

PUPPY'S DAY OUT IN A SEASON WHEN FLOWERS BLOOM



Pics: S Mishra

A participant cuddles a puppy at a dog show organised by Orange City Canine Club at Tilak Nagar ground on Sunday. Right: A girl at a flower show organised by Nagpur Garden Club at Kusumtai Wankhede Hall

MERC inquiry sought in power franchisee issue

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Nagpur: Even as a consumer organization filed a petition against MSEDCL's Nagpur franchisee, another Nagpurian has lodged a complaint with Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission seeking an enquiry in the matter.

Ramdaspath resident Anil Wadpaliwar stated in his complaint that Forum of Regulators (FoR), the apex body of all state electricity regulatory commissions (SERCs), had directed all power distributors to take permission of the concerned SERC for appointing a franchisee. The FoR had stressed that if MSEDCL incurred losses due to the franchisee, the consumers would have to pay for it through a higher tariff. However, MSEDCL had ignored this order, he claimed.

FoR has stated that if a distribution company wanted to deviate from the standard bidding document prepared by the Forum then it would have to take the permission of SERC. The T&D loss reduction trajectory would also have to be approved by the Commission. A nod would also be needed for any investment planned in last five years of franchisee contract as well as extra power purchase to reduce load-shedding.

Wadpaliwar claimed that MSEDCL had incurred a loss of Rs 385 crore in 2009-10 in Bhiwandi franchisee area. The company sought to recover this amount from MERC which asked it to submit an audit report while sanctioning Rs 200 crore on temporary basis.

MERC had stressed that the Rs 385 crore loss was on the higher side and hence an independent audit was necessary since any under-recovery from franchisee area had a direct impact on other consumers. Further, in absence of audited data it was difficult to find out the average billing rate (ABR) and tariff indexation rate (TIR) of the franchisee area and hence the amount recoverable by MSEDCL.

The complainant alleged that MSEDCL was not doing the audit because the truth would come out and its plans to franchisee out other divisions would be jeopardised. South-West Nagpur MLA Devendra Fadnavis has claimed that MSEDCL would incur huge loss due to franchisee. He claimed that tender conditions were changed to benefit the franchisee.

Jan Manch has also filed a petition in Nagpur high court objecting to amendments to the tender.

Max voltage substation in Vid

Ashish Roy | TNN

Nagpur: The project may not benefit the region but Vidarbhaites can take pride from the fact that Deoli, near Wardha, will have world's maximum voltage substation in four to five years. Powergrid, a central sector PSU, has decided to set up a 400/1,200 KV substation at Deoli. 1,200 KV is the highest voltage proposed in power transmission. Presently, the highest voltage used is 800 KV by China, which is also developing a 1,100 KV system.

Powergrid will lay a 380 km long 1,200 KV transmission line from Deoli to Aurangabad in the first phase. In the next phase, it will construct a 400/1,200 KV substation at Deoli and then a 1,200/400 KV one at Aurangabad.

A company official said that a substation was being set up in Bina (Madhya Pradesh) for testing the 1,200 KV system. "We are developing 1,200 KV equipment with the help of private companies like Crompton Greaves, ABB, etc. as they are not available in the world. The test substation will be ready in three years and then we will begin work on the Deoli substation. Once the technology is commercially successful, we will also market it abroad."

Elaborating on the Bina project, the official said that the project cost is estimated at Rs 40 crore. "We will have a 400/1,200 KV transformer at one end and a 1,200/400 KV

one at the other. We will then do a load test and find solutions to whatever problems we encounter. Bina was chosen as we have 400 acre land available there."

He said that a 400 KV line could transmit 600 MW power while a 800 KV line's capacity is around 2,000 MW. However, a 1,200 KV line could transmit over 6,000 MW.

Powergrid will lay a 380 km long 1,200 KV transmission line from Deoli to Aurangabad in the first phase. In the next phase, it will construct a 400/1,200 KV substation at Deoli and then a 1,200/400 KV one at Aurangabad

Explaining the need for such high voltages, another official said that transmission distance was less in most countries due to their small size. "United States is a big country but it has distributed generation. However, in India power generation is concentrated. Most thermal plants are located in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand while hydel plants are coming up in the Himalayas. However, demand for power is elsewhere. The higher voltage lines can not only carry more power, but they also have lower losses."

