

The Sunday Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

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SUNDAY, MAY 2, 2021



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Republicans tear into Biden for restrictions on India travel

WASHINGTON, MAY 1 Republican lawmakers on Friday criticised President Joe Biden for imposing restrictions on travel from India in view of the sudden surge in Covid cases in the country.

"Restricting travel to our ally India while leaving our border open to Mexico is not rational," Congressman Tim Burchett said in a tweet, soon after the White House announced Biden's decision.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki had said on Friday, "The policy will be implemented from May 4 in light of extraordinarily high Covid caseloads and multiple variants circulating in India."

Another Republican lawmaker, Jodey Arrington, said, "Biden enacting an India travel ban while keeping the border open is like locking your front door, but leaving the back door wide open. I wonder if the Left will accuse him of being xenophobic and anti-Hindu?"

Congresswoman Lauren Boebert tweeted, "As Biden bans flights from India, perhaps he should be reminded of a tweet he put out last year. Also, I thought travel bans were xenophobic."



A kid receives Covid vaccine at a high school in Pennsylvania. AP/PTI

BOEING ANNOUNCES \$10 MILLION AID

Boeing has announced a \$10 million emergency assistance package to support India's Covid response. "We are directing our pandemic response to the impacted communities," said Dave Calhoun, CEO, Boeing.

INDIA ON IRELAND QUARANTINE LIST

India is among the five countries that will be added to Ireland's mandatory hotel quarantine list from Tuesday. Besides India, the other such countries are Georgia, Iran, Mongolia and Costa Rica.

IRRATIONAL

Restricting travel to our ally India while leaving our border open to Mexico is not rational.

Tim Burchett, CONGRESSMAN

BACK DOOR OPEN

India travel ban while keeping the border open is like locking front door leaving the back door open.

Jodey Arrington, REPUBLICAN LAWMAKER

haps he should be reminded of a tweet he put out last year. Also, I thought travel bans were xenophobic."

Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna, however, supported the travel ban. "But what we really need to do is

IT'S HEARTBREAKING, SAY LAWMAKERS

Top US lawmakers have said it is heartbreaking to see the "crisis utterly overwhelming the health systems" in India. "It is a humanitarian crisis that requires our assistance," Congressman Brad Sherman said. He sought more help for India from Biden.

prioritise lives over excess profits. Pfizer and Moderna need to license their formulas," Khanna said. — PTI

Int'l pupils' entry into Ontario to be barred

Of 5,30,540 foreign students in the country, over 34% are from India

TORONTO, MAY 1

Canada is all set to suspend entry of international students, including from India, to Ontario, the worst-hit province which is battling the third Covid wave.

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), an education service provider based in Ottawa, there were 530,540 international students in Canada in 2020, of which the maximum were

UNDER CONSIDERATION

The government is considering halting the arrival of international students in Ontario following a request from the province Premier, says PM Justin Trudeau.

from India (34 per cent) followed by China (22 per cent). Ontario has the maxi-

mum number of foreign students at 242,825 or 46 per cent, it said.

During a press conference, PM Justin Trudeau said the government was considering halting the arrival of international students in Ontario following a request from the province Premier Doug Ford to combat the spread of the pandemic, the globalnews.ca reported. Trudeau said they would be "reaching out to

their officials" to formalise the request.

However, there is no clarity on when the change will take effect or how long it will last. International students are currently exempt from Canada's Covid-19 travel rules. All students must be able to provide a valid study permit or a letter of introduction that shows they were approved for a permit, according to CTV news. — PTI

US exempts categories of students, academics, journos from travel ban

WASHINGTON, MAY 1

Certain categories of students, academics, journalists and individuals have been exempted from the India travel ban announced by President Joe Biden, the US State Department said.

The exemptions were issued by Secretary of State Tony Blinken, hours after Biden issued a proclamation restricting travel from India beginning May 4 because of the

In line with exemption given to Brazil, China

"extraordinarily high Covid-19 caseloads and multiple variants circulating in the country". According to the State Department, the travel ban exemption is in line with a similar exemption that the US has granted to some categories of travellers from Brazil, China,



To fight surge, Unicef sends aid to New Delhi

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 1

The UN children's agency has sent critical life-saving supplies, including 3,000 oxygen concentrators, diagnostic tests and other equipment to help India combat a "devastating new wave" of Covid. The Unicef also said it is continuing to support India in the acceleration of its national vaccine rollout to equitably reach all population groups.

During the daily press briefing on Friday, Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesman for the UN chief, referred to the tweet by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that he and the UN family stand in solidarity with the people of the country as they face a horrific Covid-19 outbreak and the UN stands ready to step up its support to the country. — PTI

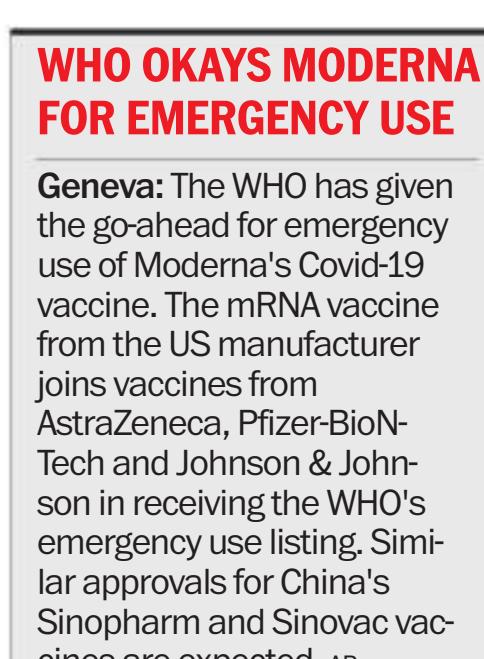
South Asians in UK at greater risk in 2nd Covid wave: Study

LONDON, MAY 1

Minority ethnic groups in general and South Asians, in particular, had a higher risk of testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 and of COVID-19-related hospitalisation, intensive care (ICU) admissions and deaths during the second wave of the pandemic in the UK compared to the first, according to a new observational study of 17 million people.

Led by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the study published in the medical journal 'Lancet' on Friday accounted for a large number of explanatory variables, such as household size, social factors and health conditions across all ethnic groups and at different stages of Covid-19, from testing to mortality.

The study that compared with the first wave last year, the relative risk for testing positive, hospitalisation, ICU admission, and death were smaller in the pandemic second wave earlier this year for all minority ethnic communities compared to white people, with



the exception of South Asian groups - covering Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.

"Despite the improvements seen in most minority ethnic groups in the second wave compared to the first, it's concerning to see that the disparity widened among South Asian groups," said Dr Rohini Mathur, the study's lead author. "This highlights an urgent need to find effective prevention measures that fit with the needs of the UK's ethnically diverse population," she said.

In South Asian groups,

health factors such as BMI, blood pressure, underlying health conditions played the biggest role in explaining excess risks for all outcomes. Household size was an important explanatory factor for the disparity for Covid-19 mortality in South Asian groups only.

"Minority ethnic groups in the UK are disproportionately affected by factors that also increase the risk for poor Covid-19 outcomes, such as living in deprived areas, working in front-line jobs, and having poorer access to healthcare," Dr Mathur noted. — PTI

Will ensure smooth medical supplies: China

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

Beijing sought to make amends for negative publicity surrounding the dispatch of emergency medical supplies from China to India with Chinese Ambassador in India Sun Weidong assuring actor-philanthropist Sonu Sood that freight air routes between both countries were operating normally. "The past two weeks have witnessed 61 freight flights from

Envoy responds to actor-philanthropist Sonu Sood's plaint

China to India. China will do its utmost to support India fighting Covid," tweeted Sun in response to Sood's Twitter complaint that China had blocked supplies of hundreds of oxygen concentrators.

"Noted your twitter info," said Sun in response to Sood

calling on the Chinese authorities to help get the consignments cleared "so we can save lives." The envoy assured: "We've provided convenience in Customs clearance and transportation of medical supplies. Will continue to ensure smooth functioning of export channel of materials to India."

Mukesh Aghi of an Indo-US business chamber too had complained that oxygen concentrators from China had to be re-routed through Japan.

Walmart to send oxygen plants to India

WASHINGTON, MAY 1

Walmart will donate up to 20 oxygen-generating plants and 20 cryogenic containers to India for the storage and transportation of the life-saving gas, and also provide USD 2 million to non-governmental organisations to help them fight the devastating surge in Covid cases, the American retail giant has announced.

The decision by Walmart came as India continues to witness a steep increase in the number of Covid cases. — PTI

Anti-Bill protest



A demonstrator holds a placard during a 'Kill the Bill' protest in London. Protesters say the Bill will give cops discretionary powers to shut down protests. REUTERS

NATO begins final phase of Afghan pullout

KABUL, MAY 1

The final phase of ending America's war in Afghanistan after 20 years formally began on Saturday with the withdrawal of the last US and NATO troops by the end of summer. President Joe Biden had set May 1 as the official start of the withdrawal of the remaining forces, about 2,500-3,500 US troops and about 7,000 NATO soldiers.

Even before Saturday, the herculean task of packing up had begun. The military has been taking inventory, decid-

\$2 TRILLION SPENT ON KABUL WAR

- About 2,500-3,500 US troops and about 7,000 NATO soldiers are to be withdrawn.

- The US is estimated to have spent more than \$2 trillion in Afghanistan war, according to Brown University.

ing what is shipped back to the US, what is handed to the Afghan security forces and what is sold as junk in Afghanistan's markets.

In recent weeks, the military has been flying out equipment on massive C-17 cargo planes. The US is estimated to have spent more than \$2 trillion

year. The US and NATO went into Afghanistan together on October 7, 2001, to hunt the al-Qaeda perpetrators of the 9/11 terrorist attacks who lived under the protection of the country's Taliban rulers.

Two months later, the Taliban had been defeated and al-Qaeda fighters and their leader, Osama bin Laden, were on the run.

Until now the US and NATO have received no promises from the Taliban that they won't attack troops during the pullout. — AP

Nepal to close 22 entry points as India battles spike in cases

KATHMANDU, MAY 1

The Nepal government has decided to close 22 border points between Nepal and India will now remain operational.

The decision comes in the wake of rising cases of Covid infections in the southern neighbour.

The decision came after the Covid Crisis Management Coordination Committee (CCMC) on Friday recommended to the Council of Ministers to shut down 22 out of a total of 35 border points between Nepal and India, according to the date updated by the

Union Health Ministry on Saturday.

