

# Helping shuttlers fight 'stage fear'

Thane's Krida Prabodhini comes up with new initiatives to improve its badminton players' performance while the athletics coach should be finalised soon

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**THANE:** The Dadoji Konddeo stadium in Thane is full of lush green overgrown grass. The authorities are waiting for the monsoon to end to bring the ground back to playable condition.

This has forced the nine athletes of Thane centre's Krida Prabodhini to train at the balconies of the stadium or sometimes travel to Khandivli's SAI centre as competitions near.

Krida Prabodhini is also without an athletics coach two-and-a-half months after its earlier coach Surendra Modi left for his native Aurangabad to join Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University as assistant lecturer (physical education). Modi has also been roped in as the athletics coach of Aurangabad's Krida Prabodhini centre.

The Prabodhini is on the verge of finalising its athletics coach after shortlisting three candidates, all NIS qualified. Presently, as a temporary arrangement, the athletes are being put through their paces by Central Railways coach and former athlete, 35-year-old Nagesh Shetty of Thane.

Following a report on the performances / non-performances of its students in the previous year, the athletes' size has been cut from 15 to nine. "Seven from the previous batch have been asked to leave the Prabodhini for not giving the desired results while one has been inducted into the centre," said Thane Prabodhini principal Jagadish Shirke. "Some of those who have been asked to leave were also not keeping themselves fit. They could not take the workload of the Prabodhini's training regime."



The Krida Prabodhini shuttlers will have friendly matches to overcome fear before competitions. PRAFUL GANGURDE

The newcomer to Thane centre is Solapur's Chavan Kiran Ramachandra, who is an 800m and 1,500m runner. He is in his second year at the Krida Prabodhini, coming from the Prawanagar centre.

Shirke said that a report is being prepared at the end of a season based on the student's performance in various categories. These include his overall behaviour, his behaviour in school/ college, his performance in studies, his behaviour

at the mess, behaviour at playground, relationship with others, if he is regular for training or not, if he is committed to practice, if he is taking interest in his particular discipline and if he falls sick often. The report is then sent to the Prabodhini's headquarters in Pune, who decide if a particular student remains for another term or not.

Into his second year as the Prabodhini principal, the 50-year-old Shirke said he used the first year observing how the students performed and what needed to be done to enhance their performances. "The badminton students needed some confidence booster. Last season, they

had some fear while entering competitions. As they are from rural places, mainly adivasis, they have the fear while participating in competitions. This affects their performances. In order to make them overcome the 'stage fear', I will have my students participate in friendly matches with other clubs including Mulund Gymkhana, Kalidas Sports Complex, Mulund and Navi Mumbai Sports Association, Vashi. This will help them overcome fear before competitions," said Shirke.

With the badminton competitions locally having already begun, Shirke has also started asking for reports of his students' performances from the

## THIS SEASON'S KRIDA PRABODHINI STUDENTS

- **Badminton:** Rahul Govind Gedam, Ganesh Motiram Todsam, Ekendra Jaybahadur Darjee, Sunil Kisan Sidam, Shrinivas A. Salam, Ankush Govind Aatram, Purushotham C. Awate, Ganesh Padmakar Mahale, Dhiraj Meghnath Karvande and Sanjay Chauhan.
- **Athletics:** Jekam Singh F. Valvi (800m / 1,500m), Mahendra Pandit (long jump), Amit Y. Pawar (long jump), Dhiraj Kumar Mishra (triple jump, long jump), Nikhil N. Sarobat (high jump, triple jump), Sachin S. Rathod (long jump), Praful Y. Bele (400m), Bharat G. Vishwakarma (100m / 200m), Chavan Kiran Ramachandra (800m / 1,500m).

# Chheda leads Ruia to hat-trick of wins

The Mulund resident won her singles and doubles matches to win the women's team title for Ruia College

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**MULUND:** Kadambari Chheda of Ruia College, Matunga, played the captain's knock. She helped her college post fine victory in the Women's Team Championship event at the Mumbai University Badminton Championships. It was held at University Pavilion, Marine Lines, Mumbai early this week.

Chheda is a trainee at Yen Badminton Academy at Kalidas Sports Complex, Mulund. This was not the first time that Ruia College has won the coveted crown. Ruia College won the Women's Team Title for three consecutive years. The hat-trick victory was orchestrated by none other than Mulund player Chheda.