S Sudarshan



POWER-PACKED MEET: Union power minister Sushilkumar Shinde (left), MP Dutta Meghe (right) and Ranjit Kamble during the foundation stone laying down of 1,200 KV Deoli-Aurangabad power line in Wardha on Sunday. This is the maximum voltage line in the world

'We never publicise our findings'

Vijay Pinjarkar | TNN

Nagpur: Himmat Pawar, a resident of tiny Sisa-Masa village, 16km from Akola on Murtijapur Road, and Samvedna, an NGO, are trying to persuade the FASE Pardhis in 10 villages in the area to give up hunting in lieu of alternative livelihood options under a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ministry of environment and forests (MoEF) project.

Samvedna is implementing the UNDP and MoEF project through Centre of Environment Education (CEE), Ahmedabad, for the past three years. The programme called 'Conservation of lesser florican and livelihood development of FASE Pardhi tribe in Central India' is bearing fruits.

"Frankly speaking, many among the community don't know about floricans. With the awareness by Pawar and Samvedna, FASE Pardhis are not harming these birds any more," says Kaustubh Pandharipande, a researcher. Three floricans caught in 2001, 2004 and 2005 were released in their natural habitat by Pawar.

Pawar adds, "Many of us now don't even tell about the presence of these birds. I was lured by many in the past to show the birds by offering money but my conscious doesn't permit me to do that now."

Pandharipande, who shifted to Karanja (Lad) from Nagpur to work on the floricans, says Pawar has helped detect nests of lesser floricans, resulting in at least six more birds in the last two years. All are being monitored in the region.

"We never publicised the findings owing to the threat. Apart from florican conservation, Samvedna takes up programmes on de-addiction and solves the problems of the Pardhis through community programmes," said Pandharipande.

In Akola and Washim districts, where the floricans are found, there are 66 villages of FASE Pardhis with a population of 5,000 people. Of these, 20% are engaged in farming while 10% are into selling household items.

Samvedna and Pawar are not only protecting the birds but are also developing grasslands, preparing status reports and striving for habitat improvement under the UNDP project.

Pawar is known to many conservationists, one among them is Madhav Gadgil, noted Indian ecologist. Gadgil calls Pawar the 'barefooted ecologist' after a visit to Sisa-Masa to see his work.

Pawar, who was once a heavy drunkard, has not touched liquor for the past 18 years. "It just came into my mind and I gave up drinking. Similar was the case with floricans, when Kaustubh told me about their dwindling numbers," Pawar says.

He can tell you the names of 13 of his ancestors, who headed the family and were hunters.

VACANCY NOTICE

Jharkhand State Electricity Regulatory Commission, Ranchi invites application for filling up the post of Secretary. The details of the post and application form are available on the website of the Commission www.jserc.org. The interested candidates, who fulfill the criteria, may apply latest by 15.2.2011.

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What is making the cops shiver

Soumitra S Bose | TNN

Nagpur: The cold wave in Vidarbha may have sent the mercury dipping to record levels last week. For cops though, cold wave seems not to be the only reason bringing them shivers. There have been many occasions when cops experienced the shivers even though temperatures were not so low.

A murder at Sonba Nagar, in which name of a politically connected goon surfaced last week, seemed to have given more shivers to Kalamna cops than ambient temperature going down to five degrees celsius. Like the strong current from north that is causing the chill, there is a 'north' factor behind apparently immunity that the goon enjoys from cops. It is said that the political godfather of one time accused of Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act is also from northern part of the city. A handful of senior cops are known to be loyal friends of the godfather.

Sources in the police department said that the former jailbird's name had surfaced in three murders across the city in recent past, including that of the high profile former corporator Bharat Mohadikar at Lakadganj. The cops seem to be pondering about this conspiracy even two months after the murder. Forget arresting the goon, senior cops were left trembling just facing media questions about his involvement.