The infection tally rose to 1,91,64,969 with 4,01,993 new cases, while the active cases crossed the 32-lakh mark, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Nepal has reported 323,187 Covid cases and 3,279 deaths so far, but cases are going up at breakneck speed. The country reported more than 5,000 new cases on Thursday and Friday. — PTI

May Day protesters demand more job protection amid pandemic



Cops in civvies detain protesters in Istanbul, Turkey. REUTERS

Workers and union leaders dusted off bullhorns and flags that had stayed furlled during coronavirus lockdowns for slimmed down but still boisterous May Day marches on Saturday, demanding more labour protections amid a pandemic that has turned economies and workplaces upside down.

In countries that mark May 1 as International Labour Day, the annual celebration of workers' rights produced a

rare sight during the pandemic: large and closely packed crowds, with marchers striding shoulder-to-shoulder with clenched fists behind banners. But in Turkey and the Philippines, police prevented May Day protests, enforcing virus lockdowns.

In Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy, thousands vented their anger at a new job creation law that critics fear will reduce severance pay, lessen restrictions for foreign workers, increase outsourcing and hurt workers in other ways as the nation seeks to attract more investment. Protesters laid tombstones on the street to symbolise hopelessness.

President of the republic." Broadcaster BFM-TV reported that the French riot police fired small amounts of tear gas at two of the dozens of rallies called nationwide.

Police in Paris said they made 10 arrests. But the majority of the dozens of marches called nationwide in France passed off without incident. In Germany, where previous May Day demonstrations have often turned violent, police deployed thousands of officers. — AP

The Sunday Tribune

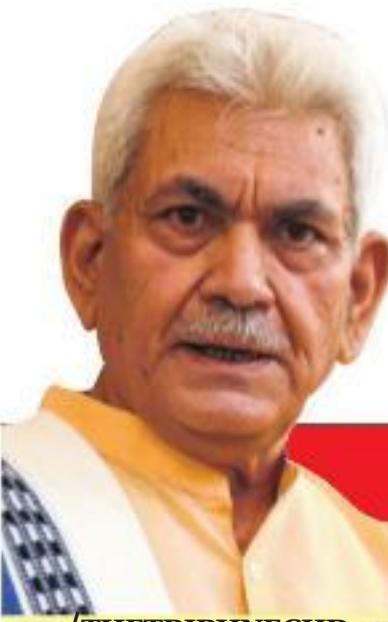
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UT ADMIN ROLLS OUT 3RD PHASE
OF VACCINATION DRIVE J&K

BANGABANDHU BY BENEGAL
SPECTRUM

SONIA FOR NATIONAL POLICY ON
VIRUS CONTROL BACK PAGE



12 die as Delhi's Batra Hospital runs out of oxygen, many critical

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, MAY 1
Tragedy struck Delhi once again on Saturday with 12 critically ill Covid patients dying at Batra Hospital after it ran out of oxygen amid cripplingly grim supply situation.

Among those dead was Dr MK Himthani, a senior gastroenterologist and head of department at the health facility. The hospital said many more patients were on the edge as they had remained without oxygen for over 80 minutes today.

Hospital executive director Sudhanshu Bankata claimed he had been pleading for oxygen replenishment since 7 am today. He said he wanted this "torture to end". "Eight patients died for want of oxygen initially. The toll has climbed to 12. Our senior gastroenterologist Dr MK Himthani too succumbed to the virus. I hope this situation does not arise again," he said.

Bankata, in a grim prophecy, said more patients could die as supplies remained weak. "Let's hope and pray that this torture and trial by fire ends

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



ANOTHER TRAGEDY
April 23, 2021: 25 die at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi due to oxygen shortage
April 24: 20 choked to death at Jaipur Golden Hospital

319 MT DELHI'S DAILY OXYGEN SUPPLY
976 MT NEEDED DAILY, CLAIMS DELHI GOVT
657 MT SHORTAGE

NO PSA PLANT IN A YEAR
Delhi's oxygen crisis has been building up since last year. The state failed to operationalise any of the 8 pressure swing adsorption plants sanctioned under PM Cares Fund

DELHI GOVT EXTENDS LOCKDOWN TILL MAY 10

6 die in G'gram hospital, kin blame O₂ shortage

SANJAY YADAV

GURUGRAM, MAY 1
Six patients at a private hospital in Gurugram died late Friday night allegedly because of lack of oxygen. The families of the deceased accused the hospital authorities of negligence. "We called the police after the doctors fled leaving the patients without oxygen. The cops made arrangements for medical help, but by then six patients had died. Twenty others survived," said a family member. The hospital owner is said to be a political activist.

The police said they were investigating the matter. Videos showing the family members of the deceased get-

ENSURING SUPPLY
The Gurugram administration has roped in Viplak India, a company which manages supply chain of e-commerce companies such as Amazon and Flipkart, to ensure smooth supply of oxygen cylinders.

ting the police to the hospital and protesting against the hospital staff went viral. The hospital authorities could not be contacted despite several attempts. The police said the doctors in a statement had said all patients who had died were in critical condition.

IN BRIEF

EC moves SC over Madras HC remarks

NEW DELHI: The EC has moved the Supreme Court against the Madras HC's comments that the panel should probably face the murder charge. —TNS

Congress to skip poll result debates

NEW DELHI: Ahead of the results in West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, the Congress on Saturday said it would skip all poll-related media debates. —TNS

Ex-MP Shahabuddin succumbs to Covid

NEW DELHI: Jailed former RJD MP Mohammad Shahabuddin, 53, died of Covid-19 at the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital here on Saturday, the Delhi Prisons Department said. —PTI



PAYING HOMAGE: PM Narendra Modi at Delhi's Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib on Prakash Purb of the Ninth Guru. PTI

At Tikri, farmers avoid mass testing

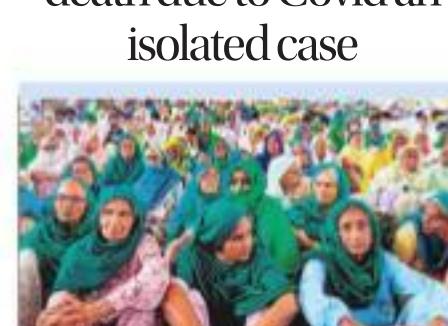
RAVINDER SAINI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

JAHJAR, MAY 1
A day after a 25-year-old woman died of Covid at Tikri border, the protesting farmers today refused to get mass testing done. Union leaders said activists had been told to get themselves tested only if they showed symptoms.

They, however, have no data to show how many of them have got Covid test done.

The district authorities have several times issued

Say woman protester's death due to Covid an isolated case



Terming it an isolated case, Pargat Singh, a BKU (Rajewal) leader, said: "Since all are healthy and participating in the movement, they have not opted for a test. Our doctors are here to treat the farmers who develop health issues."

Rush for CT scans as people shun Covid test; docs alarmed

MANAV MANDER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

LUDHIANA, MAY 1
People going in for repeated CT scans instead of RT-PCR test to detect Covid need to be watchful as repeatedly getting exposed to radiation could lead to cancer, health experts have warned.

Dr Bishav Mohan, senior cardiologist at Dayanand Medical College and Hospital here, said he had a patient

Scans can't detect virus, may lead to cancer, warn medical experts

who instead of relying on RT-PCR test, underwent five CT scans on his own within a short span. "His initial scans didn't show any infection in the lungs and he kept on roaming freely."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Patchy start to 18+ vax drive, Centre rushes doses to states

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 1
The expanded adult Covid inoculation drive took off to a patchy start on Saturday with a majority of the states delaying the rollout and a handful managing token coverage.

This came on a day when India crossed another grim milestone of 4 lakh cases with the total disease load rising to 1,91,64,969. The country saw 4,01,993 cases over 24 hours even as active cases crossed 32 lakh, crippling the health systems.

With vaccine shortage plaguing the ambitious national drive, the Ministry of Health rushed doses to all the states for the first fortnight of May to handhold them through the drive until it stabilised. In the northern region, Punjab got 6,16,520 doses (4,63,710 Covishield



STATE	DOSES
Punjab	6,16,520
Haryana	5,63,580
Himachal	3,02,080
J&K	3,84,700
Ladakh	15,260
Chandigarh	32,210

and 1,52,810 Covaxin). Over 2.5 crore 18 to 44-year-olds have registered on the CoWIN platform after the drive opened on April 28.

As of today, Gujarat managed the widest coverage of the adult inoculation drive starting with 10 districts, followed by Uttar Pradesh in seven districts, Maharashtra

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Guj hospital fire kills 18

BHARUCH, MAY 1

At least 16 Covid patients and two nurses were killed in a fire at a hospital at Bharuch in Gujarat in the early hours on Saturday. The state government said a judicial inquiry would be conducted into the incident that destroyed the ICU of Patel Welfare Hospital, run by a charitable trust.

"As many as 50 patients were undergoing treatment at the facility on the ground floor when the fire broke out in the ICU around 1 am, probably because of short circuit, said a hospital official. "The victims were either charred to



death or died due to suffocation," said Rajendrasinh Chudasama, SP. There were chaotic scenes outside the hospital as the wailing kin blamed the hospital authorities for the tragedy. CM Vijay Rupani announced ex gratia aid of Rs 4 lakh to the next of the kin. —PTI

CBSE releases marking policy for Class X

NEW DELHI, MAY 1
The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Saturday announced a policy for tabulation of marks for Class X exams which have been cancelled in view of the Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country. The result will be declared by June 20.

According to the policy, while 20 marks for each subject will be for internal assessment as every year, 80 marks will be calculated on basis of the students' performance in various tests or exams throughout the year. —PTI

Helixians shine in North-India in NEET-20

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High fatality rate in rural areas a concern

Of 9K deaths, 58% reported from villages | Civil surgeons told to intensify screening drive

TREBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1
With 58 per cent deaths being registered from the rural areas, the Covid mortality rate in villages is reportedly much higher than the urban areas.

Of around 9,000 deaths in the state so far, 27 per cent were reported in the urban areas, while the rest in the rural areas.

Expressing concern over the rising rural deaths, Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu instructed the civil surgeons to intensify the screening drive in villages.

Presiding over a meeting of the civil surgeons, Sidhu said: "There is still a misconception among people that they are suffering from the seasonal viral or typhoid. But when they reach hospitals due to breathing complications, they are diagnosed with Covid-19."

