Scheme to APL (Saffron) ration card holder farmers. According to primary statistics, the number of farmers not included in the National Food Security Scheme was found to be 22 lakh. The required foodgrains for these farmers—to the extent of 11,000 metric tonnes (6,600 metric tonnes wheat and 4,400 metric tonnes of rice)—were made available by the Government of India at fair price.

During implementation, it came to the notice of officials that the number of beneficiary farmers is actually 68 lakh instead of 22 lakh—the reason being that after 2011 many farmers were included in the list of APL beneficiaries. The fact was brought to the notice of the Cabinet, and accordingly, 23,000 metric tonnes foodgrains (13,800 metric tonnes wheat and 9,200 metric tonnes of rice) were made available at fair price. Hence, 68 lakh APL farmers from these 14 districts are being given 34,000 metric tonne foodgrains regularly.

Taking a personal interest in the scheme that started on August 15, 2015, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited some authorised ration shops at Parbhani, Latur and Beed. He inspected the list available at ration shops and had a dialogue with the farmers.

BIOMETRICS AND AADHAR

The Government of India provides around ₹13-14 thousand crore worth foodgrains to Maharashtra. The State has around 2.34 crore ration cards. On an average, each card has four to five people. It comes out to be around nine crore people to be benefitted from the food security scheme. It has also come to State Government's notice that some of the ration card holders are bogus. When biometric system was implemented on an experimental basis at a fair price shop in some talukas, about 15 to 22 per cent of the ration cards were found to be bogus.

Around 10-12 per cent of ration cards in the State are bogus and controlling the same has always been difficult, as there is no computerised system to take note. Therefore, a policy decision was taken by the Government on March 11, 2015 to computerise the public distribution system (PDS) totally and distribute ration items at fair price shop on the basis of biometric identity of the beneficiary through Aadhar. Computerised ration card will be made on the name of the senior-most woman of the family and biometric identity will be verified through use of mobile terminal technology.

The number of fair price shops in Maharashtra is also quite large. It has 56,235 fair price shops. Adequate funds have been made available for compilation of Aadhar card and seeding of the same in the database of the PDS. The action for seeding Aadhar number in the ration card is going on in all districts and seeding of 2.72 crore ration cards has been completed. Soon



Special care has been taken to ensure that food security reaches the farmers. The 7/12 extract of the ration card holder was made compulsory for getting benefits of the scheme. The 68 lakh ration cards were stamped as farmers, so that they could be easily identified. The names of the beneficiaries were read out publicly at every village and tehsil. With this, if a wrong noting was made, the same was corrected then and there. During September, 68 lakh people were given foodgrains to the extent of 34,000 metric tonnes.

—Deepak Kapoor
Secretary, Food and Civil Supplies



the whole process will be completed.

The work started on June 16, 2015 is being implemented through Talathi and Aasha workers. Information from every ration card holder is being collected and deposited with the tehsil office. Every District Collector is inviting tender for the online data entry for the district and completing the work of the data entry.

Around 4.5 lakh cards are seeded every day, and by November-December 2015, it will be hundred per cent complete. This will weed out bogus ration card holders, benefit genuine beneficiaries, curb black marketing and help the exchequer save thousands of crores of rupees.

DISTRIBUTION CHAIN

A computerised distribution system chain is being established, so that transparency can be brought in foodgrains received from Centre to the State through Food Corporation of India.

The path-breaking project is launched in Raigad and Sindhudurg districts and will be implemented all over the State by March 2016. Under this, every godown will be equipped with computers and the foodgrains will be weighed at every place. A computerised management chain will be made for materials taken out from the godown till they reach tehsil and district godown.

A SUGAR PURCHASE MODEL

The sugar distributed to BPL families and Antyodaya beneficiaries are being purchased from open market from suppliers registered with NCDEX e Markets Limited through e-tender under transparent and competitive bidding every month. The method has been practiced from January 2015.

Due to this e-tendering system, the purchase for sugar has become transparent, competitive and modern. The State Government is able to procure sugar at lower prices as compared to the market. E-tendering process sugar prices include labour, transport and other related charges. With this, the State does not incur additional expenditure and saves around ₹2 crore every month.

With the success of Maharashtra model of sugar purchase, other States such as Karnataka and Chhattisgarh have also adopted the model. The Director General Supplies (Army) has also sought the details of the model. The whole chain carries 1,86,000 quintal sugar to around 3 crore beneficiaries every month. With the transparency in the process, sugar is delivered to beneficiary in time bringing sweetness in their lives. **M**



The officials brief Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Girish Bapat on the new PDS model

THE TWIN TACTIC OF DEFENCE

With its interesting geomorphology, Maharashtra offered rulers the advantage of securing their big forts with smaller ones in the vicinity, says **Dr. Sachin Vidyadhar Joshi**



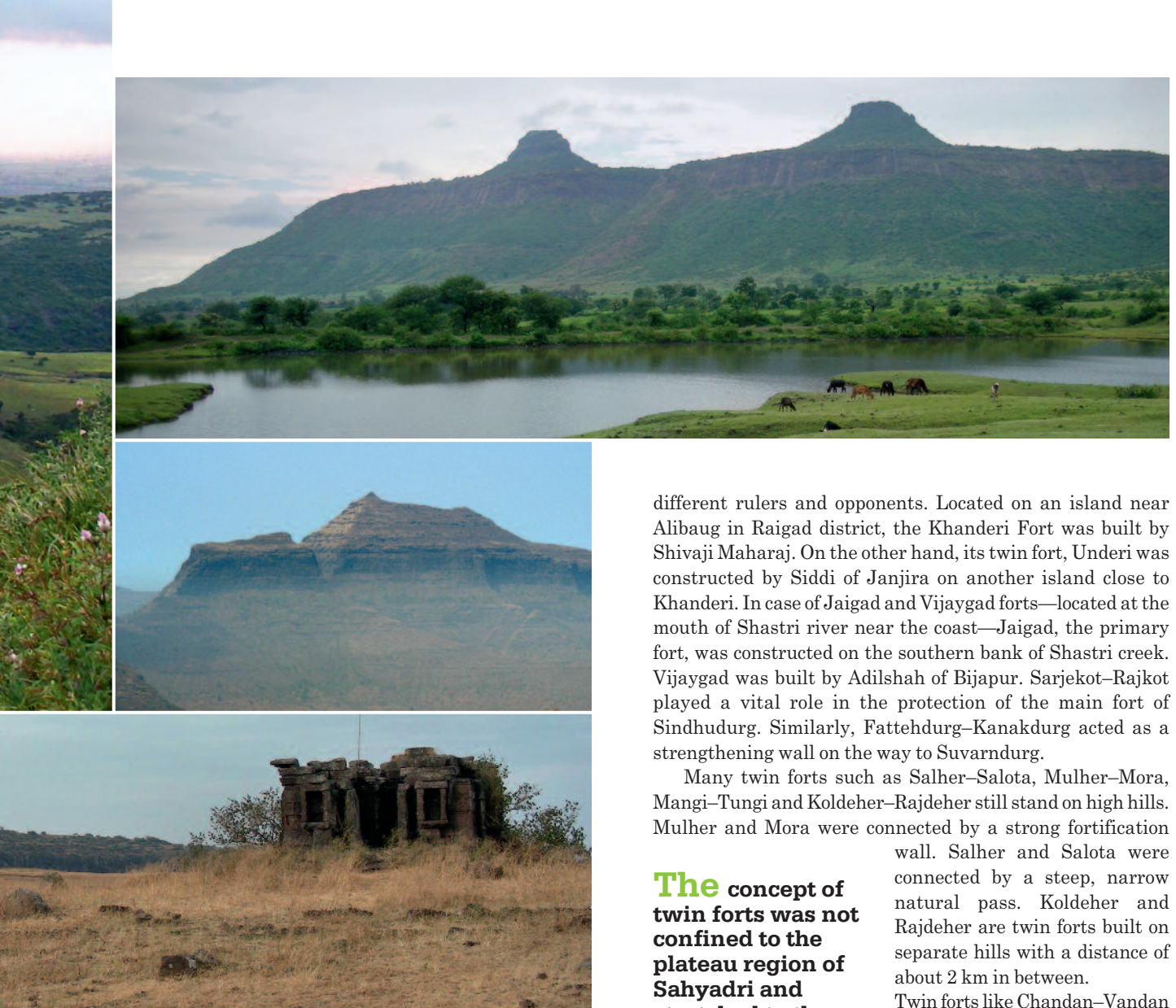
(Clockwise from top) A set of twin forts, Rawalya-Jawalya Forts, Salher-Salota Forts, a temple at Ankai-Tankai Fort complex and Ankai-Tankai Forts in Maharashtra

Landscape in Maharashtra was always suitable for construction of hill, coastal and island forts. The hilly region, thick forest and Konkan—the region between the Ghats and the sea—all offered good locations for these mighty structures. Five dynasties ruled over the Sahyadri during the medieval period. The Yadavas of Devgiri, Bahamanis, Adilshahi and Nizamshahi rulers had their capitals on the plateau region and ports on the west coast in Konkan. In *Adnyapatra*, Ramchandra Pant, a finance minister (*amatya*) of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, has written on forts and their administration. He explains the selection of locations for building a fort, its administrative system, needs, people deployed and their responsibilities in detail. An important trend mentioned is of building twin forts.