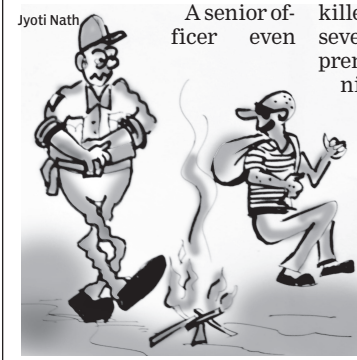
A senior officer even denied knowing that the don was called to the police station to record his statement. Just like the cops' teeth-chattering experiences have nothing to do with cold currents, so their turning cold on certain occasions. Cops seem to go into a freeze in dealing with anything that requires them to go beyond the beaten track. They never proceed on cases related to killing animals or violation of forest or environ laws. "Ask them to take action against perpetrators of cruelty to animals and they would turn to ice requiring us to coax, cajole, talk to their seniors or even get politicians to make calls," said an animal rights activist. The activist in recent times had harrowing experience with the cops.

KILLER COMEDIES

The animal right activists, along with colleagues, had gone to Kalamna police station seeking help from the cops against a bunch of herdsmen taking buffaloes for slaughter. The cops turned to spectators as herdsmen thrashed up the activists. There were nearly 40 buffaloes. The cops did take the herdsmen in custody but claimed they had no clue where more than 30 buffaloes disappeared. The activists, to their disappointment, learnt the animals were returned to herdsmen.

In another case involving officials of government mental hospital who had killed and quietly buried several stray dogs in the premises before visit of a senior official, cops were similarly reluctant to move. Police accompanied the activists to the hospital premises but refused to have the site excavated and recover carcasses, a crucial piece of evidence.

It was after much cajoling that the cops moved.



'Power generation has shot up since 2005'

Nagpur: Union power minister Sushilkumar Shinde believes that sluggish growth of power sector has become a thing of the past with private companies making huge investments in the sector.

Shinde told the power officials during the foundation ceremony of 1,200 KV Deoli-Aurangabad line that while capacity addition from 1990 to 2005 was only 41,000 MW, that between 2005 and 2010 was 45,000 MW. The generation capacity had increased from 1.19 lakh MW in 2004 to 1.70 lakh MW in 2010.

"The contribution of private sector is increasing by the day. During the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) it was 10%, in 11th it will be around 27% but in the 12th Plan, it will be over 50%. This is vital to ensure GDP growth of 9%. "This generation is allowing us to electrify the villages. There were about 1.15 lakh villages lacking electricity in 2004. We have been able to provide power to 88,000 so far under RGGVY scheme."

Shinde said that transmission and distribution (T&D) losses had also reduced sharply in last five years. "They have reduced from 38% to 28% and the target for 2015 is 15%."

Under R-APDRP, every substation and transformer will be monitored online. We will be able to locate the fault exactly very fast. We are also paying attention to energy conservation and saved 250 MW last year." The minister, however, admitted that Vidarbha would not benefit directly from 1,200 KV line.

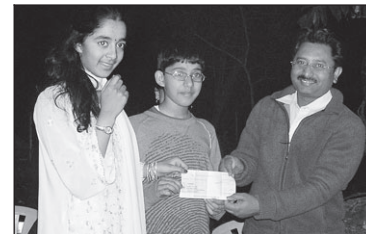
"However, this system will allow evacuation of power from Chhattisgarh to western Maharashtra and hence power generated in Vidarbha will be available for the region," he claimed.

Kids show the way to save tigers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Nagpur: When Indian tigers are passing through crisis, two Indian kids in Copenhagen have showed the way. Isha and Yash Chavan, 12, were born and brought up in Copenhagen in Denmark. Their parents Ajay Chavan is a cardiologist and mother Priya a gynaecologist there. After both of them learnt about the tiger crisis from the website, they decided to do something for the wild cats.

Both could have easily donated sum for the tigers. But the brother-sister duo spread the message among



Isha and Yash Chavan

their classmates and collected Rs 10,000 from their friends.

The money was donated to Satpuda Foundation by Isha and Yash, who

were in India for Christmas vacation. Their maternal uncle Praveen Pardeshi, who is also divisional commissioner for Amravati, guided them to hand over the proceeds to Satpuda Foundation. They met foundation chief Kishor Rithe and personally handed over the cheque.

The amount will go to the pool where the kids like Madhav Subramanian, Maya Sreenivasan and other young donors have contributed money for tiger conservation. The money will be spent on bringing awareness among the kids from tribal area and urban area about.

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