He said considering the high case fatality rate (CFR) of the state, there was also need to keep close watch on



COVID METER		
Cases	7,041	
Critical	114	
Active	58,229	
Deaths	138	
WORST-AFFECTED		
DISTRICT	CASES	DEATHS
Ludhiana	1,600	18
SAS Nagar	936	8
Bathinda	653	22
Jalandhar	566	8

« A health worker collects a swab sample from a passenger in a bus. RAJESH SACHAR

RETURN OXIMETERS, RESIDENTS TOLD

SANGRUR: Facing scarcity of pulse oximeters, the Malerkotla administration has been trying to trace recovered patients to take back oximeters from them for reuse. "We have requested residents to return the oximeters they received in Fateh Kit," said T Benith, Malerkotla SDM. TNS

the functioning of private clinics/RMPs in villages. "Senior Medical Officers

'WILL TAKE UP DEMANDS OF RURAL DOCS'

CHANDIGARH: Rural Development and Panchayats Minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa has appealed to rural doctors and pharmacists to perform their duty with dedication as frontline workers with the Health Department. He also said by next week, their demands would be taken up with the CM. TNS

PATIALA HOSPITAL REPORTS 37 DEATHS

PATIALA: Thirty-seven patients have died at Rajindra Hospital over the past 24 hours. The hospital recorded over 415 deaths in April, which is four times the fatalities witnessed in March. TNS

must ensure Covid testing of each symptomatic person receiving treatment from such clinics," he said.

If any private health facility has not shared the informa-

tion concerning symptomatic persons on a routine basis, they must be booked under the Epidemic Diseases Act for violating the government guidelines, he added.

The civil surgeons mentioned in the meeting that with the help of the district administrations, all efforts were being made to further streamline the availability of oxygen in both private and civil hospitals in the districts.

The Health Minister directed them to prevent the wastage and unjustified use of oxygen. He said: "Dedicated audit teams must conduct surprise checks at all Covid care hospitals and submit their progress report to the MD, Punjab Health System Corporation."

Keeping in view the rapid rise in the number of cases, he also issued directions to increase beds in L2 and L3 facilities. "The next 15 days are critical for Punjab and the government has put in all efforts to save people from the deadly virus," he added.

Actor Gippy arrested in Patiala over shoot without permission

TREBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Was filming at Banur village; crew booked for violating lockdown order



Actor Gippy Grewal during a shoot in Patiala. TRIBUNE PHOTO

LAND OWNER TO FACE ACTION

■ We have booked Gippy Grewal and his crew members. Action will be initiated against the owner of land that was given or leased for the shoot. VIKRAM JEET DUGGAL, PATIALA SSP

Grewal failed to show permission for the shoot and a

case was registered. Sources said as soon as the singer was arrested, certain politicians and senior police officials allegedly intervened.

Villagers claimed when the state was reeling under the pandemic and the death rate was at an all-time high, shooting for a movie at the village was "sheer callousness" on part of the crew and villagers who rented out the buildings.

"Over 100 persons were at the location but fled when the police raided it. It is so easy to catch the virus and spread it. These actors should act responsibly," said a villager.

Meanwhile, Grewal claimed he had applied for permission but his request was still pending. He said it was their last day of shoot and that they were following the Covid protocol.

The police have registered a case under Sections 188 of the IPC, 51 of the Disaster Management Act and 3 of the Epidemic Act.

Bathinda crematorium runs out of space

SUKHMEET BHASIN

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATHINDA, MAY 1 As Bathinda continues to witness a surge in Covid-19 cases and deaths in the second wave, the cremation ground in the city is running out of space.

As the places designated to light the pyre were all occupied, nine patients were consigned to flames on the ground at the overwhelmed grain market crematorium today.

With 53 deaths since April 25, including 15 in the last 24 hours, Bathinda toll is witnessing a huge surge.

Sonu Maheshwari, president, Naujanwan Welfare Society, said: "The grain market crematorium, which is the main cremation ground in Bathinda with a capacity of 24 pyres, is running out of space due to the surge in Covid deaths. As many as 19 bodies of Covid patients arrived at the cremation



NINE BODIES BURNT ON GROUND

■ As many as 19 bodies of Covid patients arrived at the main cremation ground on Saturday but only 10 were accommodated at the place designated for cremation. The remaining nine were burnt on the ground.

Sonu Maheshwari, PRESIDENT, NAUJANWAN WELFARE SOCIETY

ground today but only 10 were accommodated at the place designated for cremation. The remaining nine were burnt on the ground."

After the shortage of beds, oxygen and medicines, the shortage of space at cremation ground has now started haunting residents.

Bathinda has also seen a hike in the cases with 6,305 cases in the last 15 days, which is 28 per cent of the total 22,867 cases reported since last year.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal today visited the Civil Hospital and several private hospitals in the city and enquired about the arrangements for Covid patients.

He also reviewed the status of availability of oxygen, ventilators and vaccine and directed the authorities concerned to enhance the capacity of oxygen in the district. He reiterated that the state government was fully committed to extending all possible help amid the ongoing health crisis.

He also urged the eligible people to get vaccinated at the earliest besides following the directives of the state government. He said the issues, if any, related to Covid-19 would be sorted out within two weeks.

Tankers carrying O2 on way from Bokaro

TREBUNE NEWS SERVICE

6 PLANTS REVIVED

■ As many as 14 large-sized tankers have been pressed into service

■ The state has enhanced its production of the life-saving gas by 14 MT daily after reviving six defunct plants and enhancing capacity of the existing units

arranged the supplies and coordinated the logistics, said the first fleet of IAF aircraft with two empty tankers had taken off for Bokaro on April 28 and after being refilled hit the road on April 29 with police escort and green corridor passage all through the way.

"So far, a fleet of four aircraft, each carrying two empty tankers, is being flown to Bokaro daily. Since these tankers have more than 3.5-metre height, the Railways refused to carry those.

Principal Secretary Industries Alok Shekhar, who

came out to be Covid-positive. She was referred to the district hospital and when she suffered labour pain, gynaecologist Dr Manisha Gupta along with the para-medical staff after taking several precautions was able to do a safe delivery of the child, said the CMO.

After shifting the woman to the isolation ward, the child was tested for Covid and was found to be negative. "It was a big challenge for us, but, the doctors and the para-medical staff made special arrangements and conducted the safe delivery," said the CMO.

had reported to the Civil Hospital in Kotise-Khan town a couple of days back for delivery. As per the guidelines, the doctors who attended to her got her tested for Covid, following which her sample

AAP seeks aid for bizmen

BATHINDA, MAY 1

The Aam Aadmi Party trade and industrial wing, Punjab, has demanded financial relief and exemption from taxes to traders to minimise their burden due to losses and low business activity during pandemic-induced lockdowns.

AAP trade wing senior vice-president Anil Thakur said, "The traders' fraternity should be exempted from paying taxes and loans as they have sustained heavy losses due to lockdowns." — TNS

Infected patient delivers, baby -ve

KULWINDER SANDHU

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE



Sandeep Kaur with doctors in Moga. TRIBUNE PHOTO

came out to be Covid-positive. She was referred to the district hospital and when she suffered labour pain, gynaecologist Dr Manisha Gupta along with the para-medical staff after taking several precautions was able to do a safe delivery of the child, said the CMO.

After shifting the woman to the isolation ward, the child was tested for Covid and was found to be negative. "It was a big challenge for us, but, the doctors and the para-medical staff made special arrangements and conducted the safe delivery," said the CMO.

When asked about such a large gathering during the Covid-19 crisis, the organisers said they were ready to face the consequences. Punjab Students' Union president Ranvir Randhawa said the future of labourers and farmers was in jeopardy due to new laws.

AAP leader Dinesh Chaddha, questioning the district police, said their officials failed to act against leaders of the ruling party during the installation ceremonies of civic bodies' presidents. "The same authorities are now harassing farmers for coming together and raising their genuine concerns," he added.

Makeshift hospitals to come up in 2 dists

TREBUNE NEWS SERVICE

READY BY MAY-END

■ The two hospitals will have 104 beds each, besides ICUs, and will be ready by May-end

■ Nine smaller facilities will also come up at various district hospitals

through CSR funding and Mohali medical college would ensure coordination and procurement of equipment. For Bathinda, implementation partner CSIR/CBRI would work with HMEL to ensure equipment procurement.

PSA-PMO Dr Sapna Poti said field survey had been done in Mohali to set up the hospital within three to four weeks by using Madras IIT's innovation which has already been replicated at eight places. "Support of Murugappa/Tata groups is being taken to ramp up the facilities," she said.

Col Jasdeep Sandhu, Director, Civil Military Affairs, Western Command, said he had visited the Mohali site and felt the need to utilise the existing beds promptly as the field hospital unit could move in three days.

SAD demands hiring of staff to run ventilators

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1

Accusing Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh of leaving the state to its fate amid the ongoing pandemic, the SAD today demanded immediate recruitment of medical staff to run hundreds of ventilators that were either not installed or non-operational due to lack of experts.

Former MP Prem Singh Chandamajra said: "How else can you explain the fact that ventilators that had arrived months ago have not been

installed till now? The government has failed to recruit staff to run over 300 ventilators despite having ample time. This is complete abdication of responsibility by the CM. Capt Amarinder Singh should put in his papers immediately."

"The Congress government failed to place orders for vaccine in time due to which there is a severe shortage of vaccines. Similarly, it did not make effort to augment the state's oxygen manufacturing capacity," he said. — TNS

Shillong Sikhs start 'O2 langar'

SHUBHADEEP CHOUDHURY

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE



TIDING OVER CRISIS

■ Though hospitals have been able to take care of oxygen requirements of Covid patients, we too have made arrangements to help during the crisis.

Kamaljeet Singh Sehdeva, DENTAL SURGEON

cylinders and concentrators. While some cylinders and concentrators had arrived, more would soon come, he said.

Appreciating the Sikh community's efforts, Patricia Mukhim, editor of the region's English daily, wrote in a post on

the Facebook, "the Sikh community of Shillong is the first to respond and come forward with this critical facility (oxygen langar) at these daunting times. And this is the only building they have. Will those other religious institutions with huge infrastructure please come forward and open similar facilities to help overcome the medical crisis should we ever come to such a point? What's the use of all the big buildings if they are not used to serve humanity? Preparedness is wisdom. Thank you Guru Singh Sabha, Shillong".

Notably, Sikhs living in Shillong's Harijan Colony have been facing pressure from some Khasi outfits as well as from the Municipal Corporation to vacate their houses where they have been living for several generations.

Bir Singh Barwa, Tarsem Singh Jatpur, Rupinder Sandhu, Ranvir Randhawa, Hardeep Kaur, Harpreet Kahlon, Ram Kumar Mukari, Sucha Singh Kalma and singer Pamma Dumewal, along with some unidentified persons, have

organised the conference.

been booked under the Disaster Management Act.

However, no Samyukt Kisan Morcha leader who addressed the gathering has been named in the FIR.

Lashing out at the central government, Chadhu said it was following anti-farmer policies. "The attempts to suppress the protesting farmers will not succeed. We will not end the agitation till all our demands are met," he said.