In the finals, Ruia College Women's Team defeated Mulund College of Commerce 2-1. Chheda won her singles and doubles matches to win the Women's Team Title.

Earlier, Ruia College had

I have qualified for the West Zone Inter-University Badminton Championship scheduled in September at Surat.  
KADAMBARI CHHEDA,  
Badminton player

defeated H R College of Commerce in the Semi-finals and N M College in the quarter-finals respectively.

In the decisive finals of the women's team championships, Ruia thrashed Mulund College of Commerce to lift the crown. In the first singles encounter, Ishani Savant of Ruia lost to Jui Agaskar of Mulund College of Commerce 2-1 as the former conceded the match.

Then it was Chheda, who shouldered the whole responsibility to drive her team to a fantastic win in the remaining events.

She was charged up after Savant's dismal show and took the baton in her hand to win the doubles and singles.

Chheda and Savant outshone Jui Agaskar and Anikta S. of Mulund College 2-1, 2-1 to register win in doubles format. In the second singles match, Chheda got better of Anikta S.

21-5, 21-5 to finish the show with an impressive victory.

"With the record breaking show I have qualified for the West Zone Inter-University Badminton Championship scheduled in September at Surat. I owe credit to my coach Rajeev Ghanpule and what I am today it's all because of his sincere effort," said 21-year-old Chheda, a final year Arts student.

Kadambari was the All India Inter-University champion last academic year. She, along with Jui Agaskar won women's team championship title for Mumbai University at Mangalore.

It was for the first time in the history of Mumbai University that bagged the all India crown while beating Delhi University. "Being the champion of All India Inter-University last season, I have been summoned to the selection trial for World University Games to be held in Chinese Taipei in September," said Chheda.

She added: "The selection is scheduled at Gwalior by end of this month for which I have begun training seriously. I practise four hours a day which is segregated into two batches - net training in the morning for and physical fitness routine in the evening for an equal duration on daily basis."



Kadambari Chheda will be part of the selection trial for World University Games to be held in Chinese Taipei in September. PRAFUL GANGURDE

# Shraddha Ghule wins triple gold at West Zone National Athletics meet

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**THANE:** Thane athlete Shraddha Ghule was unstoppable at the West Zone National Athletics meet held at Bhopal early this week. She stole the show by winning hat-trick of gold.

Her fine performance with right timing brought her triple gold in long jump, triple jump and 100m team relay. Though she was the top favourite in long jump and triple jump, 100m sprint has been a big bonus where she

lived upto the reputation of Maharashtra relay team.

Being part of the under-20 girl's group she overcame stiff challenges and cleared 5.70 metre to win gold in long jump. The second gold followed in the from triple jump in which she made a giant leap of 12.60 metre.

Her hat-trick gold came in the from of 4x100m team relay event. There's more. Ghule was also announced the best athlete in the tournament for winning triple gold.

"I was happy with the hat-

**SHRADDHA GHULE AND TEJAS SALIAN HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE INTER-ZONAL ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIP TO BE HELD AT GUNTUR IN FROM SEPTEMBER 3-5**

trick. But I was surprised to be declared the best athlete in the competition amongst top players of the country. I am looking

forward to Inter-Zonal nationals," said 20-year-old Ghule, a final year commerce student of Vaze College, Mulund.

Her practice partner at Dynamo Sports Club at Dadoji Konddev stadium, Tejas Saliyan, too, gave his best.

Saliyan helped the state under-20 boy's relay squad win gold in 4x100m. Apart from his team event exploits, he won a silver medal in long jump. He cleared a distance of 7.01 meter.

"I gave my best which reflected in silver medal at the nation-

als. The competition witnessed tough challengers from across west zone states. I have made good progress with my improvised leap as compared to the junior nationals where I finished 8th with less than 7 metre barrier," he said.

"Except for Monday, the weekly rest day, both are working hard under the watchful eyes of our chief coach Ramesh Dalvi. And we hope they will recreate the same charisma of Bhopal at Guntur," said Nilesh Patkar, coach of the duo.

# Sandeep Awari on a record-breaking spree



Sandeep Awari lifted an overall 908.5 kg in the senior nationals at Coimbatore. PRAFUL GANGURDE

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**THANE:** Thane tough guy Sandeep Awari has become the Strongman of India after years of struggle and resilience.

Last year, he was inducted into Indian Railways based on his performance.

Railway power lifters have been at the frontline at national scene and Awari wanted to lead the bunch from the front which has turned to be true in his second year of service with Railways.