According to Ramchandra Pant, the hill selected for constructing a fort should not be surrounded by other high hills and should not be closer to any other hill. If there was another hill near to the location, the king was advised to construct a fort on that hill as well. The idea was to protect the

main fort from an easy defeat, which was possible from the adjacent hill. An example of this theory was Purandar Fort, which remained unbeaten for a long time during the Mughal-Maratha war of 1664-65. The fort later fell to the Mughals when Diler Khan captured Vajragad Fort, a fort just behind the fort of Purandar. The battle clearly showed the importance of twin forts in defence tactics.

Many twin forts such as Ankai-Tankai, Mangi-Tungi, Rawalya-Jawalya and Khanderi-Underi were constructed in the Sahyadris during the medieval period. The practice began with the Yadavas of Devgiri with Ankai and Tankai forts. Examples of strong defence, these forts were strengthened by gateways and fortified walls. Jain and Hindu caves were carved at the base of Tankai and Ankai, respectively. A ruined Hindu temple can be seen at the top of Tankai Fort. Ankai has more construction as compared to Tankai. The two forts were connected with a small single pass that had gateways and fortification wall to connect them internally. Between the two forts, Ankai acted as a primary fort, with Tankai built to protect it. The forts located on



Surat–Aurangabad medieval route were annexed by Khan Khanan on the orders of Shah Jahan in 1635 AD.

Rawalya and Jawalya are other famous twin forts located in Nashik district. Though one does not see colossal construction on the forts today, their strategic location is noteworthy. These forts are situated on a 300 m high common plateau. The two peaks on the plateau were fortified by Nizamshah of Ahmednagar in the early 17th century. Not directly connected with each other, the distance between them is about 500 m. Separate gateways and fortification walls were built to give strength to the two forts. Mughal warrior Alivardi Khan later captured the structures from Nizamshah. By 1670 AD, these forts were under Maratha rule.

The concept of twin forts was not confined to the plateau region of Sahyadri and stretched to the west coast and islands. The twin forts of Khanderi–Underi, located on the island with the same name, Sarjekot–Rajkot and Jaigad–Vijaygad on the coast, and Bharatgad–Bhagwantgad on the Karli creek are other examples. Many times, the twin forts were held by

different rulers and opponents. Located on an island near Alibaug in Raigad district, the Khanderi Fort was built by Shivaji Maharaj. On the other hand, its twin fort, Underi was constructed by Siddi of Janjira on another island close to Khanderi. In case of Jaigad and Vijaygad forts—located at the mouth of Shastri river near the coast—Jaigad, the primary fort, was constructed on the southern bank of Shastri creek. Vijaygad was built by Adilshah of Bijapur. Sarjekot–Rajkot played a vital role in the protection of the main fort of Sindhudurg. Similarly, Fattehburg–Kanakdurg acted as a strengthening wall on the way to Suvarndurg.

Many twin forts such as Salher–Salota, Mulher–Mora, Mangi–Tungi and Koldeher–Rajdeher still stand on high hills. Mulher and Mora were connected by a strong fortification

The concept of twin forts was not confined to the plateau region of Sahyadri and stretched to the west coast and islands. Many times the twin forts were held by different rulers and opponents

wall. Salher and Salota were connected by a steep, narrow natural pass. Koldeher and Rajdeher are twin forts built on separate hills with a distance of about 2 km in between.

Twin forts like Chandan–Vandan were constructed by Adilshah of Bijapur in Satara district, but captured by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj later. After the death of the Maratha leader, Aurangzeb took over the forts, which later, under the leadership of Maharani Tarabai, were annexed by Marathas again. The two forts were connected by a natural pass.

The concept of construction of twin forts started in 13th century AD and lasted up to 17th century AD. Almost all dynasties such as Yadavas, Bahamanis, Nizamshahi, Adilshahi and Marathas constructed twin forts. The natural landscape or geomorphology of Sahyadri region was utilised effectively by these dynasties while constructing these forts. Interestingly, the concept of twin forts is extensively seen only in Maharashtra except for the forts of Sajra and Gojara built by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in Tamil Nadu during his South India campaign. **M**

—The writer is a Researcher at Department of Archaeology, Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute, Pune



SEEDS OF OPPORTUNITY

A high-value crop, pomegranate is of great economic importance. It has also been a boon for many farmers in Maharashtra, says **Sameer K**



Pomegranate has changed lives of several farmers in some of the driest and drought-prone regions of Maharashtra. The only State in India where the fruit is produced commercially, the fruit has been the ladder of growth for those growing it. More than two decades ago, the farmers in Solapur, Sangli and Satara districts had no option but to migrate to cities for their livelihood. Things changed for them when the farmers learnt how to grow pomegranate, an arid area crop that needs little or no water. Some of the villages in Solapur—with no

The juicy, red fruit

● Pomegranate is a high-value crop with medicinal properties and good taste.

Besides good demand for its fruit and juice, pomegranate wine, tea and candy are gaining importance in world trade

● Today, a farmer earns ₹2 lakh to ₹10 lakh per acre depending on the productivity of pomegranates

● By 2025, the area under pomegranate cultivation will increase to 7.5 lakh ha from 1.20 lakh ha at present. Production would increase ten fold and export by 6.97 fold

irrigation and with meagre rainfall—are now prosperous with families moving ahead of their tough labour days when one depended on Government schemes for survival, says Prabhakar Chandane, President, Maharashtra Pomegranate Growers Research Association (MPGRA).

Pomegranate was first cultivated in Maharashtra in 1974. Since then, the prices of the fruit have only improved. Today, Solapur is waiting for Geographical Indication for its pomegranates. Pomegranates in this region are well known for their juiciness and good quality. The region produces finest varieties of the fruit with soft red, juicy seeds with very less acids.

Today, a farmer earns ₹2 lakh to ₹10 lakh per acre depending on the productivity of pomegranates. Several stories about prosperity abound in Sangole in Solapur, Satana and Malegaon in Nashik and Atpadi, Jat, Kavathe Mahankal in Sangli, which produce India's best-quality pomegranate. The fruit grows in over one lakh hectares in the State for 85 per cent of India's total produce. The global pomegranate production is 15 million tonnes and India accounts for about half of

the global production, followed by Iran and USA.

All parts of pomegranate tree have great therapeutic value and high potentiality for use in leather and dyeing industry. Demand in the international market has widened the scope for earning higher dividends from this crop. Profits up to ₹1.5 lakh per hectare per annum have been demonstrated by some growers. It is an ideal crop for the sustainability of small holdings, as pomegranate is well suited to the topography and agro-climate of arid and semi-arid regions. It provides ample opportunity for livelihood security, as it has high potential to utilise wastelands and is an ideal crop for diversification.

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) is symbolic of plenty and is liked for its cool, refreshing juice and valued for its medicinal properties. It retains its flavour and can keep well for over a year if properly filtered, bottled and preserved. The juice of pomegranate is believed to be good for leprosy patients. The grains of the fruit are also eaten

In terms of acreage, the area under pomegranate in Maharashtra has grown to 90 lakh hectares as per Government estimates and 1.40 lakh hectares as per MPGRA estimates. Except Gadchiroli and Konkan, the fruit is cultivated across the State

(Clockwise from facing page)
A pomegranate tree laden with ripe fruits, the juicy fruit and ready to be plucked pomegranate fruits

fresh in most of the hot countries and used as condiment. The bark and rind of the fruit are helpful for dysentery and diarrhoea. The rind is also used as a dye.

