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### Challenges in STPs

## STPs shut in New Nashik, polluting Nandini & Godavari rivers

**NASHIK:** The prolonged closure of sewage treatment plants (STPs) in New Nashik has led to significant pollution of the Nandini river, which eventually affects the Godavari river. With no functional STPs, untreated sewage is being discharged directly or through damaged monsoon drains into the Nandini river, creating an alarming environmental situation.

Previously, STPs were operational at Hedgewar Nagar, Shivshakti Chowk, Patilnagar, and Badadenagar. These facilities catered to the relatively smaller population of the area. However, as New Nashik developed rapidly, the existing STPs became inadequate to handle the increasing sewage load. A lack of maintenance led to their eventual closure.

To address this, Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) invested crores in constructing a drainage system

that redirected sewage to the STP at Chehedi. Unfortunately, the drainage lines were damaged during the first monsoon after their construction. Consequently, untreated sewage began flowing directly into the Nandini River and connected monsoon drains. This has not only worsened pollution in the Nandini river but also adversely affected the downstream Godavari river.

The STP at Patilnagar was demolished and replaced with a playground. At Badadenagar, the site was converted into the Balasaheb Thackeray Park. Meanwhile, the Hedgewar Nagar project remains neglected.

Despite a court-imposed ban on discharging sewage into the Nandini river, untreated waste continues to flow unabated. Citizens and environmentalists have criticized NMC for its negligent approach, accusing it of

failing to uphold its responsibilities. While the monsoon drains are intended for rainwater, they are instead carrying sewage, further exacerbating river pollution.

Chemical-laden industrial waste has also been detected at multiple locations, particularly near the ITI bridge and Untawadi bridge, adding to the environmental damage. Residents and environmentalists have raised concerns about the foul smell emanating from these areas and the deteriorating state of the Nandini river.

Environmentalists warn that if this situation persists, the Nandini river could face irreversible pollution, severely impacting the Godavari river as well. They demand immediate intervention by NMC to prevent untreated sewage and industrial waste from entering the rivers.



## Traffic congestion on Wadala road

**NASHIK:** Traffic congestion continues to plague the Indiranagar jogging track area on Wadalagaon road in Nashik city, despite extensive road widening efforts. Vehicles parked on both sides of the road in front of establishments between Indiranagar Sainath Nagar Square and Wadalagaon Circle are causing severe blockages, raising concerns among residents and commuters.

The Nashik Municipal Corporation (NMC) spent lakhs of rupees on widening and asphaltting the road to ensure smooth traffic flow. However, the persistent issue of unauthorized parking has negated these efforts. Vehicles remain parked for hours, turning the widened road into an extended parking zone. This has led to increased traffic congestion and a rise in both minor and major accidents, with fears of potential fatalities mounting.

The area serves as a critical link between the Mumbai and Pune highways, with heavy vehicular movement throughout the

day. Key points along the stretch, including the Indiranagar jogging track, Sainath Nagar Square, Wadalagaon Square, and DGP Nagar No. 1, are especially prone to bottlenecks.

Despite initial satisfaction among citizens following the completion of road widening, the issue of encroachments and unauthorized parking has undermined the project's effectiveness. The presence of an examination center near Sainath Nagar Square and a nearby mall exacerbates the problem, as candidates and shoppers frequently park on both sides of the road. This forces other vehicle owners to navigate the area cautiously, further slowing down traffic.

Residents and commuters are now calling for immediate action from the city traffic branch. They demand strict punitive measures against vehicle owners parking illegally and the removal of encroachments to ensure free passage, especially for heavy vehicles.

## Kalatarang Festival concludes

**NASHIK:** The MET School of Architecture and Interior Design College wrapped up its annual Kalatarang festival on Saturday at its Govardhan campus with a mesmerizing Kathak performance by renowned artists Sharvari Jamenis and Aditya Garud. Their act, inspired by the classic "Kesariya Balma," wove together themes of Radha-Krishna's eternal love, the cycles of nature, Radha's adornments, and her interactions with the gopis.

The duo's jugalbandi was complemented by fellow artists, drawing resounding applause from the audience.

Dignitaries, including Dr. Shefali Bhujbal, Sameer Bhujbal, senior architect Sanjay Patil, and Kathak dancer Vidyahari Deshpande, graced the event. Principal Shubhada Chapekar welcomed attendees, while architects Manish Patil and Anjali Kulkarni compered the programme. This year's festival, inaugurated by Air Commodore Kamal Bagga along with Dr. Monica Bagga, and R.D. Joshi.

This year's Kalatarang introduced a variety of workshops and activities designed to nurture artistic and technical skills. Architect Anita Kulkarni, founder of the Renu Foundation, led a workshop titled 'Design Muse', which focused on stage settings, lighting, mixed-media design, camera techniques, and interior and product design.

It featured various activities such as workshops on art and design, a doodle competition, and cultural performances. Highlights included sessions by Rachita Dutta on embroidery, Salik Ansari on sto-

rytelling, and Venkat Shyam on Gond art. The festival also showcased a handicraft hut, a fashion show, and a musical band



performance led by Sarang Gosavi.

Trustee Sameer Bhujbal praised the students and faculty for elevating the festival with creative initiatives, engaging workshops, and cultural programmes.

