

IRRIGATION OFFICIALS, VILLAGERS, BOAT CONTRACTORS FUME AT FOREST DEPT'S ACT

# Crocs in Varasgaon reservoir THROW A SCARE

Rahul Chandawarkar

Villagers in and around Varasgaon, the irrigation department and boating contractors who ferry people across the reservoir for joy rides are upset with the state forest department for releasing three crocodiles into the backwaters in the last few months.

All three reptiles are from the Rajiv Gandhi Zoological park in Kattraj. While two were picked up in April-May 2009 from the rescue centre, the third was snared from the

## hostilereptile

lake on October 12 this year, said conservator of forests (Pune) Sanjay Kumar Pathak. According to range forest officer, (Pune range) Dilip Bhurke, the third crocodile was released the same day into the dam's backwater.

"The Varasgaon reservoir is an ideal habitat for crocodiles because of its sheer length. It is also inaccessible to people and human activity is low."

Pathak's views contradict the ground reality. The irrigation department has been issuing five-year leases to private boating contractors who operate near the Varasgaon dam. People from upstream



Scenes such as this file picture of teenagers playing in the backwaters of Varasgaon could become history with the release of three crocodiles in the waters by the state forest department this year.

villages use the backwaters for swimming, lifting water and washing their cattle.

Executive engineer of the Khadakwasla irrigation division Shivaji Bolbhat slammed the forest department's decision. "The forest department has taken a hasty deci-

sion. They should have discussed the matter with us before acting. They released the crocodiles without consulting us.

"Such reptiles cannot be released in an irrigation canal. The reservoir is being used for boating by tourists and for fishing by the vil-

lagers. The presence of the crocodiles will pose a danger to people. We will take up this matter with the forest department."

Boating contractor Dinkar Bamburde is aghast. "I swim in the waters every day. Children from the villages upstream too take a dip

## 'Tulsi lake would be a better place'

Wildlife expert Aniruddh Chaoji, director of city-based Pugmarks Adventure Group, faulted the forest department. "The crocodiles could have been released in the Tulsi lake inside the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai which has a crocodile population," Chaoji said.

Chaoji cited the example of a crocodile that was released in the Koyana river near Karad some time back and how it had attacked villagers. He also said that a crocodile released upstream of the Khadakwasla reservoir was netted by the forest department nine years ago.

every day and village women fetch water from the banks. Suddenly, our lives are in danger now."

Pathak defended his decision. "Crocodiles abound at the Periyar national park and boating is permitted there. People should not be swimming in unknown waters as they are meant to have all types of wild life."

What's in your DNA



NGO seeks discount for ECS users Pg5

Ex-diplomat advises caution Pg6

Gadchiroli contractors go on strike Pg7

50 Kaiga plant employees grilled Pg10

RAHUL CHANDAWARKAR.DNA



Mother Piroja Irani (the kidney donor) and son Khodabux, and (right) Akshay Chitalkar (recipient) and his father Anil (kidney donor) at KEM Hospital's Donor Day function in the city on Monday.



## Kidney donors felicitated

Khstis, family of a brain-dead donor, feted by former mayor Vandana Chavan

Rahul Chandawarkar

### Khstis honoured

The husband and wife duo of Balwant and Pushpa Kishti, the parents of the late Nachiket Kishti (40), the brain-dead patient whose kidneys, liver and corneas were donated giving a new lease of life to five patients, were felicitated by former Pune mayor Vandana Chavan at the KEM Hospital on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, Chavan said, "The Khstis have set an example for all of us to follow. It is important to propagate their example in as many forums as possible." The former mayor also complimented all donors for their positive attitude.

All taboos associated with kidney donations took a back seat as donor after donor took to the mike and related with fervour their feelings associated with the solemn act. The occasion was a well-attended Donors' Day function organised by the KEM Hospital in the city on Monday.

The experiences were varied with scriptwriter Anjum Rajabali from Mumbai recounting on how three brothers competed with each other to donate a kidney to their kid brother Aman, the narrative of Desidum D'Souza donating a kidney to his then girlfriend Lynette and why Anjali Wavare still awaits a kidney.