Ruldu Singh said besides farmers, the Centre was trying to suppress labourers too. He said the new labour laws would ruin the

2,000 gather at Ropar farm event sans approval

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Union leaders address crowds, several booked



NONE FROM SKM NAMED IN FIR

■ Ropar SSP Akhil Chaudhary said no permission was sought from the police to organise the conference

■ None of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha leaders who addressed the event has been named in the FIR

2 held for illegal mining; SHO suspended

Nine trucks, 4 tractor-trailers, JCB seized in Amritsar | NGT Act invoked

Tribune News Service

AMRITSAR/CHANDIGARH, MAY 1
In a major crackdown on illegal mining in the Ramdass belt, the Amritsar rural police have arrested two persons and confiscated nine trucks, four tractor-trailers, a JCB machine and a Poclain machine from the site.

Ramdass police station SHO Avtar Singh has been placed under suspension for alleged negligence in curbing illegal mining leading to environment degradation.

The action came on the directive of newly formed Enforcement Directorate, Mining. Specific inputs were received by the police of large-scale illegal mining along the banks of the Ravi in the Kassowal village area under the Ramdass police station.



Police officials with the confiscated trucks at Kassowal village in Amritsar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

Acting on the inputs, the police carried out raids in the area, during which large mounds of sand were found on the riverbank, as well as in nearby hinterland area.

Besides seizing the machinery and equipment, the police arrested Ranjit

Singh of Teja village in Gurdaspur and Daljit Singh of Bahadurgarh Jandiyā village in Bathinda from the scene. Raids were on to arrest the remaining suspects who fled the scene.

A case under Sections 379 (theft), 420 (cheating), 468

(forgery), 471 (use as genuine forged document) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC; 21 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act; and 26 of the National Green Tribunal Act had been registered at the Ramdass police

station in this regard.

SSP Dhruv Dahiya said the site was illegal and unauthorised. "Some serious procedural compliance failures were noticed at the site such as absence of any physical demarcation. Further, no documents or government slips were produced by the contractor or their workers at the site," he said. Provisions of the NGT Act had been invoked to ensure stringent action, he added.

Illegal sand mining has been a bane of the area with consecutive governments and police failing to curb the menace as they prefer to turn a blind eye due to alleged "police-politician" nexus. Even the Army authorities had alerted the government as heavy machinery damaged roads leading up to the International Border near the Ravi.

CM unveils projects to mark Prakash Purb

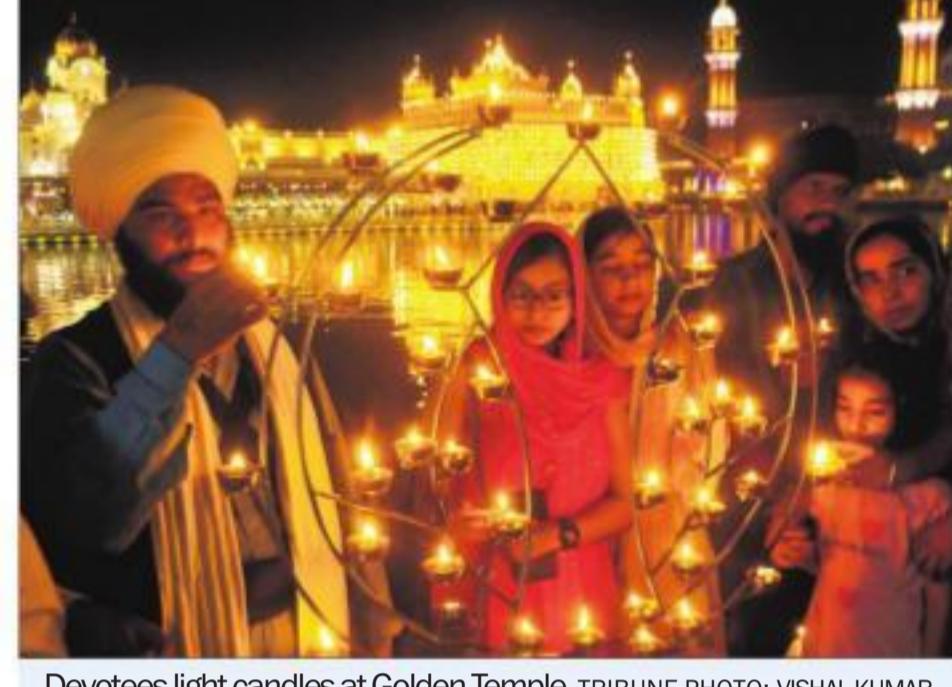
Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1
As part of the 400th Prakash Purb celebrations of Guru Teg Bahadur, Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh today dedicated several development projects to the people, including conservation and development of Old Jail at Bassi Pathana where the ninth Guru along with his supporters was imprisoned by Noor Mohammad Khan Mirza for 40 days while on his way to meet Aurangzeb.

The CM said the state had sent a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking Rs 938.37 crore grant for various infrastructure projects in the state as part of the celebrations.

The CM announced facelift of Guru Teg Bahadur Museum, Anandpur Sahib, at a cost of Rs 2 crore, with illumination of its facade and modernisation of the first floor with advanced technology, while retaining the original concept of exhibition of paintings on the ground floor. The museum, built in 1977 near Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, is the only one in the state dedicated to the ninth Guru.

A nature park would be developed in the vicinity of Virasat-e-Khalsa, Anandpur



Devotees light candles at Golden Temple. TRIBUNE PHOTO: VISHAL KUMAR

SGPC TO MAKE DOCUMENTARY ON NINTH GURU

■ SGPC president Bibi Jagir Kaur said the committee would compose a video documentary on the Guru, highlighting his life from birth to martyrdom
■ She said Bani of the ninth Guru and Guru Granth Sahib would be published in five languages and celluloids on Sikh personalities who were his contemporaries will also be prepared
■ A chair in the Guru's name will be established at the Guru Granth Sahib World University, Akal Takht officiating Jathedar Harpreet Singh said a hospital should be established to mark the occasion

FACELIFT OF JAIL, MUSEUM

■ Old Jail, Bassi Pathana, where Guru was imprisoned while on his way to meet Aurangzeb, to be developed
■ Guru Teg Bahadur Museum, Anandpur Sahib, to be facelifted at a cost of ₹2 crore
■ Nature park to be developed near Virasat-e-Khalsa, Anandpur Sahib, at a cost of ₹10 crore

CM JOINS 'ARDAS' ONLINE

■ Amid the Covid curbs, Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh virtually joined people in offering 'ardas' of 'Charhdī Kāla' and 'Sarbat Da Bhāla' on Saturday
■ He exhorted people to follow Guru's universal message of love, secularism, religious tolerance, freedom of faith and peaceful co-existence

Sahib, at a cost of Rs 10 crore, the CM said, adding it would be spread over 62 acres with extensive tree plantation. To be developed as a habitat for rare species of flora, it was likely to be commissioned by the year-end. Capt Amarinder said the Centre would soon release a commemorative stamp on the 400th Prakash Purb.

The CM said infrastructure projects worth Rs 20.50 crore were under execution at Baba Bakala and Anandpur Sahib, associated with the life and times of the Guru. Further, 103 Charan Chhoh places, including 79 villages and 24 towns, connected with the Guru had been identified and given grants worth Rs 50 lakh per village and Rs 1 crore per town for infrastructure development, he added.

He said over 60 lakh saplings had been planted at 6,986 villages as part of the celebrations. Earlier, more than 70 lakh saplings were planted to mark the 550th Prakash Purb celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev.

Rape victim attempts suicide

ABOHAL, MAY 1

Two youths were booked on the basis of a statement of a rape victim who reportedly consumed insecticide and was admitted to the Civil Hospital here.

The police said a case had been registered against Rajesh Kumar and his brother Arvind, both residents of Dhani Hari Ram, under Sections 306, 376, 511, 354D and 506 of the IPC.

The victim said Rajesh was his schoolmate from Government Model High School here, eight years back. She said he raped her twice in different hotels located near the police station here on the pretext of marriage and also took her photographs and made a video too. Later, when she insisted on marrying him, his brother Arvind allegedly threatened to rape her.

Both the accused are absconding from home, said the police. — OC

Roadways GM among 4 held for illegal plying of pvt buses

RAVI DHALIWAL
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATALA, MAY 1

The Batala-based General Manager (GM) of the Punjab Roadways and three others were today arrested by the Vigilance Bureau for allegedly defrauding the state government to the tune of lakhs by facilitating unauthorised movement of private buses across the state.

The development has sent private bus operators scurrying for cover even as officials made it clear that "this was just the tip of the iceberg".

The accused include GM Arvind Sharma, Inspector Iqbal Singh, Sub-Inspector Rana Gurwinder Singh Uppal and conductor Sukhchain Singh. A case under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, has been registered at the Vigilance Bureau (VB) police station, Amritsar.

MANY UNDER LENS

■ Several others, including Deputy Director of the State Transport Parneet Singh, are under the scanner. Parampal Singh, VIGILANCE BUREAU SSP

Sleuths had been monitoring the activities of the accused for weeks. "The unlawful activity has been taking place in almost all bus stands of Punjab," said an official.

Vigilance Bureau SSP Parampal Singh said several others, including Deputy Director of the State Transport Parneet Singh, supervisor Satnam Singh, Inspector Tarsem Singh and retired Inspector Raj Kumar Raju, were also under the scanner.

The SSP said Uppal was heading the Punjab Roadways

central flying squad which is tasked with ensuring private bus operators do not bribe the charges of bus stands, drivers and conductors to get undue advantage. "Private operators often bribe these employees to buy more time at the ticket counter," he said.

It was found during the probe that the central flying team members were hand in glove with senior roadways officials, who were allegedly given part of the bribe money to look the other way. "This is not limited to Batala or Gurdaspur. We are investigating almost all bus stands of the state," said an official.

The central flying squad looked after the bus stands of Gurdaspur, Pathankot, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ferozepur and Tarn Taran. "Teams have been sent to these places too," said a VB officer.

Workers' unions pitch for staff-friendly policies

BATHINDA, MAY 1

Members of various mass organisations and workers' union took out rallies to mark the International Labour Day (May Day) in Bathinda and Mansa districts on Saturday. Unions apart from raising voice against recent amendments in the labour laws also vowed to support the farmers' agitation against the

Take out rallies to mark Labour Day

agricultural laws.

Under the banner of Joint Platform for Mass Organisation (JPMO), union members from Bathinda thermal plant, Sewerage Board, Forest Department, PRTC and other

unions also observed Guru Teg Bahadur's 400th Prakash Purb and firmed up their resolve to struggle for their basic rights.