The fruit is grown in tropical and subtropical regions of the world. Its total production is concentrated mainly in Western Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan in India. Maharashtra is the leading State with nearly 90,000 hectares under cultivation, followed by Karnataka and Gujarat. Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu stand fourth and fifth, respectively. Ganesh, Bhagwa, Ruby, Arakta and Mridula are different varieties of pomegranates produced in Maharashtra.

In India, pomegranate is commercially cultivated in Solapur, Sangli, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Pune, Dhule, Aurangabad, Satara, Osmanabad and Latur of Maharashtra, Bijapur, Belgaum and Bagalkot of Karnataka and to a smaller extent in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. There has been a steady increase in the area and production of pomegranate. In 2010-11, it was cultivated over 1.07 lakh ha with a production of 7.43 lakh tonnes and productivity of 6.9 tonne/ha. It is proposed that by 2025, the area under pomegranate will rise to 7.5 lakh ha, from 1.20 lakh ha at present. Production is expected to increase tenfold and export by 6.97 fold.

Besides Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have begun growing pomegranates with the area under cultivation going up to 1,25,000 ha in last three years. In Maharashtra, barring Gadchiroli and Konkan, the fruit is being cultivated across the State, says Chandane. Although there is no authentic data available, there are reports of farmers making a shift to pomegranates since the fruit commands a better price in the market as opposed to grapes. Farmers get ₹100-125 per kg for pomegranates as opposed to ₹30-35 per kg for grapes.

Exports have also picked up, with Indian pomegranates now going to Sri Lanka, West Asia, Russia and Europe, Chandane said. The UK, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands, Egypt, Turkey, Bahrain and Kuwait are other important markets. Last season, around 40,000 tonne pomegranates were exported as against 30,000 tonnes last year. West Asia continues to remain one of the biggest markets for India. The export season that generally is from November to March got extended till April this year. Russia emerged as a new market last year, while the US is likely to open up next year onwards. **M**





Where the anklets *Ring*

Hupari near Kolhapur in Maharashtra has the distinction of being the land of the white metal. The silver jewels produced here find ardent buyers across the world, says **Pallavi Singh**

"Jewellery has the power to be this one little thing that can make you feel unique."

—**Jennie Kwon**, acclaimed jewellery artist

Think of jewellery and you think of women. It would not be a mistake to say that jewellery is a woman's most adored accessory and a vital part of her ensemble. Considering Hindu deities are believed to be carrying jewels of all kinds, the relationship of Indians and jewels go a long way back. Though the country is proud of its love for gold, it equally respects silver, which has seen a creative journey of its own. Examples include the silver filigree of Odisha and jewellery of Hupari, Maharashtra.

Hupari, a hamlet near Kolhapur, is a place where unique craftsmanship of silver is executed with traditional artistry. To most of its residents, it is the main source of livelihood. The best-selling jewel, also the specialty of Hupari silver jewellery, is the anklet or *payal*. The anklet is made in multifarious designs, has longer length than anklets seen otherwise and with seamless, small silver balls known as *gujrav*. These hollow balls combined with solid ones, known as *rawa*, are added to the anklet as per the design, leading to several designs—*painjan*, *koyali* and *kamarpattas*—created through stamped-out dyes. Necklace is another jewel that is available in diverse designs. These silver jewels find takers both in India and abroad. One can get hold of the Hupari jewellery across Kolhapur, Miraj, Sangli and Belgaum.

The process of making silver jewellery is worth

watching. While making the jewellery, artists heat a compound of silver, copper and zinc over a coke fire, over the *chulha* constructed indigenously. Clay-graphite crucibles, brought from Kerala, are used for pouring the alloy into cast iron moulds of various traditional designs. The process of making seamless, hollow, silver balls is equally interesting though a laborious job for a craftsman. A tiny square piece of silver is beaten into a hemisphere. Two such hemispheres are placed over each other but cross-wise. By rolling the pieces in a groove on a special grindstone, all the eight corners are folded over. These are then coated with borax-ammonium sulphate mixture and placed on an ash-covered tile in rows. After heating them with a hand-operated kerosene blowtorch, the pieces begin to take a round shape.

In 1904, when Krishnaji Ramachandra Sonar from Hupari switched over to making ornaments in silver from gold he would have hardly imagined that his silver craftsmanship would one day rise to such a height that within the next four decades it would make Hupari synonymous with the art. In the beginning, the industry was organised on



Navigator

GETTING THERE

By Train: Sangli is the major railway station (37 km) near Hupari. Nmg Tamdalge station and Hatkalangda station (near Ichalkaranji), Gur Market station (near Kolhapur) and Kolhapur station are the railway stations reachable from nearby towns.

By Road: Ichalkaranji, Vadgaon Kasba and Kolhapur are the nearby towns with road connectivity to Hupari

The industry largely expanded during 1940-45 with about 1,200 workers engaged. Later, machines were introduced in the process of beating and moulding ornaments, changing the scene completely

(Clockwise from facing page) A wide range of Hupari silver jewellery, a woman artisan busy in jewellery making, a group of artisans at work and an artisan working on *gujra*



cottage basis and carried on entirely at the residence of the artisans. Only silver articles were manufactured. The basic product was a chain made of thin wires of silver. Other articles were made after attaching pieces and trinkets to the main chain of silver. Wires were first drawn on the rolling machines from silver in ingots. They were then cut into small pieces to form rings, which were linked together with each other and soldered by an inferior type of alloy. This was the process adopted for the manufacture of silver chains.

The industry prospered during the years 1940-45 with about 1,200 workers engaged. Most of the silver ornament workshops worked on wage-cum-profit basis. The Shroffs of Kolhapur, who mostly sold gold and silver ornaments, gave orders to the artisans for making ornaments with the required quantity of silver and paid necessary wages for making ornaments and a share in the profits.

The master craftsmen of Hupari moved with the times. Many changes also took place in the design workshops. Machines were introduced in the process of beating and moulding ornaments. Introduction of an imported, hand-operated pasta machine for making silver strips and a fly-press for stamping out dies have changed the scene completely. Few years ago there were 9-10 workshops or *karkhanas* employing 20-30 craftsmen. During the span of 15 years, the number of *karkhanas* reached 60 and over 200 skilled craftsmen were overloaded with work. Out of the population of 18,000 in Hupari village, about 4,000 men work as *karigars* and about 3,000 women make chains in their spare time. Wages distributed to *karigars* every month go up to ₹10-11 lakh, totalling over ₹1 crore per annum. Kolhapur and Pune districts provide markets for these products. About 30 to 40 per cent of the products get sold locally. Apart from the economics of the trade, Hupari silver jewellery is known for its visual appeal and heritage. **M**



“JALYUKTA SHIVAR IS THE WAY TO GO”

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited Marathwada, Ahmednagar and Solapur, to have an on-the-spot survey of drought situation and assured farmers of all assistance. **Team Maharashtra Ahead** brings you accounts of his prominent halts during the three-day tour to the region. Excerpts:

Since 2011, Marathwada has been experiencing erratic rains. The precipitation percentages have been varying from 84 per cent in 2011 to 69 per cent in 2012, 109 per cent in 2013 and just 53 per cent in 2014. With rains arriving on time this year, it was expected that farming would be smooth. However, the rain turned its back on the region during peak rainy months of July and August, resulting in more than 1,200 tankers called in to provide drinking water. There was an acute shortage of fodder during August at Beed, Osmanabad and Latur, the districts with larger animal population. On the background of lack of receding rains last year, the absence of rains this year aggravated the grim situation.

Drought is not a new phenomenon for Marathwada, but



with scarcity of water even during monsoon, the situation became miserable for people.

During his stay in Marathwada, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis concentrated on listening to the many grievances of farmers. Spending day and night in meeting people, he visited Latur, Osmanabad, Beed, Parbhani and Nanded. The tour involved a first-hand inspection of water scarcity in the districts, review of the measures undertaken, interacting with people and elected representatives, and taking immediate decisions. It was clearly not a political tour, but an important part of State's decision-making process for areas affected by the ongoing natural calamity.