At Coimbatore Senior Nationals, Awari (30), did the magic with his stunning show of strength by posting a staggering overall weight of 908.5kg.

He shocked the previous record holders while slapping on the best marks with a huge gap. He created three national records at the same event-squat, dead lift and overall.

Awari put on a considerable

**SANDEEP AWARI WILL BE PART OF THE SELECTION TRIALS FOR ENSUING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP. THE TRIALS WILL BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER**

weight in the recent times in his attempt to break the national record which was set by 90kg category power lifters.

This composed Thane man took his overall tally to 908.5 kg, shattering the previous best of Gurdeep Singh of Railways who did 855kg in the 90kg group last year. Awari went on to surpass the old record of 340kg squat set by Singh when he cleared a whopping 360kg.

It was not all for this determined athlete who put in consistent effort day in and day out to become the strongman of the

country. Awari broke the dead lift record of Poteswar Rao of Postal Department. He registered 336kg against Rao's 335kg. But unfortunately, he could not overcome the national bench press record.

His event-wise break-up stood at 360kg in squat, 336kg dead lift and 212.5kg in bench press for an overall tally of 908.5kg, over 53.5kg lead from the previous national mark. Representing Railways at the senior nationals he lived upto everyone's reputation being the strongman of the country while taking part in 90kg class.

"I was not confident about such a huge lift of more than 900kg. I am sure this overall record will stand for a long time. My previous best was 838.5kg at Jamshedpur early this year when I played in the 82.5kg category. I was expecting close to 900kg but not the one I clinched," he said.

## Rescue act



■ Bhandup resident Chandramani Yadav spotted this fully-grown green vine snake (top) hanging from a tree at Lake Road. This semi-venomous snake was rescued by PAWS on August 17.  
■ A class 5 student of New Horizon School, Airoli, Himanshu Surve, spotted this owl (above) that lost its way at Janta Market, Bhandup (W) on August 18 being attacked by crows. The bird was not injured, though. Surve and his father rescued the owl and handed it over to PAWS, who released it to its natural habitat. PHOTOS COURTESY: PAWS

# Ghaisas, Ambekar top state-ranking TT meet

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**THANE:** Akshay Ghaisas, a new entrant in the cadet group this year was at it again. He proved his prowess at the recently held Symbiosis SPA State Ranking Table Tennis Tournament at Pune.

He demonstrated great temperament with his forehand-backhand combination over the table at the state show, thus winning his first singles crown in the state in cadet group (under-12). He was flawless in his move and beat Vedant Shah of Mumbai to clinch the cadet boy's title.

A student of class 6 from Sulochana Devi Singhania High School, Thane, this second seed fought against 9th seed Shah in the final clash to wrest the top prize with 3-2 scoreline.

"I was at a comfortable position after winning tough games in the initial rounds. I wanted transition in my game and concentrated on singles format rather than putting hard effort in doubles which turned to be worthy," said Ghaisas, a trainee at Youngster's Club Thane. He trains under the tutelage of Pradeep Mokashi.

Ghaisas remained the winner in doubles at three state ranking tournaments so far at Dhule, Dombivli and Mumbai since the onset of this season. He was followed by his teammate Sanish Ambekar. State seed two Ambekar, who is already a state champion in singles and doubles got into his usual form to clinch the sub-junior singles title at Pune, adding one more to his trophy cabinet.

Ambekar beat top seed Shaun Rebello of Mumbai 4-2 to grab the crown. Earlier, he won two district tournaments in close succession and excelled at



Akshay Ghaisas won the singles crown in the cadet group (under-12) at Symbiosis SPA State-ranking table tennis tournament. PRAFUL GANGURDE

Dombivli state meet with singles and doubles crown to his credit.

Ambekar started playing table tennis at Vikas complex, where he resides, under his coach Amey Joshi.

"I practice at K'villa Table Tennis Academy, Thane under the able guidance of Amey sir who has groomed me from day one. Last year I represented Maharashtra at the National School Games where our team won silver," said Ambekar, a class

8 student of Singhania School. Another Thane player Urvi Walve, a trainee at Boosters Club, played her heart out to reach the final of sub-junior girls' category.

But all her endeavour went in vein when she lost the final to Sanka Muley of Aurangabad 3-4. "I took the game into my fold with the first two set lead, but trailed in the third and fourth and came back to dominate the following set but the end result was unfortunate," said Walve.