

**briefcase**



Activists of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) caught a few people on Wednesday, who were using poisonous chemicals and injections to ripen mangoes, in Somwar Peth, Mangalwar Peth and other areas. They were handed over to the Samarth police station. A shop in Mangalwar Peth has been sealed.

**For youth**

**1 | SADHU VASWANI MISSION TO HOST INTERACTIVE SESSION**

The youth wing of Sadhu Vaswani Mission, the Bridge Builders, will hold 'Renaissance', an interactive question-and-answer session for the youth with spiritual head of the mission Dada JP Vaswani on Saturday on its campus at 6 pm. Issues concerning the youth like exams, peer pressure and cut-throat competition, terrorism, riots and corruption would be discussed.

**Astronomy**

**2 | ASTRONOMERS' ASSN WILL HOLD AKASH DARSHAN**

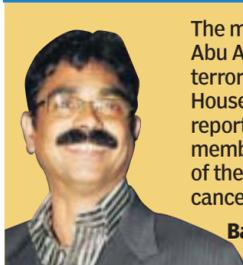
Jyotirvidya Parisanstha, an amateur astronomers' association, will organise 'Akash darshan' on Saturday. This is an opportunity for the citizens to observe the sky. Citizens can register their names with Jyotirvidya Parisanstha, Tilak Smarak Mandir, Tilak Road to participate in the programme. For details, contact Aniruddha Deshpande on 9822612737.

**Fiction**

**3 | TWO-DAY CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**

Writers Salil Desai and Chetan Joshi will conduct a creative fiction writing workshop titled "Writer's Mantra" on Saturday and Sunday in the city. It is meant to kick-start the writing talent of individuals. It will provide them with tips and tools for penning fiction and encouraging them to take the first step towards realising their aspirations of becoming authors. The workshop will be held at Parkhe Hall, FC Road. For details, contact 9881401495.

**soundbyte**



The media has reported Abu Azmi's links with terrorists in the Batla House encounter. If the reports are true, Azmi's membership of the house should be cancelled immediately

**Bala Nandgaonkar, MLA**

**weather & almanac**

**Temperature**

Maximum	37.1°C
Minimum	13.8°C
Humidity	75%
Sunrise	0642
Sunset	1844
Moonrise	0750
Moonset	2055

**Forecast:** Partly cloudy sky. Maximum and Minimum temperature would be around 37 and 13 degree Celsius.

**Thursday, 18-03-2010**

Shri Vikram Samvat 2067, Sake Era 1931, Sun Utrayan, Dakshina Gole, Basant Ritu, Chaitra Shukla Paksha Tritiya whole time, Nakshatra Revati till 10.35 am, Yoga Bramha till 10.19 am, Karan Taitil till 5.49 pm and Gar starts.

**Rahu Kala:** 1.30 pm to 3 pm,  
**Yam Ganda:** 6 am to 7.30 am  
**Best Period:** 7.30 am to 9.30 am, & 4.30 pm to 7.30 pm

**STATE MUST TAKE STEPS TO PROMOTE TOURISM, SAY TOUR OPERATORS & RESORT OWNERS**

**Tourism untapped in Konkan**

**Bhagyashree Kulthe**

From clean beaches, forts and caves to lush green stretches and ancient temples, Konkan has it all.

Although this western coastal strip of Maharashtra is full of enormous potential as a tourist destination, the failure to promote the region appropriately and provide suitable infrastructure has hindered Konkan's growth.

Prominent tour operators Raja Rani Travels along with Quality Resort Group's The Riverview Resort, Chiplun have jointly undertaken an initiative to project the beauty of Konkan as a tourist destination.

Chiplun in Ratnagiri district is rich with scenic beauty and the region is adorned with clean beaches, river, waterfalls, temples, historic monuments and caves. Chiplun and its surrounding areas have, however, remained largely unexplored.

According to Riverview's executive, Alpana Chauhan, "Though Chiplun has been declared as a tourist destination by the tourism department, it continues to be relatively unknown. We therefore decided to embark on a joint venture with Raja Rani Travels to boost tourism here."