Anjum, a practiced speaker, had the audience in splits when he said, "There was a cut-throat competition between we three brothers, each wanting to donate one of our kidneys to our kid brother Aman. I happened to be the winner." Anjum made an important point when he said, "I never realised that the second kidney was superfluous in a healthy individual. Hence, by giving it away you were doing no damage to yourself."

While Akshay Chitalkar, a thirteen-year-old recipient dressed in a suit for the special occasion, came up on stage and said, "I thank my Papa for donating his kidney to me. I feel okay now and will take part in a special games this December."

There was more humour at the function when business-

man Shapoor Irani said, "My wife Piroja donated one of her kidneys to my son Khodabux. Being in the motor rewinding business, I am now convinced that the kidney transplant process is similar to fixing new ball bearings in a motor!" However, it was touching to listen to housewife Anjali Wavare, a kidney patient undergoing dialysis treatment, who was hit by breast cancer earlier this year. As a result of which Wavare would have to wait till the year 2011 for a possible kidney transplant. The indefatigable Wavare is training to become a dialysis technician now.

# A vertical garden to enrich your homes

ELT India Enterprise to display green wall and green rooftops at Constro 2009 exhibition

Shailendra Paranjpe

Ever visualised the wall separating your kitchen and the living room to be transformed into a vertical garden!

Visit Constro 2009, an exhibition beginning Wednesday where the Pune-based ELT India Enterprise will be displaying its green wall system and green roofs.



A model of green wall

Speaking to DNA, ELT India Enterprise proprietor Pradeep Barpande said the patented products — ELT Living Wall and ELT Roof — will be displayed for the first time in Pune.

According to him, the modular garden would provide more oxygen besides adding to the aesthetics and improving the feel cool impact of the

## Constro opens on Wednesday

Shailendra Paranjpe

Eco-friendly construction material, elevators for old wadas, 2 kW windmill for bungalows, vertical gardens inside flats and eco-friendly bamboo for construction are the main attractions of the five-day Constro-2009 which will start in the city on Wednesday.

It is the country's biggest international exhibition on construction machinery, material, methods and projects and would be inaugurated by member of Parliament Suresh Kalmadi and BAU Germany Exhibition director Markus Geisenberger.

It has been organised by Pune Construction Engineering Research Foundation (PCERF), an NGO working in the infrastructure

home. The company would be displaying small panels ranging from 3X2 feet and 5X2 feet onwards for creating vertical gardens.

Having tried 115 plant varieties which can grow in different climatic conditions in India, he said a small tray for drip irrigation would be sufficient to water the plants for such mini vertical gardens.

He said there were five such systems available in the world when he started the research work on verti-

cal gardens in February last year.

Barpande followed the method prepared by a Canadian company which was engaged in vertical gardening to make the system suitable for Indian condition.

He has received orders from North America and Canada and the production will begin in the next 2-3 weeks.

Speaking on the green rooftops made his company, he said, "They are as light as 8 kg per sq ft when saturated with water. Our rooftops are the lightest of all," adding that it

could be set up on any rooftop and was a green product made of recycled goods and recyclable goods.

Having completed five projects in Delhi and two each in Mumbai and Hyderabad with one each in Chennai and Bangalore, the firm has received three enquiries from Pune besides bagging a project of establishing 41X16-feet green

wall in New Delhi. He said there were two enquiries for establishing green walls as high as more than 150 metres in Mumbai and Egypt. The company can build green walls up to 200 metres high. He said the cost for such panel or green wall was Rs1,800 per sq ft and there was a one year warranty including 100 % backup from the company.



A model structure having a green wall and a green rooftop

## Mayoral polls in civic bodies today

NCP men all set to become first citizens of PMC and PCMC

DNA Correspondent

The election for the mayor's and deputy mayor's posts in the Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad municipal corporations will be held on Tuesday. It is a foregone conclusion that the National Congress Party (NCP), which is the ruling party in both civic bodies, will get the mayors' posts.

In Pune, the party gave the ticket to Mohan Singh Rajpal, while in Pimpri-Chinchwad Yogesh Behl has been chosen. Since the party has an alliance with the Congress, the tickets for the deputy mayors' post in both civic bodies have been offered to Congmen Prasanna Jagtap (in Pune) and to Daboo Aswani (in Pimpri-Chinchwad).

