

World Environment Day celebrations (The Orchid, Mumbai)



From to left to right Mr. Vithal Kamat (CMD, The Orchid), Mr. Anand Bharati receiving the award, Mr. Kiran Shantaram (Ex Sheriff, Mumbai) & Mr. Param Kannampilly (Technical Director, The Orchid)



Mr. Sujoy Monga receiving the award, Mr. Vithal Kamat (CMD, The Orchid), Mr. Kiran Shantaram (Ex Sheriff, Mumbai) & Mr. Param Kannampilly (Technical Director, The Orchid)

Vithal Kamat introduces Media Transasia's environment magazine "NaturAlli" in Mumbai

On the eve of World Environment Day noted green hotelier and CMD of The Orchid, Asia's first ecotel, Vithal Kamat announced the introduction of "NaturAlli" India's first eco-style quarterly by Media Transasia (India). Said Mr. Kamat, "I am honoured to introduce this magazine on environment by Media Transasia. We have always maintained our commitment to the environment and extend our full-fledged support and good wishes to this noble venture."

Said Xavier Collaco, President of Media Transasia, "Drawing from indigenous tradition and modern science at once, NaturAlli shall endeavour to bridge the man-nature gap in life. Be it the threat to wildlife in our fast depleting forests or the need to harvest rain water in our own back yard, the magazine shall be a source of reader friendly information, authoritative comment, back-to-nature remedies, lively interviews, global trends in ecologically-sound architecture and product design, natural beauty aids, and, of course, magnificent pictures."

Added Xavier, "Free of any political agenda, drab displays or declamatory discourse, NaturAlli shall be people's ally in the exploration of the natural world. Spanning the local and the global, it shall be a window into the diverse natural phenomena found around the world and, at the same time, try to highlight issues, techniques and processes that might impinge on everyone's daily life with the firm belief that an ecologically balanced lifestyle is not only chic but also sustainable. Printed on eco-friendly Zanders paper in four-colour, NaturAlli, endeavours to marry ecological and environmental concerns to one's daily life."

The evening also saw Vithal Kamat felicitating six "Green citizens" of Mumbai for their contribution to the environment in the year 2004 - 05. These included Ms Seema Redkar for her role in popularizing Advanced Locality Management (ALM) programmes, Mr Sujoy Monga (for his role in Wildlife and Nature Conservation), Mr Rajkumar Sharma (for his initiative in developing Chembur ALM), Eureka Forbes Institute of Environment (for its role in Rain Water Harvesting in Mumbai), DSP Merrill Lynch (for its innovative employment training programme on environment) and Mr Anand Bharati (Ex-Deputy Conservator of Borivli National Park).

The evening also saw a brilliant "eco dance" performance by the much acclaimed dancers from ace choreographer and dancer Shiamak Davar's troupe.

The concluding act saw an eco song performance by "Green Team" members of The Orchid.

"Green Citizen" Felicitations

Seema Redkar: Officer on Special Duty - Advanced Locality Management Program, Ms Redkar took over from Mr Shirkrishna Bhagwat, 2003 onwards. She has been instrumental in the make over of various ALM's. She has also initiated 57 new ALM's. Mrs Redkar is credited with initiatives such as conversion of Nirmalya at two places in the last Ganpati festival, Rain water harvesting in various ALMs and creating awareness programs for the MCGM staff and ALM's alike. Seema Redkar has been working with the BMC from the past five years prior to which she was with Nirmala Niketan College.

Rajkumar Sharma: Rajkumar Sharma has shown how ordinary citizens can rise above the ordinary and create better surroundings for themselves, move the state machinery. By bringing together citizens of his surroundign buildings he created an ALM in Chembur, which inspired many others to form such groups within their loality. Soft spoken and modest, Rajkumar has not rested on his laurels. He has been instrumental in creating a federation of ALMs in Chembur, which looks after the woes and worries of all the surrounding ALMs. He is currently assisting Clean Sweep and AILSG to understand the positive impact of ALM in the city

Sujoy Monga: Sunjoy Monga was smitten by the nature- bug at the tender age of six when he first stepped into those hills and forest the other side of the railway lines in northwest Mumbai, then a verdant, laid-back suburban sprawl. Widely travelled, Monga is a prolific writer and has contributed his pen and imagery to scores of publications. He is also involved with several children's education projects and regularly conducts field and classroom sessions for many institutions.

He has, to date, authored and photographed five books, including the much acclaimed City Forest: Mumbai's National Park, Wildlife Reserves of India, The Mumbai Nature Guide, Birds of Mumbai and The Nature of EsselWorld and Water Kingdom. He was also co-author of Photoguide to Birds of India. He has also done wildlife cinematography for several national and international television programmes. He is presently involved in the creation of a series of very special books on Indian biodiversity. Infact he has just arrived here after launching his new book at Maharashtra Nature Park. He resides with his wife Jyoti and daughter Yuhina in Mumbai.

Eureka Forbes Institute of Environment: As the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) arm of its parent company, Eureka Forbes, EFIE has in its own right created massive awareness amongst the city on Rain Water Harvesting. EFIE is credited with many firsts: It is the first who spoke about the need of Rainwater harvesting, long before it became the buzzword.

It is also the first to have installed pollution monitors across various cities, which monitor the level of pollutants in the air. The first garden on the rainwater-harvesting concept, which also depicts the various water technologies, has been instituted by the EFIE.

DSP Merrill Lynch: DSP Merrill Lynch has initiated a training program for its employees wherein they recognize the need to save the environment. Products, which can be reused, are given away to various charities. It also assists schools for underprivileged students.

Anand Bharati: Mr Bharati was the Dy Conservator and in charge of the National Park for over 12 years until his retirement on 31st March 2005. He was literally the face of the National Park, and was instrumental in highlighting and to a considerably extent sorting out the encroachment-related issues that helped revert a lot of land area back to the department. He also encouraged large-scale plantation of trees on these reclaimed lands besides in the creation of numerous waterholes and embankments that would greatly help local ecology.

In a nutshell, it can be said that he was a most easily approachable forest official, always willing to help out those deserving, and he was just the perfect choice for this City Forest. Even after his retirement, Mr Bharati will be involved in nature and environment related activities.