Chiplun lies on the way to Goa from Pune and Mumbai. However, very few care to stop for a day or two and explore the beauty of Konkan in Chiplun and nearby places due to lack of promotion, Chauhan lamented.

The Riverview Resort, situated amidst the hills with a panoramic view of Vashisthi river, has been promoting Chiplun and Konkan in general through organised tours besides holding new year theme parties every year.

In spite of its many attractions, Chiplun and the rest of Konkan has

not figured on the list of preferred destinations for family tours, or short trips, said Vijay Kirtikar of Raja Rani Travels. "People go to Goa even for a two-three days' trip but the idea of specifically choosing Konkan — which is closer — is yet to take root," he added.

**Chiplun lies on the way to Goa from Pune and Mumbai. But few care to stop for a day and explore the beauty of Konkan**

One reason for this is the poor awareness levels among tourists, Kirtikar said. He regretted the state's failure in promoting Konkan as a tourist destination as the livelihood of the local population was heavily dependent on this industry.



A view of the Vashisthi river in Chiplun.

**ABOUT KONKAN**

Konkan — Maharashtra's coastal strip with the Sahyadri hills on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west, includes Raigad, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg and Thane districts. The diverse geographical features offer a variety of choices for tourists. The region is adorned with more than 300 species of flora and fauna. The picturesque villages and Konkani cuisine are other major attractions. Parasailing and boating facilities are available.

**PLACES TO VISIT**

Clean and unpolluted beaches like those at Alibaug, Guhagar and Harihareshwar are in complete contrast with many other famous beaches in the state. Places like Harihareshwar and Ganpatipule have ancient temples. Janjira fort, Shrivardhan, Diveagar, Sangameshwar, Pavas, Malvan, Devgad, Sawantwadi, Koyna dam, Vengurla are other not-much-discovered places in Konkan. The region is well connected with Konkan Railway and road routes.



Tourists at the Parshuram temple at Lote Parshuram near Chiplun.

**Cheti Chand celebrated with fervour and gaiety**



The Sindhi community celebrated Cheti Chand at Govindram Jhulelal temple in Pimpri on Wednesday — NARESH NATU/DNA

**It marks the beginning of the new year for the Sindhi community**

**Archana Dahiwal**

The Sindhi community celebrated Cheti Chand on Wednesday with traditional fervour and gaiety in Pimpri. Cheti Chand is the beginning of the new year for the community.

People gathered at Lord Jhulelal temple in the evening and lit *diyas* (lamps). They prayed for betterment of society on the occasion.

Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) deputy mayor Dabhu Aswani, who is a resident of Pimpri, celebrated the festival with his family members and friends.

Aswani told DNA that he celebrates Cheti Chand with total enthusiasm. "Ours is a joint family and this year too in the evening, the entire family gathered at Lord Jhulelal temple at the Pavana riverside at Pimpri. We prayed for happiness, satisfaction and

**Dabhu Aswani**

deputy mayor of Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation

**In the evening, the entire family gathered at Lord Jhulelal temple at Pavana riverside in Pimpri. We prayed for happiness, satisfaction and betterment of society."**

betterment of society," he added.

Sonu Tekuchand Jasnani, owner of the temple told DNA that every year nearly 4,000 people from the community gather at the temple to offer prayers.

"We light diyas in the evening. We perform *puja* and at night we make *visarjan* of *diyas* in the river," he added.

Sona Naresh Satum, a resident of Pimpri Camp, said, "Cheti Chand is like Diwali for us. We wear new clothes and make *prasad* of sweet rice, *shira*, *sewai* at home and bring it along while coming to the Jhulelal temple."

**Nadeem Inamdar**

The Sindhi community celebrated its new year Cheti Chand at Vimla-Jivan Jhulelal Hindu Mandir in Wanavdi on Monday.

The function, which began at 5 pm, included a grand Jhulelal procession followed by a cultural programme.

Dressed in white *kurta-pyjamas* with red skull caps with the message of Jai Jhulelal, the celebration began with the community elders performing puja at the sanctum sanctorum in honour of Jhulelal.