After landing at Latur airport, the Chief Minister started





(Clockwise from left) It rained at a meeting in Beed when Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was addressing the farmers, bringing a relief from the ongoing dry spell. Minister for Rural Development Pankaja Munde was also present on the occasion. The Chief Minister later planted a sapling and met the farmers and heard their problems

for the five Marathwada districts and held dialogue with farmers at 30 locations. He was accompanied by the Guardian Minister and Chief Secretary of the State. The time was spent in interacting with farmers and understanding every aspect of drought management. Devendra Fadnavis made it amply clear that he was in the region to listen and assess the situation and the tour would facilitate him to make decisions. The time duration and area covered were also exceptionally huge, making many compare the tour to the one undertaken in Latur after the massive earthquake of 1993.

The most important elements of Chief Minister's recent tour to drought-affected Marathwada were what he saw, what he heard, what he said and how he said. The greens in the fields were misleading, but the standing crops told the real story. The cotton crop stood devastated. Soybean had not matured. The agony of the farmers was shared with the Chief Minister. After their meeting with the leader, farmers were hopeful of State Government's attention.

While observing the havoc played by drought, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis went through the progress of various Jalyukta Shivar projects undertaken in the area. Visiting an agro-lake in Latur, he impressed upon everyone present that the work has supported the farmer during severe drought conditions. In his dialogue at Beed, he shared with everyone the idea of agro-lake and suggested it to generate employment and create reservoirs for water at limited expenditure.

On his first day in Latur, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had a late-night review meeting at Osmanabad Collector Office

The State has become the first one in India to implement a food security scheme for farmers. The importance of the scheme is underlined by the response it is registering

for Osmanabad and Latur. The water issue for Latur was brought to his notice for which he immediately issued instructions for finding viable options. After the tour, there was a meeting at the Divisional Commissioner's Office and Principal Secretary, Water Resources Department also visited Latur. Further action has been initiated on the matter.

The State Government has taken a decision to provide food grains to farmers at affordable rates. The implementation of the same started in Marathwada on August 15. The Chief Minister noted the status of the initiative at Yerol in Shirur Anantpal taluka of Latur. He visited the ration shops under the scheme and interacted with people. Huge applauses followed whenever he mentioned the food security scheme during his meetings with the farmers.

Maharashtra has become the first State in India to implement an unconditional food security scheme for farmers. The importance of the scheme is underlined by the huge response it is registering. The dialogue Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had with the people during

the tour had a gist of his observations and remedial measures to be implemented.

A fodder scheme was launched end of August and some norms were relaxed for fodder camps. The funds for fodder, water and employment will not be an issue at all, and there would not be inconsistent terms either, said the Chief Minister. He assured that the Government is ready to handle the situation and emphasised that Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan has the capability of resolving farmers' problems. **M**

—Radhakrishna Muli



(From top) Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Guardian Minister, Ahmednagar, Prof. Ram Shinde during their visit to the villages of the drought-affected district. The Chief Minister visited many works initiated under Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan. The Ministers were accompanied by many senior officials of the district administration.

“WATER, WORK AND FODDER ARE PRIORITIES”

After his tour of the five drought-affected districts of Marathwada, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis arrived at Ahmednagar. He surveyed the situation in the district and had a meaningful dialogue with farmers, farm labourers and women. The objective was to understand the sentiments of people struggling with drought. His tour reassured citizens of the district as a whole.

While the Chief Minister was in Ahmednagar on the occasion of Farmers Day, Minister of State for Agriculture and Horticulture, Home (Rural) Tourism, Public Health and Guardian Minister of the district, Prof. Ram Shinde requested Chief Minister for a visit to assess the drought situation. Starting with a representative survey of Pimpri Pathar in Parner taluka, Dhawalewadi and Satwad in Pathardi taluka and Katewadi and Rajuri in Jamkhed taluka, he hosted a district review meeting at Jamkhed. The Chief Minister said that the assistance measures taken for

Marathwada will be applicable for Ahmednagar as well.

The Chief Minister suggested that the farmers should build agro-lake in their own fields, so that the calamity of drought can be converted into an opportunity

The Chief Minister visited villages with dry wells and lakes, the primary source of water. He saw the dilapidated condition of crops due to lack of rains and met the farmers. The dialogue soon took shape of a Janata Darbar, where people placed their grievances before their leader.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis not only answered the questions, but also gave immediate instructions to the officials present so that some of the issues were resolved then and there only. He agreed to take a decision of providing 1 TMC of water from Kukdi Dam once he receives inputs and feasibility report on the same. He said that the funds for drinking water, work for hands and fodder for the animals will not be short. He emphasised on Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan and importance of saving water. He informed that the State had completed 1 lakh works under the scheme and water expert Rajendra Singh has spoken very well about the same. He suggested that the farmers should build agro-lake in their fields, so that drought can be converted into an opportunity.

Guardian Minister Prof. Ram Shinde, ZP Chairman Manjusha Gund, MLAs Shivajirao Kardile, Babasaheb Murkute and Monika Rajale, and others were present at the district drought review committee meeting. **M**

—Rajendra Sarag



Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis during his visit to the villages in Solapur and interactions with farmers

“THE GOVERNMENT STANDS BY THE FARMERS”

While the average precipitation in Maharashtra is about 936 mm, the State has received only 530 mm rains this year. Some of the districts have received even less than half of average precipitation, and the quantum of water was not enough for Kharif crops or for reservoirs. Along with Marathwada, the districts in Western Maharashtra also reeled under drought and the demand for work went on an increase. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis decided to assess the situation himself instead of working from Mantralaya and began on a tour to the region.

The Chief Minister visited a few drought-affected locations in Solapur. He inspected Kurnur Dam that provides water for Akkalkot City. He then had a discussion with Guardian Minister Vijay Deshmukh, District Collector Tukaram Mundhe and municipal officers. He assured that the drinking water problem of Akkalkot City will be resolved. He issued instructions for the same to District Collector.

There have been meagre rains in the taluka and the water

sources have dried up. Akkalkot is a spiritual place with devotees arriving in large numbers. With all water sources drying up, the city is now provided water from Kurnur Dam.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis visited many places in

Visiting many places in South Solapur, Chief Minister inspected the desedimentation work at lakes done out under MGNREGA and checked about the wages paid to people

South Solapur and inspected the desedimentation work at lakes carried out under Centre's employment guarantee scheme MGNREGA. He had a dialogue with the workers and received information about the availability of work and wages paid. In a dialogue with the farmers at Kardehalli, he told the people about his visits to other drought-affected villages in the State and asked them to courageously fight the calamity, as they have

complete Government support. He shared that the tour helped him understand the difficulties of people and the State Government will do anything to mitigate the effects of the calamity. **M**

—Yashwant Bhandare



FAITH, HOLY DIP AND CELEBRATION

With the chants of *Siyavar Ramchandraj ki jai* echoing the streets of Panchvati, Nashik in the early hours of morning, creating a mesmerising scene of faith, enthusiasm and festivity, lakhs of sages, heads of sects and pilgrims took a holy dip in river Godavari to mark the second Shahi Snan of Simhastha Kumbh Mela 2015.

The *Shahi Miravnuk* (royal procession) started early in the morning. During the procession, flower petals were showered at sages and heads of sects from both sides of the road. The traditional Mardani sport of Nashik was displayed on the occasion. Many sages presented various exercise postures and enthralled the people. The Mela administration hosted the event smoothly with no untoward incident reported. People also took a holy bath at Ramkund.

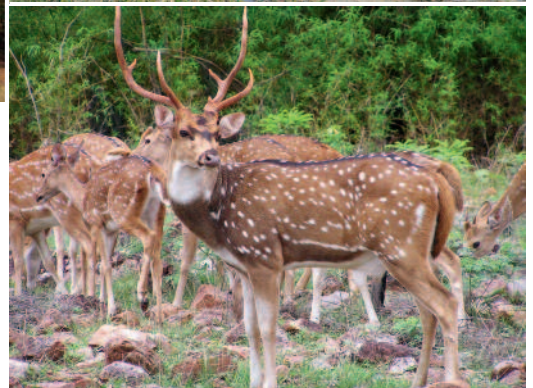
On the third and last Shahi Snan at Trimbakeshwar, lakhs of sages and devotees took a dip at Kushavarta Teerth pond. This Simhastha Kumbh, holy water from Kailash Mansarovar was offered to river Godavari at Trimbakeshwar on the day of *pavani* (Shahi Snan). This not only brought together the two countries, but also two civilisations, making the event historic and memorable, said Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The Chief Minister was presented a *kalash* (pitcher) of sacred water from Kailash Mansarovar by the Observer Research Foundation. Harit Kumbh could become successful because of the efforts of the administration and the coordination and cooperation of people.





Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis (right) was presented a pitcher of sacred water from Kailash Mansarovar. A one-of-its-kind initiative, it tied India and China with threads of faith





WET AND WILD

Chikhaldara and Melghat are summer hill town resorts in Amravati district with rare panoramic sights that exude charm, writes **Pallavi Singh**

Featured in the epic *Mahabharata*, Chikhaldara is the place where Bheema killed the villainous Keechaka in a Herculean bout and then threw him into the valley. It thus came to be known as Keechakadara, now popularly known as Chikhaldara. But there's more to this hill town discovered in 1823 by Captain Robinson of Hyderabad Regiment.

Chikhaldara is a famous city located on a plateau in Amravati district of Maharashtra. The sole hill resort of the Vidarbha region, it is situated at an altitude of 1118 m and is the only coffee-growing area in the State. Blessed with rich

(Clockwise from top left)
A scenic view of Melghat,
an old fort bordering the
Melghat Reserve, a slice
of nature at Chikhaldara,
a nilgai, a herd of
deers, an Indian Bison
with calf and the Melghat
Tiger Reserve



Navigator

GETTING THERE

By Air: Akola (160 km) and Nagpur (260 km)

By Railway: Badnera is the nearest railhead. The Bombay–Howrah

Express, Ahmedabad–Madras

Navjeevan Express and Ahmedabad–Howrah

Express arrive here. Within Maharashtra,

one can take the Kolhapur–Nagpur

Maharashtra Express and Bhusaval–Nagpur

Passenger Train. **By Road:** STC buses ply

from Amravati and Nagpur to Chikhaldara.

Travel by road from Mumbai (763 km),

Nagpur (230 km) and Amravati (100 km). MTDC

provides tourists with water-sport facilities

at Chikhaldara.

biodiversity, replete with captivating precipices and highpoints offering a panoramic view of the serene surroundings, Chikhaldara is home to waterfalls, lakes, flora and fauna. It abounds in wildlife, which includes panthers, sloth bears, sambar, wild boar, and even the rarely seen wild dogs. Close by is the famous Melghat Tiger Project, which has 82 tigers. The flora constitutes teak, *ain*, bamboo, *tiwas*, *dhaoda*, *kusum* and *mahua*. The scenic beauty of Chikhaldara can be enjoyed from Hurricane Point, Prospect Point and Devi Point. Other interesting excursions include Gavilgad and Narnala Fort, Pandit Nehru Botanical Gardens, tribal museum and Semadoh Lake. Chikhaldara has an annual rainfall of 154 cm. Temperatures here vary from 39 degree C in summer to 5 degree C in winter.

Melghat means meeting of the ghats (river bank), which is just what the area is—a large tract of unending hills and ravines scarred by jagged cliffs and steep climbs. The exquisite hill forest, thick undergrowth and moss-covered trees define its unperturbed confines. It lies at the northern end of

Amravati district on the border of Madhya Pradesh, in the southwestern Satpura mountain range. It is a birdwatcher's dream come true. The forest is one of India's most vital tiger-breeding habitats.

Melghat encompasses an area of 1,676.93 sq. km, which includes the 788.75 sq. km Melghat Sanctuary and 361.28 sq. km Gugarnal National Park, in the Vidharba region. The rest of the buffer zone includes 526.90 sq. km of reserve forest. Located in the catchment area of river Tapti, Melghat, a water-harvesting forest, supplies 30 per cent of the fresh water to the people living in the vicinity.

Melghat is a prime habitat of the Royal Bengal Tiger, *Panthera tigris*. Leopard and jungle cat also thrive here, besides the rusty spotted cat, dhole, wild pig, jackal, hyena, fox, wolf, *gaur*, barking deer, chinkara, chausingha, chital, blackbuck, mouse deer, nilgai and langur. River Tapti harbours a small population of otters, several species of frogs and over 24 species of fish. There are 16 species of snakes that have been documented. Additionally, over 250 species of birds have been listed in Melghat, but it is most importantly a raptor paradise.

Forts at Gawilgarh, Narnala and Asirgarh, bordering the Melghat reserve, are of great historical interest. About 3 km from Makhala village in the reserve towards Jarida is a beautiful waterfall with splendid mountains in the background and wild bananas growing in rocky crags. The spot is barely 4-5 m from Makhala–Jarida road. The local tribal communities, include Korku, Gond, Nihal, Balai, Gawli and Gaolan. The Korkus dominate, as they are 60-65 per cent of the local populace. You would need a local guide or at least a translator to know the place better. Be sure to sample the sweet, mouth-watering, milk-based sweet called *rabdi*—a specialty of the Gawlis. The Nature Interpretation Centre at Semadoh, established in 1988, attracts tourists throughout the year. It has a museum, an amphitheater and a canteen. **M**

Blessed with rich biodiversity, Chikhaldara is home to waterfalls, lakes, flora and fauna. Melghat, meaning meeting of ghats, is a large tract of unending hills and ravines scarred by jagged cliffs and steep climbs



A RESOLVE FOR CLEAN MAHARASHTRA

Several key meetings between Maharashtra Cabinet Ministers and Union Ministers in the Capital put the State on path for consistent growth in years to come



(From left) Chief Ministers of Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana and Mizoram at the sub-committee meeting for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in New Delhi

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis reiterated his resolve to make Maharashtra free from open defecation by 2017 at a meeting of NITI Aayog held in New Delhi. The sub-committee meeting on Swachh Bharat with Chief Ministers of ten States present was held in New Delhi recently. The sub-committee has made various recommendations to the Government of India for implementation of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. The Chief Minister made certain important suggestions during the meeting. He presented the case of building toilets at slums in Mumbai.

The meeting held under the chairmanship of Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh was attended by Manohar Lal Khattar, Chief Minister, Haryana, Harish Rawat, Chief Minister, Uttarakhand, Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister, Karnataka, Lal Thanwala, Chief Minister, Mizoram, Sindhushri Khullar, CEO, NITI Aayog, Manisha Mhaikar, Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra and

Milind Mhaikar, Secretary to Chief Minister's office. Senior administrative officers from Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Delhi and other States were also present.

The sub-committee suggested that funds need to be provided under 14th Finance Commission so that local self-government bodies can provide basic services under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. A suggestion for a sanitation tax to be laid on coal, aluminium, iron manufacturing companies, and chemical and telecommunication industries was also presented in the meeting. It was suggested that the funds generated from this tax should be deposited in the State Swachh Bharat Fund. The meeting decided on creation of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan at both Centre and State levels and building a State system with Project Implementation Director, a skill development centre, a Swachh Bharat Fund, and an information, training and communication department. **M**

PUNE INFRASTRUCTURE TO BE BOOSTED

A meeting at Maharashtra Sadan was organised with Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport and Highways and Shipping, and elected representatives and administrative officers from Pune to discuss metro, airport and ring road projects in the city. A decision was arrived at the meeting to start the work of both phases of Pune Metro early and undertake expansion of Pune airport and ring road. The meeting was attended by Prakash Javdekar, Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Girish Bapat, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies and Guardian Minister, Pune, Eknath Shinde, Minister for Public Works, Dilip Kamble,





CENTRE TO SUPPORT RAIGAD MAHOTSAV

While affirming essential sanctions for Raigad Mahotsav, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, assured Centre's support to the event in every possible way. Vinod Tawde, Maharashtra Minister for Culture, met Dr. Mahesh Sharma at the office of

Tourism Ministry in Transport Bhawan, New Delhi. Dr. Rakesh Tiwari, Director General, Geological Survey of India (GSI) was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, Vinod Tawde sought permission from GSI for hosting the Mahotsav, which is to be organised at Raigad Fort. Vinod Tawde said that the festival is a venerable initiative to take the rich heritage of Indian history and monuments to the people.

The Government of Maharashtra has made a provision of ₹10 crore in the State Budget for the Raigad Mahotsav. To be held during November, the Mahotsav will recreate the Chhatrapati Shivaji era.

The State Government had made a provision of ₹10 crore in the Budget for Raigad Mahotsav, which to be held during November

Minister of State for Social Justice, and Former Union Minister for Agriculture, Sharad Pawar.