Mass organisations and labourers' unions also organised rallies in Mansa district and joined farmers at various protest venues in the state. Meanwhile, trade union members also joined protest-

ing farmers at Tikri and Singhu borders. Mahipal Sathi, a JPMO leader, said, "Our struggle against the amended labour laws and revival of the 44 laws being annulled by the government will continue and we will also go to any extent to support the farmers' agitation that has taken the form of a mass movement." — TNS

station in this regard.

SSP Dhruv Dahiya said the site was illegal and unauthorised. "Some serious procedural compliance failures were noticed at the site such as absence of any physical demarcation. Further, no documents or government slips were produced by the contractor or their workers at the site," he said. Provisions of the NGT Act had been invoked to ensure stringent action, he added.

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Positivity rate 6.7%; Hisar worst hit

TREND NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1

In what can be described as the gloomiest day of the pandemic for Haryana so far, 125 persons lost their lives to the deadly virus today even as 13,588 new cases of Covid-19 surfaced in the last 24 hours in the state, taking the active cases past the one-lakh mark.

125 die in past 24 hours

Hisar witnessed the maximum 17 fatalities today followed by Panipat and Panchkula 12 each, Ambala nine, Bhiwani eight and Fatehabad seven.

Of the 13,588 new cases, 4,099 were reported from Gurugram, 1,751 in Faridabad, 920 in Sonipat and 897 in Hisar.

Of the 1,02,516 active cases, Gurugram has the

**COVID METER**

Cases	13,588
Active	1,02,516
Deaths	125

WORST-AFFECTED DISTRICTS

DISTRICT	CASES
Gurugram	4,099
Faridabad	1,751
Sonipat	920
Hisar	897

Kin of Covid patients protest against the government at an oxygen plant in Sector 16, Gurugram, on Saturday.

PHOTO: S.CHANDAN

highest active caseload of 38,560 followed by 12,196 in Faridabad, 7,267 in Hisar and 5,775 in Sonipat.

As many as 8,509 patients recovered from the virus today and were discharged, taking the cumulative recovery rate as on

today to 78.70 per cent.

Haryana today tested 50,823 samples and with 13,588 of these coming positive, the daily positivity rate jumped to alarming 26.74 per cent.

This also shows that the testing is too low in the

state considering that all close contacts of the positive cases are to be tested. The cumulative positivity rate of the state has also shot to 6.76 per cent.

According to the Covid bulletin issued by the state Health Department

today, 1,383 patients in the state are in a critical condition, of which 1,152 are on oxygen support and 231 are on ventilators.

Today, 9,969 people got their first dose of vaccine jabs, while 5,699 were given the second dose.

April deadliest month for Faridabad

BIJENDRA AHLAWAT

TREND NEWS SERVICE

FARIDABAD, MAY 1

With as many as 84 deaths reported officially due to Covid in April, it has proved the deadliest month so far and especially during the second wave of the Covid surge in the district.

While the authorities deny any under-reporting, unofficial claims suspect the deaths to be much higher.

The number of deaths reported officially in the past 30 days (April) is 1,200 per cent (12 times) more than the total seven deaths recorded in March, according to the data released by the Health Department.

With sample positivity rate touching 10.9 per cent, the number of active cases rose to 11,439 on Friday, which has been the highest till date. As the

84 deaths due to virus

number of deaths shown by the department on Friday was five, the cumulative figure reached 508 on April 30.

It is 84 more than the figure of 424 recorded on April 1. However, the number of casualties in March had only been seven as per the official data. The number of Covid deaths in February and January this year had been three and 12 respectively.

Though officially five deaths were reported on Friday, unofficial sources claim that the number could have been much higher if the information from the cremation grounds had been working overtime.

However rejecting such claims, Randeep Singh Poonia, Civil Surgeon, said there was no irregularity. He said that death data was prepared by a committee having a WHO official. He said that it includes only the data of the residents of the district and not the victims who belong to other districts or states.

been 508, an employee of the Municipal Corporation here, on condition of anonymity, said that the month's figure could be anybody's guess. "Some of the persons could have died due to natural or other factors also," he added.

Alleging that Covid deaths were under-reported, Varun Sheokand, a social activist, has demanded an independent probe as he claimed that cremation grounds had been working overtime.

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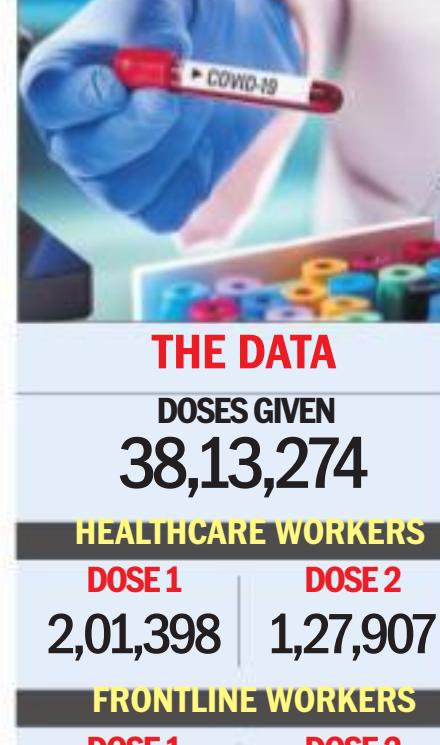
"It may take up to a week or two. We are in touch with the local Health Department," he added.

When asked several persons had tested positive even after getting both doses of Covid vaccine, Dr Jain said it was possible as the efficacy of the shot was up to 80 per cent.

"Nonetheless, several studies have shown that the chances of a person contracting Covid after getting both doses are minimal and the severity of the disease is also less," he said. Meanwhile, Dr Shiba Sethi, a senior resident doctor at the department of community medicine, PGIMS, who has been supervising the vaccination drive at the institute, said as many as 10,981 persons had been given the first dose while 2,528 had got both doses till April 30.

3L vaccine doses received for 18+; drive starts today

TREND NEWS SERVICE



been administered so far.

As many as 2,01,398 health care workers (HCWs) had been administered the first dose while 1,27,907 had been given the second dose. Similarly, 1,46,441 frontline workers had been given the first dose and 64,599 had been administered the second dose.

Meanwhile, Karnal district has also announced to roll out the third phase of the inoculation drive tomorrow. As per information, there were 450 doses of Covishield and 6,000 of Covaxin in the stock of the health department on Saturday morning. However, 17,000 more doses arrived late in the evening.

"We will launch the third phase of the Covid vaccination drive from Sunday," said Dr Yogesh Sharma, Civil Surgeon.

He said as many as 38,13,274 Covid doses had

PGIMS-Rohtak yet to get vaccine stock

SUNIT DHAWAN

TREND NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, MAY 1

The inoculation drive for the 18-44 age group failed to take off at the PGIMS here today due to the shortage of doses.

Dr RB Jain, nodal officer for the vaccination drive at the PGIMS, said the stock was limited and the 18-plus beneficiaries would have to wait for some days.

"The vaccination drive for those above 45 years is going on. However, in view of the limited stock of vaccines, those in the 18-44 age group will be inoculated after the fresh stock is received," he said.

Asked how much time it would take for the fresh stock to arrive, Dr Jain said nothing could be said with certainty.

CM, ministers given dists for Covid mgmt

TREND NEWS SERVICE

Manohar Lal Khattar will oversee the arrangements in Gurugram district, Deputy CM Dushyant Chautala will oversee Jind and Sonipat districts and Home Minister Anil Vij will oversee Ambala and Panipat districts.

IAS officers during their visit/stay in the districts assigned to them will monitor the availability of medicines in districts, to various ministers, including the CM and the Speaker.

Also, the government has deputed 22 IAS officers/administrative secretaries as in charges of the districts for monitoring Covid preparedness.

An official spokesperson said that Haryana Vidhan Sabha Speaker Gian Chand Gupta would oversee the arrangements in Panchkula district, Chief Minister

PGIMS faculty demand leave

TREND NEWS SERVICE

FEELING EXHAUSTED

The faculty is denied summer and winter vacations and now, all types of leave have also been cancelled. In view of this, the faculty members feel burnout and exhausted.

A representation

OPDs CLOSED

The OPDs of Rohtak PGIMS have been closed with immediate effect. All OPDs, except those of the departments of medicine, general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, paediatrics, orthopaedics and radiotherapy, had been closed till further orders.

leave have also been cancelled. In view of this, the faculty members feel burnout and exhausted and strongly demand that either vacations/leave should be granted to the faculty members as per their requirement or they should be compensated with equal number of earned leaves/vacation.

The Haryana State Medical Teachers Association, Pt BD Sharma PGIMS, Rohtak, has urged the state government as well as the authorities of the University of Health Sciences (UHS) authorities to grant them their due leaves/vacation.

"The faculty is denied summer and winter vacations and now, all types of

demanded timely payment of salaries and earmarking of some ICU beds at the PGIMS for the institute's faculty members. The representation is addressed to the UHS Vice-Chancellor and its copies have been sent to the Haryana Chief Minister, Health and Medical Education Minister, the Additional Chief Secretary and Director-General of the Department of Medical Education and Research.

Vulnerable govt staff exempted from duty

TREND NEWS SERVICE

Amid the second wave of Covid, the Haryana Government on Saturday said it had decided that employees with severe disabilities, vulnerable persons and pregnant women should not be called for duty, even if they are engaged in essential services.

Can work from home provided they have infrastructure

According to the decision, if required, they can work from home provided they have the necessary infrastructure. This exemption will remain in force till further orders.

An official spokesperson said keeping in view the prevailing situation due to the pandemic and with an aim to break the infection chain and safety of persons of certain categories, the government had issued detailed preventive measures for the protection and safety of persons with disabilities (divyangjan), vulnerable persons and pregnant women.

Gangster held from airport

TREND NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram Special Task Force (STF) has nabbed most-wanted gangster Sube Gujjar. The Gurugram police had been attaching his properties for a year now to force him to surrender, but it was the STF that finally nabbed him.

Carrying a bounty of Rs 7.5 lakh on his arrest, Gujjar was reportedly caught from the airport. — OC

HC quashes temporary permits to pvt bus operators

SAURABH MALIK

TREND NEWS SERVICE

dents invaded their lawful rights under the garb of the impugned permits, which are found to be legally unsustainable. As a result, the rights of the petitioners flowing from Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution have been infringed," Justice Sindhu asserted.

The Bench was told that the petitioners were existing stage carriage permit holders. Their grievance was that certain private respondents were also granted/issued impugned temporary permits on those very routes illegally. As such, the same was liable to be set aside under Article 226 of the Constitution.