The sanctum sanctorum is known as Bahrana Sahib in Sindhi folklore and contains sugar candy, fruits, and *akha*. It has a bronze pot with a coconut in it. It is covered with a cloth, flowers, leaves and an idol of Jhulelal.

After the traditional



Children participating in a cultural programme on the occasion of Cheti Chand on Wednesday. The programme was organised by Sindhu Seva Dal. (Inset) Dada JP Vaswani delivering a speech at the function.

**'Jhulelal's teachings have universal appeal'**



Sindhi community members at the sanctum sanctorum Bahrana Sahib at Vimla-Jivan Jhulelal Hindu Mandir in Wanavdi on Wednesday.

prayers, the idol was kept in a cart drawn by a bullock and taken around with chants like 'Jhulelal Ki Jai'. Scores of localities participated in the procession and had darshan of the idol.

Om Thakur, a leading Hong Kong-based financier who co-ordinated the programme, said, "The festival is celebrated to mark the birthday of Jhulelal popularly known as 'Water God'. The main festival starts with the

worships of Jhulelal and Bahrana, where the community members perform the folk dance, Chej, on Sindhi music before the Jhulelal idol," he said.

Another community member, Prakash Dodeja, said the message of Jhulelal is universal. "He has been a great unifier of the mankind. His life is appealing and a role model for people not only in India but across the world," Dodeja said.

**UoP will be a Euroculture member**

**It is a consortium of European varsities**

**Gitesh Shelke**

The University of Pune will soon become a full-time member of Euroculture, a consortium of prominent European universities.

At present, the UoP is an associate member of the consortium, which has nine different universities as its members. "Talks are on between the UoP and Euroculture for the inclusion of UoP as a full-time member," acting vice



chancellor of UoP Arun Adsool told DNA. According to him, once the UoP becomes a full-time mem-

ber, it would ensure exchange of more students, faculty and scholars between UoP and the varsities. Euroculture imparts studies on European Union to the students through Erasmus Mundus scholarships.

Adsool said that after the varsity becomes a part of Euroculture, it has plans to start a separate department of international academic relationships on the UoP premises.

"This will provide an insight to the students about courses being offered by the Euroculture and also oversee and monitor exchange of

**Adsool said after the varsity becomes a part of Euroculture, it has plans to start a separate department of international academic relationships on the UoP premises**

students, scholars and faculty members from both UoP and Euroculture," he added.

Adsool last week visited Gottingen University in Germany. He said the German university wants to strengthen its relations with the UoP. It was observed that many students in Germany are interested in Indology and many are learning Hindi language and Vedas.

The students and faculties of that varsity are interested

in studies of agro-economics of rural India.

"The agriculture department in Germany runs a state university in agriculture to provide education on agro-economics and product based economics," he said.

Hence, it has been decided to invite students from Germany who will gain knowledge about India's rural development and development through participation of villagers.

**CITYBROWSER**

**PUBLIC PROGRAMME**

**Aspects of yoga**

An intensive weeklong programme designed by Sadhguru to transmit the subtlest aspects of yoga as a 'live' process.

**When:** Till March 23

**Where:** Indraprastha hall, opp. Chaturshingi temple, Senapati Bapat Road

**Contact:** 98814 08561, 92256 20614

**Talk**

Talk on alternative means of education by Urmila Samson

**When:** March 18, 6 pm to 8 pm

**Where:** The Urban Ashram, 34 Mukundnagar, opposite Sujay Gardens

**WORKSHOP**

**Exit to light**

Fine art photography workshop

for beginners and amateurs

**When:** Till March 21, 7 am to 9 am

**Where:** Aperture India, first floor, Connaught place, Bund Garden Road, near Wadia College

**EXHIBITION**

**Paintings**

Exhibition of paintings by film and TV actor Pankaj Zha

**When:** Till April 5, 10 am to 6pm

**Where:** Bliss Art Gallery, North Main Road, Koregaon Park

**Contact:** Khushmita on 96896 03540