

6th Giritra Convention: July 15, 2007

Trekking and mountaineering are never in the limelight. But Maharashtra teems with trekking groups, and ten of them were in their silver jubilee year in **2006**. So the theme of the 6th Convention was the achievements of these silver jubilee groups. Young Zingaro, one of such groups, were the organisers.

N K Mahajan, the first generation mountaineer from Pune, was the president, while former DGP of Maharashtra, Bhishmaraj Bam, was the chief guest.

Mahajan "sir" complimented Mumbaikars for this annual convention , and took a dig at mountain-lovers from his hometown. Pune too should have a similar gathering, he said.

Bam said, "Mountaineering is a sport where you defy gravity. The Earth loves those who defy the gravity. I cannot climb hills now. But those who can't go to Pandharpur pay obeisance through taking `darshan' of those who have been to the holy town. Likewise, I am here to meet you."

Suhas Joshi and Rajesh Gadgil made a presentation on the ten trekking groups who were celebrating the silver jubilee: Y Z Trekkers, Chakram Hikers, Giriviraj Hikers, Giripremi, Nagpur Mountaineers, Young Blood Adventure, Trekking and Adventure Tata Power Sports, Yashwanti Hikers, Bhannat Trekkers and Jidd. It bought forth these groups' endeavours to promote trekking.

A novel event at this convention was `Dongar-Gani' (Hill Songs), presented by Rahul Joshi of Young Zingaro. Trekkers have a huge collection of songs that are sung at the camp fire, or during the trek. Most such songs are in folk language. The idea behind the Dongar-Gani was to compile and preserve them.

Giripremi, a Pune-based group, had just returned from a successful expedition to Shivling. It made a presentation on it.

The reference guide which was published during this Convention consisted of detailed information about trekking groups, and also a compilation of Dongar Gani.

The chief organiser of this meet was Shridhar Dalvi of Y Z. The 2005 Convention was about 50 years of mountaineering in Maharashtra; this year's was about 25 years of trekking groups. The two themes said it all: Mountaineering now had a `rock solid' following in Maharashtra.
