

Ashish Bhatia said: "He is a key witness in the case. Most of the accused and charges are to be settled on them. Bhavik was probably to threaten Patel to turn hostile. So one of the accused in the Patel murder case is pending."

said Harjani, Soni, other members of the team probably from Pune, abducted Bhavik. They took Bhavik to later released him on which Bhavik took a dare. The two arrested persistency of betting on

cricket matches. The ATS will question them for further information on Harjani and his right-hand Devang Bharmbhatt.

The ATS said, Harjani is wanted in a number of murder, kidnapping, attempt to murder and extortion cases in Anand, Nadiad, Vadodara and elsewhere in Gujarat. He is also wanted in similar cases in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Bhatia said that Bhavik will be questioned after a few days as he is under trauma and not in a good health, adding that his statement could lead them to Harjani.

Harjani was in jail for five-six years before his release on bail. He has since been evading arrest.

tarakhand sent personnel to the neighboring districts with sketches of the 42-year-old academic who had just returned to

IIM-A from a year-long stint as head of Pune's National Insurance Academy. The academic session at the premier B-School has just started and Prof Oburai had hardly been in the campus for long before he went on an unofficial trip.

The professor of marketing disappeared from his ho-

had earlier tried to jump into the Ganga at Devprayag, the confluence of the Alkananda and Bhagirathi rivers

ing faculty member of IIM-Ahmedabad, has been provided to the police of neighboring districts. Rafts have been

pressed into service to trace him. We are presuming that he has either become a sanyasi or has jumped into the Ganga."

Prof Oburai's colleagues at IIM-A said they were clueless about the circumstances over his strange disappearance, as he was usually 'jolly'.  
(With PTI inputs)

## State leads the way in organic farming

**NEW DELHI:** Gujarat has made the most of a key horticulture promotion scheme of the Centre and expanded the area under organic farming.

A total of 2,047 hectares have been covered under organic farming as part of the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), and Gujarat alone accounts for 2,000 hectares, a review report by the Agriculture Ministry said. Chhattisgarh's share comes to 45 hectares, and Kerala's two hectares.

Organic farming relies on crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological pest control. It excludes or strictly limits the use of manufac-

tured fertilisers, pesticides (herbicides, insecticides and fungicides), plant growth regulators such as hormones, livestock antibiotics, food additives, and genetically modified organisms.

The NHM progress report for last year revealed that the state's expenditure of the Central fund under the head was 115 per cent. Against a fund allocation of Rs 5,497 crore up to February 2011, Gujarat spent Rs 6,351.30 crore, a surplus of Rs 854 crore. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh also saw impressive performance under the scheme, the report added. **PTI**

## GNLU students to tutor juniors this year too

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

**AHMEDABAD, JULY 4**

THE Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar, has decided to continue with its last year's module in which senior students volunteer to teach their juniors in less formal interactions.

The module — Academic Support Programme (ASP) — was born from the recognition that students who join the university are not at a level-playing field because of social and economic inequalities; they often have difficulties in language, presentation skills

and so on.

Last year, 50 teaching sessions were conducted under ASP, where 27 senior students taught. The university also provided them certificates for their efforts.

Programme coordinator K Parameswaran, who teaches international law, said the initiative's benefits are not limited to the juniors alone, but it also helps the seniors gain better clarity of thought, as well as better experiences in public speaking and communication.

ASP team consists of 12 students and three faculty coordinators besides volunteers.

## Colour-producing microbes found in Kutch

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

**AHMEDABAD, JULY 4**

RESEARCHERS at the Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology (GUIDE) claim to have isolated a biocolour-producing bacterial strain from the soil of the arid Banni region of Kutch district, which may find application in the dye-making industry.

For the first time this pigment-production employing a halophilic bacterial culture has been found in saline soils of Banni, GUIDE sci-

entists say.

Director-in-charge of GUIDE, Dr V Vijay Kumar, said: "When the pigment (obtained from these bacteria) was used for dyeing cotton yarn, it showed a higher colour withstanding ability even when exposed to high temperature and light. It is an interesting indication about its potential for commercial application."

Biologically produced colours are in a great demand, and these microorganisms can find application

in various sectors, GUIDE scientists say.

A group of four researchers examined 30-35 bacterial strains from the soil samples from Banni area, and discovered two pigment-producing strains. "Preliminary findings suggest that this discovery has a potential for commercial production of eco-friendly colours in the dye stuff industry," said Dr K Karthikeyan, a scientist at GUIDE and a member of the research group.

"We are now planning to

design a pilot scale set up where the potential of this organism can be tested at higher volumes, 100 litres or 1,000 litres, which are on an industrial scale," he said.

Researchers would study the toxicity level of the pigments, to see if they are safe enough to be used as food colours, Karthikeyan said.

Banni grasslands, known for rich wildlife and biodiversity, are spread over an area of 3,847 square kilometers. They enjoy the status of 'Reserve Forest'.

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