For both the phases of Pune metro, the work of flyovers and underground roads will be taken up at key locations. It was decided to take up the work of Metro by the side of the river flowing through the city. Laxmi Road, Kothrud, Pune Station, Band Garden route will be built underground and increase the cost of the project by around ₹6,000 crore. The project expenses will be shared by State and Central Government (20 per cent each), Pune Municipal Corporation (10 per cent) and the rest raised through loans. For expansion of Lohgaon Airport, 10 acres of land, currently with Ministry of Defence, will be acquired on lease. An important decision with respect to a ring road in Pune was also taken in the meeting.



STATE MINISTER MEETS UNION RAILWAY MINISTER FOR MGNREGA

The fund needed for Parali-Beed-Ahmednagar Railway route was allocated in the Union Budget this year. For the work to start soon and, on the backdrop of drought situation in the region, some of the works related to soil and others must be carried out through MGNREGA, urged Maharashtra Minister for Rural Development and Employment Guarantee Pankaja Munde during a meeting with Union Minister for Railways, Suresh Prabhu in New Delhi. Suresh Prabhu said that to accelerate the development of Beed district, it is essential that railway services are available and the work is started soon. He added that to make employment available in drought-affected Marathwada, an appropriate and positive decision will be taken in verification, consultation and coordination with the MGNREGA Department for carrying out the works related to soil for the project.



IN-PRINCIPLE SANCTION FOR KOYNA-MUMBAI WATER LINKING PROJECT

The Sixth meeting of Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers held in New Delhi recently has given an in-principle sanction for making a detailed project report (DPR) of Koyna-Mumbai water linking project through (NWDA). The meeting of interlinking of rivers was organised by Union Ministry of Water Resources at Vigyan Bhawan and chaired by Uma Bharati, Minister for Water Resources. Minister of State for Water Resources and Conservation, Vijay Shitware attended the meeting on behalf of Maharashtra.

The water released in Indian Ocean after electricity generation at Koyna Power Station through river Vashishti could be used for drinking water for Mumbai. Maharashtra has been demanding Koyna-Mumbai link project from the NWDA. From the month of December, the Ken-Betwa project will also start. A decision to take up nationally path-breaking projects of Damanganga-Pinjal and Par-Tapi-Narmada was also taken in the meeting.

—**Dayanand Kamble**, Deputy Director, MIC, New Delhi

TEN GLORIOUS YEARS OF RTI

The Act that empowered citizens with information has also been assisting the State in achieving good governance in the true sense, says **Shruti Ganapatye**



It has been ten long years that the revolutionary Right to Information Act (RTI) has come into existence in India and in Maharashtra. The law was passed by Parliament on June 15, 2005 and came fully into force on October 12, 2005. The first application was given to a Pune police station. Prior to the Act, information disclosure in India was restricted by the Official Secrets Act 1923 and various other special laws. The new RTI Act relaxed these.

With the RTI Act, the citizens can seek any information from the Government on any issue. The process is also simple and inexpensive, encouraging many to be aware, participate and point out any lacunae that exist in the public system. The Act that initially saw a lukewarm response from a section of Government today has a structured system to address citizens. Popular among people, the Act also acts as a watchdog of governance.

FOR PEOPLE'S SAKE

- Maharashtra, which enacted a State-level RTI Act in 2002, is a pioneer in RTI and has brought changes in its social as well as administrative system with the tool.
- From the day it got implemented, 46,26,397 appeals have been made under the RTI Act in the State, of which 45,42,585 have been cleared by the respective departments.
- The website of RTI Commission gives detailed information about its day-to-day work. All information about the appeals is displayed online.

Maharashtra, which enacted a State-level RTI Act in 2002, is one of the pioneers in RTI, resulting in changes in its social and administrative system with the tool. Though the information sought under RTI in Maharashtra is lesser compared to other States, public awareness about the Act is much more. This awareness has been driving the number of queries under the Act year on year, making the Government further responsible.

From the day of its implementation, 46,26,397 appeals have been made under the Act in Maharashtra, of which 45,42,585 have been cleared by the respective departments. The remaining 2,04,477 appeals moved to the RTI Commission, which shows that only four per cent of cases went up to the level of second appeal with applicants not satisfied with the initial reply. "The RTI has given a kind of equal opportunity to everyone, from youth to senior citizens and retired people. The Act also facilitates citizens to participate in Government operations and, hence, it is very close to them. Every year, the appeals made under the Act are growing, if you see the numbers of all the divisions," shared Chief Information Commissioner of Maharashtra, Ratnakar Gaikwad in the latest report on the Act.

One of the main features of the RTI in Maharashtra is that its implementation is divided into six divisions making replies faster than any other State. The divisions include Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Konkan, Nagpur and Amravati. The decentralisation has brought convenience, as people need not come to Mumbai every time. Every division has its own staff that ensures that people get correct information and within the stipulated time period. To keep it smooth, the Chief Information Commissioner has urged the State Government to fill the vacant posts of information officers so that speedy implementation is possible. "Of the total 135, there are 51 vacant posts that are affecting the work of the Commission. Also, the posts of State Information Commissioner are vacant due to which some appeals at some divisions have been pending for more than two years. This is not in favour of the RTI," added Ratnakar Gaikwad.

The website of RTI Commission gives detailed



RIGHT TO INFORMATION IN MAHARASHTRA

- The Government of Maharashtra (GoM) on September 23, 2002 promulgated the Maharashtra Right to Information Ordinance replacing the Maharashtra Right to Information Act of 2000.
- The 2000 Act was modelled on the Tamil Nadu Right to Information Act of 1997. The repeal of the 2000 Act by the GoM proved to be a welcome move. The initiative to advocate for repeal was taken by social worker Anna Hazare.
- A committee was set up under the chairmanship of the then Chief Minister. The committee consisted of Madhav Godbole, Prof S.P. Sathe and Anna Hazare. The Ordinance is a very detailed one and is also one of the best models in terms of legislation on the issue in comparison with other States in India that have laws on right to information.



“**The RTI has given a kind of equal opportunity to everyone, from youth to senior citizens and retired people. The Act also facilitates citizens to participate in Government operations and it is very close to them.**

—**Ratnakar Gaikwad**
Chief Information
Commissioner,
Maharashtra



information about its day-to-day work. All information about the appeals is displayed online. Every small change is updated on the website to encourage transparency. By adopting the online method, the Commission has created a data bank that can be used not only for information, but to analyse the functioning of the Government. It has also taken punitive measures by imposing fines of ₹42,37,000 in 412 cases. However, the recovery process is low and currently stands at ₹6,14,500 only. The Commission has asked the State Government to strictly implement the orders of the Commission and help recover the remaining amount from the officers who have been penalised. The penalty on the officials that delayed or denied the information falls between ₹1,000 and ₹25,000. The Commission has brought justice to the citizens as well, with compensations paid ranging from ₹100 to ₹30,000.

Though the novelty factor of the RTI Act is not as much as it used to be in its initial days, the Act has been successful in building a bridge between the people and the Government. In democracy, it is necessary to have public participation in governance, and the Act helps one achieve that. It also makes Governments more open, transparent and responsible. **M**

HEAR IT FROM THE EXPERTS

State Government's information channels bring to the audience dialogues, discussions and user-friendly information on key topics



(From left) Rubal Agarwal, Bhakti Ambre, Ankita Mayekar, Prabhakar Save and Dr. Pramod Sonawane



DILKHULAS

Tuning to the right frequency

While working on Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme of the Centre, Rubal Agarwal, District Collector, Jalgaon launched a digital Gudda-Guddi board. She implemented the environment-friendly initiative during Digital India Week and designed a Facebook page for the same. She was felicitated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi recently. Union Minister for Women and Child Welfare, Maneka Gandhi has included the board in the mission aimed at enhancing the birth rate of girls in India. The officer was invited to *Dilkhulas* for an interview.

Rubal Agarwal has also implemented *nallah* construction works, well recharging and removing sedimentation from lakes under Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan in Jalgaon. She believes in public participation and has used micro irrigation system

extensively with 232 villages currently using the method. In her interview, she said that the district has registered a huge success in the campaign by becoming tanker free.

Bhakti Ambre and Ankita Mayekar, winners of silver and bronze medals respectively, in power lifting at Asian Sports Meet, were invited to *Dilkhulas* to talk about their journey. Bhakti Ambre said that she dedicated herself to the sport without overlooking her family responsibilities. She insisted that regular exercise, practice and a firm support from the family are important for one to excel. Ankita Mayekar gave the credit for her success to her mother and her coach. She said that exercise, practice and yoga proved helpful and that there are ample opportunities in power lifting. She stressed on the need to participate in competitions and the importance of aim, perseverance and training.