"The petitioners have already been granted the permits to ply their buses on the routes in question. But the private respon-

RIGHTS UNDER ARTICLE 19 INFRINGED

• The petitioners have already been granted the permits to ply their buses on the routes in question. But the private respondents invaded their lawful rights under the garb of the impugned permits, which are found to be legally unsustainable. As a result, the rights of the petitioners flowing from Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution have been infringed. Justice Mahabir Singh Sindhu

ernment as well as state government are vested with powers limited under the Constitution and in case such a limit is crossed, the remedy of judicial review can be invoked before the constitutional courts to preserve the rule of law."

Justice Sindhu added that the facts and circumstances of the case clearly revealed that the state government was more interested in util-

izing its precious time taking executive decision for the grant of permits without lawful authority. It was, thereby, intervening in the functioning of quasi-judicial authorities, instead of "bringing proper scheme at the place so as to avoid the perennial litigation". The fact was clearly discernable from the chequered history of various schemes framed by the state government

right from 1993 till date. Referring to the respondents' arguments that the petitioners adopted a pick-and-choose policy while not impleading some of the permit holders as party respondents, Justice Sindhu added it was unacceptable. Among other things, the petitioners were the master of their case and could not be forced to implead each and every permit holders as party respondents.

Justice Sindhu concluded that the state government was not legally empowered to take executive decision. Thus, its actions were found to be without legitimate authority. All actions of the official respondents were also found to be in violation of the Supreme Court orders.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH
TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No. Name of Work Bid Submission Schedule (Online) Opening Technical Bid (Online)

1. Repair of PCC tiles on road berm (Balance portion) in Maloya Colony, Chandigarh. Estimated Cost: Rs. 9.52 Lacs 30.04.2021 To 07.05.2021 up to 12:00 noon 07.05.2021 at 12:00 noon

CM Relief Fund Covid-19

1. Gen P/F Electric Crematorium Machine and construction of Hall. 80.00 160000 5900 2 M

Other terms and conditions can be seen at E-tender website eproc.punjab.gov.in.
D-2130 Sd/- Superintending Engineer

Baddi unit sells 706 oxygen cylinders, booked

AMBika SHARMA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SOLAN, MAY 1

A case has been registered against Indo Gases, an oxygen producer at Baddi, for selling more than 706 oxygen cylinders to 36 companies and individuals after April 19 though it was authorised to sell only medical oxygen.

Besides, the company violated the April 25 directions of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs banning the use of oxygen for non-essential purposes and sold cylinders up to April 29.

The Centre has declared medical oxygen as a critical commodity in view of its rising demand for Covid patients. The company had

a licence of medical oxygen valid till March 23 but it sold oxygen to industries in violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

A joint inspection conducted by a committee headed by Solan Additional DC (ADC) Anurag Chander Sharma, SDM (Nalagarh) Mahinder Pal, Baddi SP Rohit Malpani, Deputy Commissioner (State Taxes and Excise) Varun Katoch, Deputy Director (Industries) Sanjay Kanwar and State Drugs Controller Navneet Marwaha yesterday found large-scale irregularities in the stock at Indo Gases.

Based on the findings, a recommendation was sent to DC KC Chaman. "As the licence was sought under the



IN THE DOCK

Indo Gases, an oxygen producer at Baddi, has been booked for selling more than 706 oxygen cylinders to 36 companies and individuals after April 19

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, oxygen is considered a drug under the Act and the sale of oxygen cylinders for industrial use is a violation," recommended the State Drugs Controller.

Chaman said, "The Baddi SP has been directed to register an FIR and investigate the matter. The SDM, Nalagarh, has also been directed to collect all cylinders sold to local industries".

The SP said that a case under Section 3 of the Epidemic Act, Section 51 of the Disaster Management Act, and Sections 188 and 336 of the IPC had been registered against Gurdeep Chandar of Indo Gases at Baddi police station. A probe was underway.

A scrutiny of the e-way bills of the company led to a list of beneficiaries, including Ghaziabad-based SNJ Distribution, who was sold a total of 453 oxygen cylinders on April 24, 25 and 27. Besides, oxygen cylinders had been sold to private individuals, resorts, housing apartments and several industries, including those manufacturing batteries, cosmetics, chemicals, phar-

maceuticals and adhesives.

Issues like the price at which the cylinders were sold would also be enquired into. As against prices ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 per cylinder, as high as Rs 62,000 had been sought in some cases, said officials probing the case.

The sales records were examined electronically by the Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes and Excise, as well as through the e-way portal. Enquiries revealed that both empty and filled oxygen cylinders had been supplied in various parts of the country in violation of the April 25 orders of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and the Solan District Magistrate.

Thunderstorm, rain lash Shimla

TRIBUNE NEW SERVICE

SHIMLA, MAY 1

A severe thunderstorm and hailstorm, accompanied by lightning and sharp showers, lashed Shimla, its surrounding areas and some other places in mid and lower hills, causing a drop in maximum temperature.

MeT issues yellow warning in ten districts



Trees destroyed near Tolla due to storm in Shimla on Saturday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

Bilaspur and Hamirpur recorded a high of 37 degree and 36.4 degree, followed by Sundernagar 33.9 degree, Nahan 32.2 degree, Solan 30.6 degree, Shimla 24.5 degree and Keylong 13.5 degree.

Sundernagar recorded 11 mm rain, followed by Solan 3.2 mm, Shimla 3 mm, Fagu and Mandi 2 mm. The state received

155.1 mm average rain from March 1 to May 1,

against the normal rainfall of 179 mm, a deficit to 13 per cent. The rain deficit was 26 per cent and 24 per cent in Sirmour and Chamba, while Mandi, Kullu and Shimla has received 38 percent, 36 per cent and 18 per cent excess rains respectively.

Pvt bus operators' strike from May 3

OUR CORRESPONDENT



Chamba assn seeks exemption from taxes

would not run buses on various routes of the district from May 3.

However, the HTRC bus service would continue, he added. The RTO urged the private bus operators to postpone the strike in view of the difficulties being faced by people.

Man dies by suicide in Jawali

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NURPUR, MAY 1

Yashpal Singh (50), a resident of Keharian at Jawali in Kangra district, allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree near the Jawali court complex today. He left his home last evening but didn't return. His family members got worried and started looking for him. They found his body hanging from a tree a few yards away from their house this morning.

The Jawali police took possession of the body. DSP, Jawali, Sidharth Sharma said that Yashpal worked at a factory at Sansarpur Terrace in Dehra subdivision. He was mentally upset due to a financial crisis and took the extreme step.

The body was sent to the civil Hospital mortuary at Nurpur. A case has been registered.

'Baba' buried against norms, 14 booked

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SOLAN, MAY 1

The body of 60-year-old Baba Bharti, head of the Luthru Mahadev at Arki who had died of Covid, was given a samadhi (buried) on the temple premises by his disciplines in the wee hours yesterday in violation of norms. His 14 disciples have been booked for the violation of Covid protocols.

Arki SDM Vikas Shukla said the Baba was admitted to MMU Medical College at Sultanpur after he complained of breathing problem for three days. He died on April 29 and his body was brought to Luthru village at night the same day. The administration had made arrangements for his cremation, as per the Covid protocol, but the temple

management informed it yesterday that he was given a samadhi (buried) around 5.45 am.

Shukla added that four disciples of the Baba had not only bared the body but also come in contact with it while 10 others were present during the burial. All of them quarantined themselves after the burial and they would be tested for Covid tomorrow.

"It was a violation of the Covid protocols, and an FIR has been registered against four disciples, who had come in contact with the body and 10 others who were present during the burial". The Baba had a massive following in Punjab, Haryana and HP, and the administration issued an appeal saying it was illegal to store filled oxygen cylinders. —TNS

NGOs, industry urged to deposit O₂ cylinders

SOLAN, MAY 1

The district administration today appealed to social organisations, NGOs, industries as well as common people to hand over oxygen cylinders to their area SDMs. It

MATRIMONIALS

BRIDEROOMS WANTED

MAHAJAN

SM4 Oct. 91 born, beautiful Mahajan girl, 5'-2", born Jammu, BE, MBA, job location Bangalore, salary 30 Lakhs plus reputed upper middle class family. Contact 83604-76284. (CL2101070)

Required suitable match for high status Mahajan Manglik. Post Graduate girl, DOB 18 Nov, 1993, 9:50 am, height 5'-4", Jalandhar. Contact No. 75088-00661. (CL21011580)

AGGARWAL

Boy for a beautiful, slim, Bisa Aggarwal girl practicing Advocate in New Delhi, age 27 years. Looking for a match based in Chandigarh. Professional boy (around 28-32 years of age). Please contact at swarupgroup7@gmail.com, 98112-09220/ Manoj Swarup (Father). (CL21007893)

PQM for slim, smart Bansal girl, B.Tech., 5'-2", 16.02.1992, 07:05 am, Bathinda, job MNC Pune, 16-L; 94179-47475, 94632-43675. (CL21009894)

Tayal Manglik, 9.10.88, 18:35, Narnaul, Software Engineer, Bangalore, 21 LPA, high status family. Preference Ludhiana. Working. Call: 93069-60465. (CL21010228)

SM4 Aggarwal beautiful girl, 1993/ 5'-2", M.Tech. Short marriage issueless divorcee. 70730-83001. (CL21010284)

Suitable match for B.Tech. doing Govt. job in UCO Bank, Goel girl with dark complexion, 5'-5", 07.08.92, 7:10 am, Jalandhar. Punjab, non-manglik. Requirement B.Tech, 5'-10" boy in well settled job or Businessman. Preferable cities are from Chandigarh to Karnal. Mobile: 93552-22491. Plz send biodata, photo on WhatsApp first. Not interested in marriage bureaus. (CL21010289)

SM4 Mangli Bansal, 5'-2" girl, 90 born, Ludhiana, M.Sc. Physics, Ludhiana boy preferred. Caste no bar, 91-9645-82190, 98889-74721. (CL21010383)

Jain Aggarwal, Anshik Manglik girl, 22.06.1995, 11:50 am, Chandigarh, 5'-4", MA- B.Ed. 8568-78591. (CL21010423)

PQM for very beautiful Kansal girl, 31, 5'-2", M.Tech., Computer Engg. girl, Asstt. Professor in Himachal. Preferred Himachal based boy. WhatsApp: 94183-93060. (CL21010566)

Slim, wheatish, 4.1.91, 7:30 am, Kurnal, convent, M.Com., MBA, NET, Assistant Professor. Dowry seekers excuse. Father businessman. 98969-65868. (CL21010591)

BDS/ MBBS/ vegetarian match for Mittal beautiful slim girl 14.11.1994, 4:47 am, Dhuri, 5'-1", 94464-97707, (9867-84201) WhatsApp. (CL21010654)

