



HOME MUMBAI INDIA WORLD MONEY SPORT AFTER HRS OPINION SPEAK UP POPULAR ↓ SERVICES ↓ EPAPER ↓ MORE ↓

## CORE ISSUE

**Green Technologies**

Treat Industrial Wastewater using green technology, fewer chemicals  
www.ClearBluEnvironmental.com

**Energized water filter**

Removes toxic substances Order on our secure site  
store.yahoo.com/building-biology/sp

**Want Natural Long Hair?**

Human Hair Extensions - Low Prices Free Consult From A Professional!  
www.NoelleSalon.com/

**Visit Goa**

Plan your tour w/ travel specialist Book now & explore Goa. Goa-Tour.MakeMyTrip.com

Ads by Google

DNA NOW Midas-touch Mukesh only gainer in turbulent mkt

Home | **Core Issue** | Report

# To the abyss, and back

Labonita Ghosh  
Sunday, October 14, 2007 04:19 IST

Post your comment | Email Article | Print Article | Share | RSS Feeds | TEXT A A A | Reprint

*Dyed roads and buildings, and a dying ecosystem. A visit to Vapi is like a trip to environmental hell, says **Labonita Ghosh***

What do you take when you visit a hazardous zone? Knowledge about the toxins you will encounter? Reserves of courage, knowing you'll inhale the foulest chemicals? A mask?

I packed a surgical mask for my trip to Vapi in Gujarat — the industrial hub that has recently been designated one of the most polluted place on the planet by US-based eco-watchdog, the Blacksmith Institute. It's just 190km from Mumbai, but almost a world away.

report continued below »

**Want Natural Long Hair?**

Human Hair Extensions - Low Prices Free Consult. Call Us Today!  
www.NoelleSalon.com/

**Energized water filter**

Removes toxic substances Order on our secure site  
store.yahoo.com/building-biology/sp

**Ultraviolet Disinfection**

High quality ultraviolet systems for all applications - Made in USA.  
www.aquaazul.com

Ads by Google

- Latest News on [DNAINDIA.COM](http://DNAINDIA.COM)
- **7th ODI: Indian century up, Ind 106/6** [more »](#)
  - Stock market restricts losses to 336 pts [more »](#)
  - Don't be swayed by rumours: SEBI [more »](#)

SEARCH:  DNAINDIA.COM  WEB

**TOP IN CORE ISSUE**

- It's dangerous to take a morning walk
  - Our food and water has become poison
  - We find hundreds of fish washed ashore
  - Golden child no more
  - Lung, gas poisoning is common
- [more »](#)

**POPULAR IN CORE ISSUE**

- It's dangerous to take a morning walk
  - We find hundreds of fish washed ashore
  - Our food and water has become poison
  - Covering Vapi pollution 12 years ago
  - Lung, gas poisoning is common
- [more »](#)

**POPULAR SLIDESHOWS**

- Shopper's chant 'Om shanti Om'
  - Leafing through the Dutts' lives
  - Arabian Knights!
  - Working for victory
  - No clowning
- [more »](#)

As the photographer and I drove into Vapi at dawn, it looked like any other smog-encased town. But soon, signs of why Vapi made it to Blacksmith's 'Dirty Thirty' list began to show up. Visibility was low; we were unable to see even 200 feet ahead of us on the road.

Large portions of the highway were bright blue and red, permanently stained by a spillover from the nearby dyeing units. Whole four-storey buildings were stained green with dye — and then abandoned when they became unliveable. At the main Damanganga river, we noticed large pipes channelling a bright orange liquid into the reddish-brown water.

Every stream and water body along the way was red, sludgy and choked with refuse from the nearby factories of the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation.

The trees have a thick film of fly ash and coal dust on them, turning the leaves a sickly yellow. As the smog lifted, we noticed factory chimneys stretching all the way into the horizon. Each of them was emitting a different coloured smoke— sulphur-yellow, reddish-orange, a wispy green. It would be pretty if it weren't dangerous.

By the time I left Vapi, it was almost midnight — about the time that the factories begin freely releasing their toxins and gases into the air. My eyes, which had started itching at sunset, were now burning. My throat was parched and my skin prickled. I had a slight headache.

This was what a visit to Chernobyl must feel like, I thought remembering accounts from the internet.

As we pulled onto the Ahmedabad highway, I was glad to be heading back to relatively less-polluted Mumbai.

Home | **Core Issue**

**Latest Core Issue headlines:**

- [Covering Vapi pollution 12 years ago](#)
- [Lung, gas poisoning is common](#)

Post Comment | Email Article

**5000 + Destinations**

**Sulekha.com**  
Connecting Indians Worldwide

REVIEWS | VIDEOS | TIPS

**Travel now**

[www.sulekha.com](http://www.sulekha.com)

**SPECIAL**



**They have arrived**  
India is waking up to beach safety, and life guards have made an entry on Indian beaches.

Golden child no more

Be the first to rate this article! ☆☆☆☆☆

**Ads by Google**

[Latest India](#)

[Punjab India](#)

[Air India News](#)

[Samachar India](#)

**Post your comment**

Your Name (Will appear below your comment.)

Your email ID (Will not be published.)

Subject

Comment

(Please note: Comment moderation is enabled and may delay your comment. There is no need to resubmit your comment.)

**Post**

**YOUR SAY**



**Cell v/s Cell**

Drivers beware. Now if you're behind the wheel and talking on the phone, you may be headed straight to jail.

**QUICK POLL**

**Should cricketers have a compulsory retirement age?**

- Yes
- No
- Can't say

**Vote** [View result](#) | [Previous polls](#)

**NEWSLETTER**

Get daily news in your inbox and read it at your convenience.

Your email address  **Sign Up**

[About us](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Advertise with us](#) | [Subscription](#) | [Reprint rights](#)

© 2005-2007 Diligent Media Corporation Ltd. All rights reserved.