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Oxford scholars interested in IPL & Magarpatta, says Pawar



■ Mayor Rajlaxmi Bhosale, Babanrao Pachpute, Ajit Pawar, RR Patil, Vilasrao Deshmukh, Sharad Pawar and Satish Magar at the inauguration of Nanded City project on Sinhgad Road on Sunday —Shashank Sane/DNA

Union minister denies owning vast tracts of land in the state

DNA Correspondent

Oxford University scholars are interested in studying the success of the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the farmer-driven Magarpatta City model, union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar said here on Sunday.

Pawar, who is also the president of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said, that entire families were watching IPL on television, and many had called him saying that they were worried of boredom after the IPL matches ended on June 1.

While speaking at the inauguration function of the Nanded City project, Pawar said that the 400-acre Magarpatta City township, where the local farmers were stakeholders, was a case study for the Oxford experts.

Deshmukh warns sand lobby

DNA Correspondent

Chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh and district guardian & water resources minister Ajit Pawar on Sunday warned action against the sand lobby in the state saying that it was assuming the dimension of an underworld syndicate.

They were addressing a gathering during the launch of Nanded City township project.

The extraction of sand leads to prevention of water percolation,

which results in higher expenditure on road repairs. And this expenditure is more than what the state exchequer gets from sand sale through auction, Pawar said.

Echoing Pawar's concern, chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh said that the extraction of excessive sand from river banks and riverbeds had led to desertification of villages on the river banks. The sand lobby was getting as strong as the milk lobby and sugar lobby.

The minister, who denied holding any stakes in the Nanded City township said that many people were under the wrong impression that large tracts of land in Maharashtra belonged to him and his family.

Chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh,

who accompanied Pawar at two functions in the city, said that while the Akhil Bharatiya Maratha Shikshan Parishad had ample land in heart of the city, one should congratulate its secretary Uttamrao Patil for protecting this land from land sharks in Pune.