Aggarwal match for Manglik Goyal M.Sc. Maths, B.Ed. girl, 21 Sept. 1993, 8:45 am, 5' ft. C.No. 89998-00990. (CL21010969)

Employed match for Bansal girl B.D.S. M.P.H. NET Clear doing Ph.D., 5'-3", 9.10.90. 94642-69785. (CL21011295)

Beautiful Non- Manglik Garg girl, 5'-3", 17.8.1993, 13.40, Kurail (Pb), B.Tech, Senior Software Developer, Noida. Contact: 98766-23967. (CL21011421)

SM4 Bansal girl 5'-4"/ 13.08.1992/ 6:40 am, Badshahgarh, Inspector Income Tax, Posted Chandigarh, looking for Govt. Employee in Tricity. 98128-08869. (CL21011425)

Garg girl beautiful Anshik Manglik 5'-4", 22 Feb, 1994, 10:55 pm, Panchkula. Preferred Tricity businessman. 97793-64237. (CL21011450)

SM4, CA, beautiful, slim, Goyal girl, 5'-1/2", 1991, 1:04 am, working Mohali. 94170-94879. (CL21011472)

Non Manglik Aggarwal Doctor Eye Surgeon, DNB, girl 20.10.1992, 7:16 am Jalandhar, 5'-2", Govt. Teacher. No issue. Preferred Govt. employee. 94662-67114, 97291-22821. (CL21011504)

Match for Aggarwal non- Manglik girl, 02.12.91, 12:12 After-Noon (Ludhiana) 5'-2", Govt. Bank Officer 68,000/- salary, preferred Govt. service, kundi must. 98761-23120. (CL21011512)

PQM Bansal girl 5'-4%", Software Enginee, 93 born, MNC Gurgaon. 94634-09248. (CL21011547)

Garg girl, 1994, BDS, 5'-3", works in MNC Mohali. 83605-86030. (CL21009972)

Educated, established businesswoman unmarried for Khatri beautiful working girl 1981/ 5'-2", BA, PGDCA, Delhi, Master of Management from University of Sydney. Working in IT service company at Panchkula. Pref. vegetarian, educated family. 93166-66053. (CL21011522)

Aggarwal beautiful rich family girl, 11.11.1995, 09:35 am, 5'-3/2", preferred high Class Businessman, Jagadhri. 99995-80982. (CL21011607)

Match for B'ful Aggarwal homely girl, 29.12.2000 Ludhiana, 3:34 pm doing BA Hons., father industrialist, well to do family 2 elder sisters. 98153-89307, 0161-460370. (CL21011623)

For Circulation and Advertisement booking and other related queries please call at following numbers from Monday to Saturday between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m.

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E-mail at: ineditcirculation@tribunemail.com

AGGARWAL ISSUELESS DIVORCE GIRL FEW DAYS

educated (B.A. Hon's, LL.B.) cultured Khatri girl, 5'-7". Very simple marriage. Dowry seekers kindly excuse. Upper caste welcome. Contact: 95017-08770. (CL21010173)

Qualified match for Hindu Khatri girl, 6.10.1991, 1:55 a.m. Chandigarh, 5'-2", B.Com., LL.B., IELTS Teacher. Contact: 95010-03091. (CL21010601)

Beautiful unmarried Dec. 74, 5'-3", M.A. M.Ed., Govt. ETT Teacher. Ten years visa Canada. 7696118255. (CL21005248)

Beautiful girl non manglik September 1984, M.Tech. Assistant Professor upper caste welcome, manglik apply. 98766-18242 (CL21011645)

M4 NM PB girl, upper Middle Class, 23.10.85, 23.45 pm, Chandigarh, 5'-0". Interior Designer seeks well settled Prof. Businessman. Upper caste no bar. Call WhatsApp: 98109-93314. (CL21005540)

Well qualified match sought for Himachali Sood girl, 5'-4", 17.05.1990, working as Sr. Audiologist in Gurgaon. Himachali boy working in NCR preferred. Contact: 89849-12348. (CL21007466)

Professionally qualified match for 5'-3", 1984 born, B.Tech, MBA girl, employed MNC Mumbai, package 28. Contact: 83558-23297 or ashokchopra2017@gmail.com (CL21007536)

Match for beautiful Khatri girl, 5', 01.07.1986, 10:00 am, Delhi, working as Assistant Professor in Delhi Ph.D. MBA UGC NET cleared. Kundli must. Contact: 098682-14448, 01-28561314, 94171-5028. (CL21009863)

Beautiful girl 5'-2", 92 Government job, preferred Tricity boy, Contact at 94178-01084. (CL21009992)

Panchkula based reputed business family seeks well settled business match for their beautiful daughter 30.08.1987, 9:45 p.m. Chandigarh, 5'-3", M.Pharmacy. 98167-00133. (CL21010055)

Match for Hindu Khatri girl, 24.02.90, 5'-7". Private Teacher. Patiala preferred. Contact 7087034423 (CL21010071)

Panchkula based affluent Bhatia, business family seeking well settled match for their very beautiful, charming daughter, 5"-2", 1988, Convent Educated, B.Com, ICWA. Working with SBI Chandigarh. Marriage bureaus please excuse. Send complete particulars. Email: Jastee.singh19@outlook.com (CL21010103)

Suitable match for 92 born, 5'-3", MBA, very fair and beautiful, convent educated girl. Working at Senior Position in Finance at Shimla. Contact: 9418039539. (CL21010179)

Match for Khatri Handa Manglik girl, 30.4.1989, 8:40 a.m., Amritsar, 5'-3", Canada PR. 62808-02923. (CL21010440)

Match for Khatri girl (Joint Hindu-Sikh family), 5'-6", 22-12-1986, 8:15 pm, Ludhiana born, Post-Graduate. Father senior officer. 98720-04646 (CL21010603)

Professionally qualified match for Khatri working girl, 17.02.1986, Chandigarh, 5'-1", fair, B.Tech, MBA. 97801-17660. (CL21010643)

Qualified match for M.A., 4'-8", 1986, 7:15 PM, Professor. Preferred Amritsar. 94784-57202, 94171-80951 (CL21010645)

Pure vegetarian well settled educated match for Khatri girl (joint Hindu-Sikh family), 5'-6", 22-12-1986, 8:15 pm, Ludhiana born, Post-Graduate. Father senior officer. 94663-62417 (CL21010461)

Professionally qualified match for Khatri girl 02.01.89, 6 pm, Nawanshahr, 5'-4", M.Com CS. Self employed. 98886 - 38503 (CL21010479)

Suitable match for Khatri girl, 20.09.1993, 7:00 am, B.Sc. (Med.), B.Ed. Working in private school as teacher. Residence near New Chandigarh. 98766 - 65098, 90413 - 56002, 98766 - 02391. (CL21010679)

Beautiful, Fair, Slim, Khatri Manglik BDS girl, 04-12-1989, 15:19, Amritsar born, 5'-4". Working & own clinic Ambala. Father retired gazetted officer. 94663-62417 (CL21011014)

Match for very beautiful Hindu Khatri girl, 09-02-1990, 5'-5", B.Com., B.Ed., M.Sc. (Math), PHD., Govt. Lecturer, Bathinda, 60,000/- pm. Wanted Govt. Employee. Preferred nearby Bathinda. 97922-06863. (CL21010145)

Suitable match for Khatri girl, 20.09.1993, 7:00 am, B.Sc. (Med.), B.Ed. Working in private school as teacher. Residence near New Chandigarh. 98766 - 65098, 90413 - 56002, 98766 - 02391. (CL21010679)

Qualified match for M.A., 4'-8", 1986, 7:15 PM, Professor. Preferred Amritsar. 94784-57202, 94171-80951 (CL21010645)

Pure vegetarian well settled educated match for Hindu Khatri girl (joint Hindu-Sikh family), 5'-6", 22-12-1986, 8:15 pm, Ludhiana born, Post-Graduate. Father senior officer. 94663-62417 (CL21010461)

Match for Hindu Khatri girl, 26.11.1995, 05:29 pm, Ludhiana, 5'-4", Law graduate, status family. Contact after matching kundi. 93175 - 18069, 90233 - 88899. (CL21011563)

Status match for Khatri very beautiful, slim 5'-3/2", MBA girl 1.1.1991, 13:20. Amritsar. Father Industrialist, Dubai, proposals welcome. 98552-53539. (CL21011568)

Professionally qualified vegetarian handsome boy for Khatri Arora smart girl, 4.3.1995, 10:15 am, Sangrur, 5'-2", convent educated MBA. Senior Manager job in PUNE. Radhaosami family. Upper caste no bar. 99148-17917, 98785-45937. (CL21011572)

Match for Hindu Arora girl 27/ 5', job in MNC PUNE, 15 LPA, Contact 98881-55225. (CL21011561)

Educated, established businesswoman unmarried for Khatri beautiful working girl 1981/ 5'-2", BA, PGDCA, Delhi, Master of Management from University of Sydney. Working in IT service company at Panchkula. Pref. vegetarian, educated family. 93166-66053. (CL21011522)

Arora girl 1991/ 5'-6", B.Tech, working in MNC Gurugram. Preference 6'. Govt./ Corporate 93.07-9738. (CL21011595)

Match for Bhatia Khatri girl, 19.01.1989, 7:30 pm, Chandigarh, 5'-3", BCA, B.Ed. MBA, Teacher in private School. 62804-87912, 78883-10436. (CL21011609)

PQM from Tricity for Ludhiana based, Hindu Arora/ Khatri girl, 15.04.1993, B.Com (Hons), SRCC, Delhi, Master of Management from University of Sydney. Working in IT service company at Panchkula. Pref. vegetarian, educated family. 98143-93725. (CL21011552)

Aggarwal beautiful rich family girl, 11.11.1995, 09:35 am, 5'-3/2", preferred high Class Businessman, Jagadhri. 99995-80982. (CL21011607)

Match for B'ful Aggarwal homely girl, 29.12.2000 Ludhiana, 3:34 pm doing BA Hons., father industrialist, well to do family 2 elder sisters. 98153-89307, 0161-460370. (CL21011623)

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Circulation: 0172-267031

BRAHMIN

SM 4 Himachali Brahmin girl, 5'-4", BCA, M.Sc. (T), B.Ed. School teacher in Chd., 12.11.92, 11:45 p.m. Chd. Tricity preferred. 97800-46171. (CL21011625)

Looking for suitable match for innocently divorced beautiful M.Sc., B.Ed., 5'-5" Sharma girl working in Kharar, DoB 4.11.90, 9.39 pm, Jalandhar born. Tricity preferred. Contact after Kundli matching 78844-2432, 78143-36089. (CL21011111)

Professional qualified match for Brahmin girl, 27.12.1989, 5'-2", B.Com., MBA, working in MNC as Manager. 98721-14760. (CL21011406)

Govt. Officer/ Doctor/ well settled businessman match for convert educated beautiful Brahmin girl.