## Cycle rally held

**NASHIK:** A spirited cycle rally organized by the Saturday-Sunday Cycling Group under the Central Government's Fit India initiative saw enthusiastic participation from over 70 cyclists in the city yesterday. The rally began at 7 a.m. from the martyr Anant Kanhere ground, with cyclists chanting slogans such as 'Ride Cycle, Save Environment', 'We Fit, Then India Fit', and 'Plant Trees, Conserve Trees'. These slogans, led by Suryakant Aher, set an energetic tone for the event.

The rally is part of a larger campaign by the Saturday-Sunday Cycling Group, which boasts over 200 active members cycling a minimum of 21 kilometres daily. This initiative, started on December 12, 2024, will continue until January 12,

2025, marking the birth anniversary of Rajmata Jijau Maasa-

Women cyclists played a significant role, leading from the

Sunday Cycling Group, organised the rally.



heb. Senior cyclists and other cyclists including Vinayak Warungse, Madhavrao Pawar, Meera Joshi, and Chandarani Gaware participated in the rally.

front and showcasing their commitment to the cause.

Retired Commissioner Pratap Patil and Babu Tajanpure flagged off the rally, while Truptida Katkar, president of the Saturday-

Participants began with three laps around the cycling track at the martyr Anant Kanhere ground before proceeding through ABB Circle and Jehan Circle, concluding at Someshwar.

## Fine of Rs 8 cr recovered from unruly drivers

**NASHIK:** The Nashik City Traffic Branch (CTB) has taken decisive action against traffic violators, enforcing the Motor Vehicle Act rigorously over the past year. From January to November 2024, a total of 1,54,515 cases were registered against errant drivers, resulting in fines amounting to Rs. 8.17 crore. Among the violations, failure to wear helmets emerged as the most frequent offense, with 46,151 cases recorded.

Under the leadership of Commissioner of Police Sandeep Karnik and Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Chandrakant Khandvi, the CTB has been working relentlessly to ensure compliance with traffic laws. Senior officials, including Assistant Commissioner of Police Sudhakar Suradkar and the inspec-

tors of the city's four traffic units, have spearheaded enforcement efforts in their respective areas.

The traffic branch has targeted a wide range of violations, including driving without helmets, talking on mobile phones while driving, failing to wear seat belts, parking in no-park-

ing zones, jumping signals, and ignoring zebra crossings. Special drives conducted between April 3 and 9, as well as April 22 and 28, saw intensified penalties for offenders. A similar campaign in December focused on curbing violations, with action taken against 460 drivers and Rs. 2.69 lakh in fines collected.

Despite these measures, reckless use of mobile phones by drivers of two-wheelers, cars, buses, and trucks remains a significant concern. Many accidents, some fatal, have been attributed to such behaviour.

Surprisingly, data shows that in eleven months, only 803 cases of mobile phone violations were identified, and action was taken against just 143 drivers for crossing zebra lines.

Do not violate traffic rules. Action is being taken by all four units of the traffic branch. Various measures are being taken to create awareness among drivers about traffic rules. No one should bend the rules. Otherwise, action is inevitable.  
- Chandrakant Khandvi, DCP



## Energy conservation awareness at KTHM College

**NASHIK:** As part of Energy Conservation Week, the Maharashtra Energy Development Agency (MEDA) organized an awareness drive at KTHM College. A tableau was used to display visuals emphasizing energy conservation, highlighting it as a shared responsibility.

The drive stressed that saving energy is as crucial as generating it, presenting it as a national duty. Tips were shared on using household appliances efficiently, the importance of energy ratings when purchasing devices, and the need to turn off appliances after use. Attendees were encouraged to minimize air conditioner use and design homes to maximize natural sunlight. The programme saw the participation of college principal Dr. S. S. Kale, Maratha Vidya Prasarak Samaj Sanstha director Dr. S. K. Shinde, junior science department head Prof. Kiran Redgaonkar, Dr. Ganesh Mogal, MEDA officers, staff, and students.

## Protecting Brahmagiri

(Contd from P-3)

Despite awareness efforts by experienced mountaineers and environmentalists, and occasional media coverage of the issue, the problem persists. While everyone expects clean surroundings at tourist spots, the responsibility to maintain cleanliness falls on both visitors and locals. Unfortunately, a lack of awareness and accountability has turned this shared responsibility into an ongoing challenge. Regular cleanliness drives are conducted to address the mounting garbage. Tons of waste are removed during these campaigns, but the impact is short-lived. The next day, the area often reverts to its littered state. This highlights a critical issue: clean-

liness is not a one-time effort but a continuous and collective process. The current cycle of littering by some and cleaning by others is unsustainable. The solution lies in breaking this cycle by preventing garbage accumulation in the first place. This requires a shift in mindset, where every individual takes ownership of their actions. Change must begin at home. Elders have a vital role in shaping the habits and values of younger generations. By demonstrating respect for cleanliness and the environment, adults can instill these principles in their children. If parents avoid littering and take steps to maintain cleanliness, their children will naturally follow suit. The preservation of Brahmagiri and the rivers it nour-

ishes is not just an environmental obligation but a cultural and spiritual duty. Maintaining cleanliness reflects respect for the mountain's sanctity and ensures its legacy for future generations. Keeping the Godavari and its source clean requires sustained efforts from all sections of society. Social organizations, local residents, and visitors must work together to safeguard Brahmagiri's ecological and cultural heritage. Awareness, accountability, and consistent action are the keys to achieving this goal. The day everyone recognises their role and improves their behaviour will mark the beginning of a brighter, cleaner future for Brahmagiri and Nashik as a whole. Let us make that change today.

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