Agro-tourism bestows a social status to farmer. It not only provides honourable grandeur to agriculture, but also a new

JAI MAHARASHTRA

The areas of emphasis

Jai Maharashtra covered important topics such as Teachers' Day, cyber crimes, archeology and Chief Minister Medical Relief Cell during September. The invitees to the programme were Om Prakash Shete, Head, Chief Minister Medical Relief Cell, Shobha Nakhare, a teacher, and Atul Chandra Kulkarni, Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime), Mumbai.

In his talk, Om Prakash Shete shared that Government of Maharashtra is implementing various health schemes for its citizens. "For the same, Chief Minister Medical Relief Cell has been established to provide financial assistance to the needy patients with serious ailments. The Chief Minister's Office receives innumerable applications for such cases. The cell supports patients with serious ailments and accident victims with immediate financial assistance," he said.



(From left) Om Prakash Shete, Atul Chandra Kulkarni, Dr. Sanjeev Galande, Shobha

The rising cases of cyber crimes in the digitally connected world led to the visit of Atul Chandra Kulkarni, Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime), Mumbai to *Jai Maharashtra*. "While we are benefitted by information technology, we are also experiencing its evil effects. Cyber crime is one of those. Often, all the information is taken from us and money is siphoned off from our online bank account without our knowledge. This is a cyber crime. The common man unknowingly falls prey to the trap. With a view to

experience to the farmer, bringing him security, affinity, healthcare, and, most importantly, consistent and easy business. "Agriculture is the backbone of rural economy. When it comes to agro-tourism, apart from basic infrastructure, a farmer's family must indulge in hospitality and have pride in being the family of a farmer. It is also necessary to learn newer marketing techniques. Instead of falling in the trap of demand and supply, those catering to it must do justice to the expectations of tourists," said Prabhakar Save during a

“Agriculture is the backbone of rural economy. When it comes to agro-tourism, apart from basic infrastructure, a farmer family must sincerely indulge in hospitality and take pride in being the family of a farmer.

—Prabhakar Save

”

programme on *Dilkhulas*, where he shared the experience of agro-tourism at his venture, Save Farm. Based in Dahanu, Maharashtra, Save Farm has been into agro-tourism, a profession that connects one and all with agricultural fields. "My efforts would be to see a human touch being tried by the entire family and the tourist being treated as a guest rather than a customer," advised the veteran. Quality health services are being provided to farthest rural areas through Primary Health Centres, such as the one at Patonda in Chalisgaon taluka. A testimony of the excellent health services provided at the centre is the ISO 9001-2008 certification it got recently. Effective measures such as 24x7 quality health services, clean and green campus and thorough maintenance of records have helped the centre bag the recognition, besides the Dr. Anandibai Joshi Ideal Primary Health Centre Award from the State Government for 2013-14, said Dr. Pramod Sonawane in his interview with *Dilkhulas*.

—Meera Dhas

MAHANNEWS

A one-stop shop for information

Mahanews came into being on September 19, 2008. The portal that completed seven successful years last month is a result of conceptualisation and mentoring of then Director General of Information and Public Relations and now Secretary, Manisha Mhaikar.

In these seven years, *Mahanews* has undergone many changes, most based on the needs of the people of Maharashtra. Columns such as Employment Search—helping aspirants with updates on employment opportunities—and Careernama—for students, youth and others interested in making a career—are two important sectors that were started. These sections guide the youth on various career options and courses one must go for. Besides details on specialised areas such as social work and petroleum, information on distance education, scholarships (especially for handicapped students and minority sections), army, preparation for administrative services and others are given by the columns.

Experts from various fields, authors and journalists also get the opportunity to express themselves through various columns of *Mahanews*. The online medium also introduces the youth to new and salient topics. The column Simhashta Samvad covered this year's Kumbh Mela at Nashik, providing information about the importance of the congregation, preparations done by State administration and other initiatives.

Mahanews has continued to be a source of information for one and all. The guidance of senior members of DGIPR, Secretary, Manisha Mhaikar, Director General, Chandrashekhar Oak and Director (Information) (Administration) Devendra Bhujbal has contributed to the rising graph of followers of the portal.

—Gajanan Patil



Nakhare and Bhalachandra Kulkarni

create awareness among people about these crimes and to prevent them, the police is taking various measures," he said.

Dr. Sanjeev Galande, Senior Scientist, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), shared with viewers the unique connection between environment and human genes. The science that studies this association is called Epigenetic. IISER is carrying out research on personalised medicine for diseases such as cancer and diabetes with the help of Epigenetic. Dr. Sanjeev

Galande, who is working on the project, has been honoured with the eminent Dr. G. D. Birla Award.

Shobha Nakhare, Principal, Central Society for the Education of the Deaf and a recipient of President's Award to teachers, was invited to *Jai Maharashtra* for Teacher's Day. She and her students convey a message of hope that one can overcome any disability with one's infinite willpower and obstinacy.



Department of Archeology, under Government of Maharashtra, has the responsibility of conserving State's heritage monuments. To make the work of the department known to everyone and highlight the importance of monuments, Bhalchandra Kulkarni, Assistant Director, Department of Archeology, was invited to *Jai Maharashtra*. He spoke about the work of the department, types of forts and fortresses in the State and challenges ahead of conservation.

—Atul Pande

MELGHAT CHOSEN FOR SMART VILLAGE PILOT PROJECT



Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has said that a pilot project of Smart Village will be taken up in Harisal in Melghat, which will be digitally connected to improve healthcare. "We are in talks with Microsoft for the purpose. Melghat is known for deaths due to malnutrition. The region has connectivity problems," he said after launching local cloud services

from Microsoft data centres in Mumbai and Pune. "Efforts were made in the last 20 years but success was not achieved. Technology can help eradicate malnutrition. We can build network and connectivity to provide better healthcare," he said.

The Chief Minister shared that the Government is also working on smart MIDCs. "All Maharashtra Industrial Development Corpora-

tions (MIDCs) will be brought on one digital platform. Cloud computing and data centres will make service delivery system fast, efficient and responsive," he said, adding that accountability can also be fixed.

Pune is the first city under digital surveillance. "Now, we will get to analyse types and trends of

All MIDCs will be brought on one digital platform. Cloud computing and data centres will make service delivery system fast, efficient and responsive

crime and the timing when they are committed. This will help us formulate strategy to curb crime cases. South Mumbai will soon be brought under CCTV surveillance," said Devendra Fadnavis, underlining that future is more about digital than street crime. "People will lose money if digital financial services are unsafe. Safety is of prime concern. If data is safe, businesses will flourish."

MUMBAI, PUNE, NAGPUR AND NASHIK TO BE DISABLED FRIENDLY

The Centre has asked each State to identify 50 to 100 public buildings in major cities to be made accessible for persons with disabilities (PwDs) under Accessible India Campaign, also known as Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan. Speaking at the inauguration of workshop on accessibility in Mumbai, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Thawarchand Gehlot said the Government has been working with renewed vigour to implement policies drawn up



STATE LAUNCHES CCTNS TO DIGITISE ITS POLICE FORCE

Governor Ch. Vidyasagar Rao launched Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) in Nagpur, taking forward the ambitious project to digitise State's Police force. The move aims to ensure more transparency, improve coor-

dination between Police stations and bring more accountability. The Chief Minister said, "The CCTNS project will bring all Police stations across the State online and make them paperless. The project that gained momentum in six months has now become a reality. The overall conduct and functioning of the Police is significant for any State. Law and order makes or mars State's image in public and di-

rectly or indirectly determines its socio-economic progress."

The Chief Minister said that digital Police stations would make smart cities more secure. The Government has decided to increase forensic infrastructure and make available mobile forensic units in each district. "We are integrating fingerprint, DNA and jail data. Soon, Maharashtra Police will be at par with those of the developed countries," he added.



for the benefit of PwDs.

The Union Minister said that Centre has drawn up a plan to identify at least 50 most important public buildings in 26 metro cities and State capitals and at least 25 buildings in 22 other cities and capitals of smaller States and Union Territories. Four cities from Maharashtra, namely Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur and Nashik figure in the list of cities for Accessible India Campaign. The Union Minister said that the identified buildings will be made fully accessible to PwDs via retrofitting of ramps, disabled-friendly lifts, toilets as well as signages. In addition, 75 important railway stations and domestic airports will be made fully

accessible by July 2016.