Elections for the mayors' posts are to be conducted by raising of hands by the corporators. The Shiv Sena has nominated Dipak Gawade against Rajpal while the BJP has chosen corporator Vishnu Harihar for the deputy mayor's post. The NCP has decided to implement the same power-sharing formula it had with its saffron partners in the Pune Pattern. The election for the school board chairman is on December 3. The NCP has offered this seat to the Congress.

The election for the president and vice president for the zilla parishad will also take place on Tuesday. The president's post is reserved for a woman and since the NCP has a majority, its nominee is likely to be elected. State energy minister Ajit Pawar will announce the name of the candidate on Tuesday before the mayoral polls.



Rajpal Behl

## Dreaded Conficker virus is CAT's bane

DNA Correspondent. AHMEDABAD

The test delivery systems of CAT-2009 have been affected by the Conficker and W32/Nimda viruses, Prometric, which is conducting the test, has said. The entrance exam to the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), being administered in stages over several days, had to be put on hold for more than 7,000 candidates by day three.

Confirming the names of the viruses, Charles Karnan, chief operating officer, Prometric, said the problem has been a learning experience for the firm. "The lesson we have learnt is that we should not have used public infrastructure for the computerised test."

Ramesh Nava, vice president and general manager, Prometric (Asia Pacific, Japan and Africa), said: "Unfortunately, the viruses and malware that attacked the test delivery system were not detected by the antivirus software at the testing centres."

On the third day of the test, 33 computer labs across various centres in different cities remained to be restored. Samir Barua, director, IIM-

## Smooth affair in city

The Common Admission Test (CAT) in the city went on smoothly without any technical hiccups on the third day on Monday.

The tests, which started on Saturday, will continue till December 7. The CAT administration is using online test format for the first time in the country. On Saturday, many CAT aspirants found themselves in a tizzy when the online system failed at various centres in the country.

The CAT exams are being held at the College of Engineering Pune (COEP), Sinhad College of Engineering, DY Patil College of Engineering and the Pimpri-Chinchwad College of Engineering.

Ahmedabad, said: "The test failed in the first few days this year. However, since this is the first time the test is computerised, it is not very surprising."

"We have contacted the candidates whose tests have to be called off through SMS and email. We will make sure that all candidates get another op-

A FILE PHOTO



## City builder succumbs to bullet injury

Nadeem Inamdar

City-based builder Nikhil Rane (42), who was shot at by unidentified assailants in broad daylight at his office on Jungli Maharaj Road on November 23, passed away at 10.45 am on Monday at the Sancheti Hospital due to spinal shock complications.

Sancheti Hospital chairman Dr Parag Sancheti said Rane was proclaimed dead after his pulse went down due to the shock he sustained in his spinal cord as a bullet fired by the assailants got lodged in his neck.

Although the police had arrested four persons for extortion, the killers of the builder are still at large. The police were clueless why Rane was killed though he had paid the extortion money.

The anti-extortion cell crime branch on Sunday had arrested four persons for extorting a Rs10 lakh from the builder. The arrested included Sandeep Sitaram Dicholkar (42), a resident of MIDC Belapur and an alleged Ashwin Naik associate, Dhananjay Bhalchandra Dixit (35), a resident of Uruli Kanchan, Sandeep Rohidas Sangale (30), a resident of PMC colony and Deepak Ramdas Borkar (37), a resident of Narayan Peth.

They were produced before a local court on Monday, which remanded them in police custody till December 3.



Nikhil Rane

## ICONS of Maharashtra

205 Vishnupant Govind Damle

CELEBRATING



50th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Among the founders of the Prabhath Film Company and the Prabhath Film Studio (along with V Shantaram, K Dhaiber, S Fatelal and SB Kulkarni), Vishnupant Govind Damle is remembered as a pioneering film-maker of India.

Ayodhya Raja, the first Marathi film and the oldest available talkie, was produced by his studio.

Sant Sakhu, Sant Dnyaneshwar, Gopal Krishna, Sant Tukaram

and Karna were some of the memorable movies directed by him with S Fatelal.

Born on October 14, 1892 to Rakhmabai and Govind Damle, he used to paint the backdrops for drama companies under Baburao Painter and Anandrao Painter in his early days.

Udaykal was filmed by Damle who also acted in Sairandhri and undertook sound recording for Prabhath's earliest films.

He died on July 5, 1945.