Thawarchand Gehlot said that of the 26.8 million PwDs, less than half have been given disability certificates. To overcome this problem, the Union Minister stated that the Government has decided to issue Universal Identity Cards having a unique number to all PwDs within next one-and-a-half year. He also said that the present definition of disability was not inclusive enough, as it covered only seven types of disabilities. The Government has decided to increase the number of disabilities to 19 from the present seven, in a bid to expand the pool of beneficiaries and make it more inclusive.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said that the governments have the primary responsibility of creating an accessible environment for PwDs. Bollywood actor and social activist Vivek Oberoi, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Krishan Pal Gurjar, Minister for Transport Diwakar Raote, Minister for Social Justice and Special Assistance Raj Kumar Badole, Secretary, Social Justice and Empowerment Lov Verma, experts on accessibility and representatives of NGOs were among those present. Among the highlights of the workshop was the rendering of the national anthem in sign language by the Helen Keller Institute of Deaf and Deafblind, Mumbai.



PRABHAKAR JOG WINS LATA MANGESHKAR AWARD

Maharashtra Government has announced Indian violinist and music composer Prabhakar Jog as the winner of Lata Mangeshkar Award for Lifetime Achievement 2015 for his contribution in the field of music. Prabhakar Jog had worked as music composer, music coordinator and violinist with many renowned music directors, including Madan Mohan, S.D. Burman, Laxmikant-Pyarelal, Shankar-Jaikishan, O.P. Nayyar, Usha Khanna, Khayyam,



series with Sudhir Phadke. His first song as a music director for *Lapvilpas Tu Hirva Chafa* was broadcasted on Aakashwani Pune. Sung by his wife Late Neela Jog, the song is a popular Marathi song. His first film as a music composer was *Jawai Maza Bhala*. Many noted singers like Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Suresh Wadkar, Suman Kalyanpur and Sudhir Phadke have sung under his music direction. He assisted legendary music directors of the Marathi film industry, including Shrinivas Khale, Vasant Pawar, Ram Kadam, Vasant Prabhu, Yashwant Deo, Pt. Hridayanath Mangeshkar and Dashrath Pujari.

The Lata Mangeshkar Award is a national-level award instituted to honour works in the field of music. Various State Governments present this award.

Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Suresh Wadkar, Suman Kalyanpur and Sudhir Phadke have sung under Prabhakar Jog's music direction

Ravindra Jain and Jaidev.

Prabhakar Jog was born in Haregaon, Maharashtra on December 25, 1932. He took lessons in classical vocal music from Pt. Gajananrao Joshi and Pt. Narayanrao Marulkar. He got his first break as a violinist for Marathi film *Shri Gurudev datta* and played an integral part in the creation of *Geet Ramayana*

STATE GIVES APPROVAL TO 27 SCHEMES UNDER GREEN ENERGY CORRIDOR

The State Government has decided to participate in a national programme to create special transmission and distribution network among various States to carry green or non-conventional energy such as hydro, wind and solar. The State Cabinet has approved ₹367 crore in order to create a renewable energy transmission and evacuation network to participate in the inter-state green energy corridor (GEC) programme. The project will ensure increase in green power quantum and eventually its sale at cheaper tariffs. The State has approved around 27 projects of the State Transmission

Corporation, which will facilitate supply of another 2,570 MW power to the State.

Under the 12th Five Year Plan, India has proposed to connect states that are generating substantial renewable energy such as Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir. The project will strengthen the inter-state transmission system in such a way that it will also take care of sudden power failures by enabling porting of power from other states. State is funding 40 per cent of the total project amount under the GEC scheme.



MAHARASHTRA TO PROMOTE MGNREGA-LINKED HORTICULTURE

The State Government plans to promote horticulture on one lakh hectare of land through the right for work scheme, MGNREGA, informed Minister for Agriculture Eknath Khadse. The scheme will continue for next three years. The minister

added that improved rains have helped alleviate the scarcity of fodder and drinking water in Maharashtra. The number of water tankers has also reduced. As a result, the area under Rabi cultivation is expected to increase and may even double.

STATE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES 43 CITIES FOR AMRUT PROJECT

Government of Maharashtra has decided to implement the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) and has shortlisted 43 cities for the same. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious project has provisions to upgrade 500 cities/towns between 2015 and 2019. The Centre is providing ₹1,000 crore for its implementation in Maharashtra. The major parameters of the project is to provide every household in these cities basic amenities, water supply,



sewerage, infrastructure, rain-harvesting projects, open space, transport, green city, land bank and housing to enhance standard of living.

The cities proposed under

AMRUT include Mumbai, Pune, Kalyan-Dombivali, Meera-Bhayandar, Navi Mumbai, Bhivandi, Ulhasnagar, Ambernath, Vasai-Virar, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Malegaon, Nagpur, Bhusawal,

Barshi, Satara, Sangli-Miraj, Kolhapur, Ichalkaranji, Parbhani, Jalna, Akola, Beed, Latur, Udgir, Aurangabad, Kolhapur, Nanded, Badlapur, Panvel, Dhule, Ahmednagar, Chandrapur, Raigad, Osmanabad, Waghala, Gondia, Nashik, Solapur, Amravati, Achalpur, Wardha, Hinganghat and Jalgaon.

As per Centre's guidelines, a city with a population of more than ten lakh would be entitled for 33.33 per cent funds from the Centre, 16.67 per cent from the State and 50 per cent from local bodies. For a city/town with a population of less than ten lakh, Centre's contribution would be 50 per cent and 25 per cent each from State and local body.

SINGLE WINDOW TO EASE FILM-TV PERMISSIONS

The State Government is planning a single-window system for all necessary permissions for production of films and television serials. The permissions are expected to be given within seven days, said Minister for Cultural Affairs Vinod Tawde, in a meeting with the representatives of Film Industry Federation to discuss various issues faced by film and TV serial producers.

One of the primary roadblocks mentioned was the hassle in acquiring permissions from various Government agencies. Minister for Housing, Prakash Mehta and Secretary for Cultural Affairs, Valsa Nair, were present at the meeting. On behalf of Film Industry Federation, art director Nitin Desai, actors Manoj Joshi and Pallavi Joshi were present for the meeting held in Mantralaya.

The Minister for Cultural Affairs said that there are about 30-32 permissions involving Police, fire brigade and local BMC ward that need to be taken before shooting a film or a serial. "The Government will open a single-window facility at Goregaon Film City to solve the permission issues. All permissions will be provided within seven days so that producers do not have to waste time," he assured. The Government will also consider forming an Advisory Board in the Goregaon film city to sort out various issues and problems related to actors and other staff. The Government decision has been welcomed by the film fraternity.



GRAMEEN BANK FOUNDER UNDERLINES THE NEED OF BANKS FOR THE POOR

Nobel laureate and Grameen Bank founder Muhammed Yunus has called for the establishment of independent banks for poor and underprivileged, as part of empowering women self-help groups (SHGs) in drought-prone regions. "Poverty, illiteracy and unequal distribution of wealth are some of the unavoidable factual realities of life in every corner of the globe. Zero per cent poverty is not impossible, but policies need to strive towards it systematically," said Muhammed Yunus, adding, "The current banking system is skewed towards serving prosperous sections of society."

Muhammed Yunus, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, was asked to

provide assistance to Maharashtra Government to empower women SHGs in drought-prone Vidarbha and Marathwada in order to financially strengthen such families. Several delegates, including ministers and

lators are still deprived of the benefits and power of banking. Those otherwise considered 'poor' customers are actually better at repaying loans. Hence, it becomes all the more important to extend the banking system to them," he said.

Minister for Finance Sudhir Mungantiwar said that the State Government would take measures to emulate Grameen Bank's success in the State. "A proactive, non-subsidised banking ecosystem is a distinguished feature of the Grameen Bank and it highlights the value of providing the underprivileged the tools to carve out their future. Efforts will be aligned to create a model based on Grameen Bank in Maharashtra to expand the reach of the financial revolution to the lower most strata of the economic pyramid," he added.

Efforts will be made to create a model based on Grameen Bank to take financial revolution to the poorest in the State

bureaucrats were present on the occasion, as Yunus shared details of his work on Bangladesh's rural banking system, for which he was awarded the Nobel. "A majority of the world's rural popu-



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