Manglik, 25y, 5'-5", working as P.O in a Govt. Bank, Chandigarh. B.Tech. Father Architect, upper caste no bar.

Contact- 98771-97657. (CL21011416)

Brahmin Manglik girl 26.02.1985/

7.50 pm/ Amritsar, 5'-1", Fashion Designing (NIFD), Medium body. 75082-05666. (CL21011447)

Beautiful Himachali convert educated girl, 5'-4", 29.4.86, 9.20 am, Shimla (BALB Hons & LLM) PU Campus, NET, Law Faculty in Chandigarh. Parents: Rtd Govt. Officers. 94184-70200. (CL21011456)

Govt. officer/ Engineer, pure vegetarian match for Saraswat Brahmin girl, 20.5.1991, 7:35 pm, 5'-2", Bathinda based, B.Tech. (ECE), M.Tech. (ECE), M.A. (English), pursuing Ph.D., Assistant Professor. Father retired Govt. Lecturer, mother Associate Professor. 94657-50635, 81465-82780. (CL21011558)

Professionally qualified teetotaler, vegetarian, Brahmin match for fair, Anshik Manglik, Delhi based Brahmin girl, 5'-4", 14.10.92 (11:15 am), Delhi, M.Tech. Software Engineer MNC, Bangalore (WPH Delhi). Preference for well settled, educated, service class family. Brahmin boy working in Delhi, NCR/ Bangalore. Pls send biodata, photo & horoscope. 93111-50033. (CL21011458)

Suitable match for professionally settled, beautiful 5'-7" girl, born in Jalandhar, 19.12.1990, 00:40, Software Engineer in MNC (Pune), looking for 5'-9" and above professional boy settled in Metropolitan or Canada. Contact: 98721-56459 or 92163-11345. (CL21009898)

Vegetarian teetotaler match for B.Tech, MBA fair, 5'-2%", 11.6.92, 8.00 p.m., Ambala born Canada PR awaiting Saraswat Brahmin girl. Parents retired Govt. official settled Chandigarh. Contact after kundli match. 98885-8961. (CL21009912)

Suitable match for fair manglik Gaur Brahmin girl Msc (Maths) B.Ed., Sept. 1996, 5'-4", Contact 98694-87593, 94684-47908 (AMBALA) (CL21010060)

Professionally qualified match for Punjabi Brahmin girl 30 years 5 feet BDX with IELTS 7 band. Contact: 94630-34981. (CL21010108)

Brahmin girl 36/ 5"- Graduate, ETT, Computer Course, from Educated Family at Bathinda. Mobile: 95019-63574. (CL21010142)

Saraswat Brahmin girl, 5'-4", 21.10.1994, 4:40 pm, Ludhiana, MBA (HR), 98159-73734 (CL21010145)

Suitable match for Sharmi girl 30/ 5"-, M.Sc., doing Ph.D. Canada Montreal. Only Canada preferred. 98898-36809, 80542-99645. (CL21010237)

Suitable match for Saraswat Brahmin girl, 31.05.1986, 5'-8". Graduation, Diploma in Aviation and Hospitality, working as Manager at Chandigarh Airport in Indigo Airlines. 99152-79539. (CL21010244)

Match below 1993 for Saraswat Brahmin gotra Prashar single girl child 1996, 5'-4", M.Sc., CTET cleared, doing B.Ed. Father, mother retired Govt. employee. Resident of Patiala, Sangrur, Ludhiana to send profile on WhatsApp No. 78373-15803. Excuse for calls. (CL21010325)

Beautiful and tall Saraswat Brahmin girl, 31 Dec. 1990, M.Com., B.Ed. NET and HTET qualified from high status business family. 94162-68311. (CL21010327)

Canada PR or employed in reputed company (India) boy for Saraswat Brahmin girl, 7.1.989, 3:15 pm. B.Sc., 5"-5", Software Developer in IT Company Mohali (M.Tech.). Contact: 97795145138, 7814264878. (CL21010375)

Suitable match for Saraswat Brahmin, Indian educated girl, Nov. 1988, Ph.D. (Microbiology), working in Gurgaon MNC. Contact: jatssikh.gill.asr@gmail.com. 98730-7936. (CL21009896)

Professionally qualified match for Defence Officers daughter, Nov. 91, 5'-3", Dentist Canada PR, working in Ministry of Health Canada in Administrative capacity. Girl in India for a month. 99889-99170. (CL21009538)

Professionally qualified well settled match for Jatt Sikh girl, 87, 5'-4", B.Tech., M.Tech-ECE, Software Developer in Gurgaon MNC. Contact: jatssikh.gill.asr@gmail.com. 98730-7936. (CL21009896)

Preferred Doctor match for Jat Sikh September 89/5'-5", beautiful girl currently Internal medicine resident in US. 94638-79620, jkaur107@gmail.com (CL21009900)

Match for Jat Sikh girl, Dec. 1993, 5'-5", NET clear, doing Ph.D. (Physics). Preferred Govt. employee. Contact 99146-00905. (CL21009900)

Suitable match for Jat Sikh girl, 90, 5'-3", Ph.D. (Commerce) with 10 year US visa. Only Jat Sikh enquires preferably from abroad. 98140-0089. (CL21009939)

Seeking suitable professional Jatt Sikh match for our daughter, 93 born, 5'-3", M.Pharmacy, UK born, raised in both India and UK. Respectable families versed in both cultures to apply. If interested please send biodata and most recent photos to: gillmatrimony2021@gmail.com or +44774357042. (CL21009940)

Wanted suitable match from Canada for beautiful slim girl 5'-4", Oct. 89 BDS (India). Job in Dental Corp. Toronto. Only liberal minded should send details with latest photo on email: dhalwalss7@gmail.com/ WhatsApp: 95016-11595. (CL21011517)

Suitable match for Gaur Brahmin girl, 05.02.1995, 4.45 am, Ambala (Haryana), 5'-5", BBA, M.Com., Gotia Kapil/ Kashyap No. 86830-2816, 93503-67449. (CL21011528)

Saraswat Brahmin girl 14.8.93, 6 pm, 5'-3" Khanbari based, M.Sc (IT) Executive in public sector bank. WhatsApp 94772-49953. (CL21011551)

Suitable match for beautiful Sarwat Brahmin girl, 19.04.1991, 00:30 am, Modinagar, B.Tech. Computer Science, working MNC Chandigarh. Tricity preferred. 72063-23142. (CL21010458)

SM 4 Brahmin girl, 05.02.1993 10 a.m. 5'-4" from Ambala, M.Tech. qualified teaching experience, Central Govt. employee Chandigarh. No onion/garlic diet. Requires pure vegetarian boy, religious family. Preferred tricity family. Contact: 98910-36615, 98109-38769. (CL21010483)

Ludhiana based Saraswat Brahmin girl, Oct. 1994, 5', M.Com., B.Ed., Australia study visa holder 78372-0049, 97806-16142. (CL21010524)

Match for S. Brahmin girl, born on 29 December 92, 2:50 pm, Chandigarh, 5'-3", B.Com., MBA, working in IT, Chandigarh. IELTS 7 bands. Upper caste no bar. 98146-72218. (CL21010537)

Suitable match for Sarwat Brahmin, Indian based, status family, beautiful girl, 81.1.93, 5"-5", B.Pharma, M.Pharma, working in MNC, Chandigarh. Preferred Govt./ Private employee. 94783-89098, 70188-43192. (CL21010398)

Serving teetotaler match for Gaur Brahmin Manglik girl, 5'-4%", 19.04.1991, 00:30 am, Modinagar, B.Tech. Computer Science, working MNC Chandigarh. Tricity preferred. 72063-23142. (CL21010458)

SM 4 Brahmin girl, 05.02.1993 10 a.m. 5'-4" from Ambala, M.Tech. qualified teaching experience, Central Govt. employee Chandigarh. No onion/garlic diet. Requires pure vegetarian boy, religious family. Preferred tricity family. Contact: 98910-36615, 98109-38769. (CL21010483)

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Tonk-Kashatriya beautiful girl, 27.5"-6", B.Tech. IT Diploma working girl. 97800-14273, 74899-02691. (CL21011532)

Doctor/ Engineer match for Tonkashatriya beautiful girl, 20 Nov. 1994, 7.40 pm, Jalandhar, 5'-3", B.Com., M.Sc. PGID (HRD). Preferred Govt. job Defense Services. 93504-36867. (CL21010918)

Match for beautiful girl, April 1993 5'-3", Deputy Branch Manager ICICI Bank, Khatri/ Brahmin welcome. Contact: 97815-99352, 97815-99308, 9046-48064. (CL21010985)

Canada work permit Brahmin Manglik girl, August 1990, 5'-4", M.Sc Chemistry. B.Ed. preferred PR boy. Simple marriage, no dowry. 76965-2205, 98833-34413. (CL21011401)

Pure vegetarian, teetotaler, Brahmin match for Brahmin girl, 5'-4", 10.12.1990, Amritsar M.Com., UGC-NET working as Assist professor (Adhoc). Father Bank employee, Mother Retd VRS from PSU preferred Govt employee / well settled caste no bar. 94171-94571 (CL21011618)

Professional qualified match for Brahmin girl, 27.12.1989, 5'-2", B.Com., MBA, working in MNC as Manager. 98721-14760. (CL21011406)

Govt. Officer/ Doctor/ well settled businessman match for convert educated beautiful Brahmin girl.

Manglik, 25y, 5"-5", working as P.O in a Govt. Bank, Chandigarh. B.Tech. Father Architect, upper caste no bar.

Contact- 98771-97657. (CL21011416)

Brahmin Manglik girl 26.02.1985/

7.50 pm/ Amritsar, 5"-1", Fashion Designing (NIFD), Medium body. 75082-05666. (CL21011447)

Beautiful Himachali convert educated girl, 5'-4", 29.4.86, 9.20 am, Shimla (BALB Hons & LLM) PU Campus, NET, Law Faculty in Chandigarh. Parents: Rtd Govt. Officers. 94184-70200. (CL21011456)

Professional match for unmarried Non-manglik girl from

tricity for beautiful girl, 5"-2", Saraswat Brahmin, Ludhiana born (February 28, 1989, 11:15 am), Government employee in Chandigarh. 84274-77466, 82641-40024. (CL21011685)

Professional qualified match for unmarri-

ed Non-manglik girl from

tricity for beautiful girl, 5"-2", Saraswat

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CHANDIGARH

Chandigarh 10 marla first floor Sector 40, B-Road, ample parking. Subhasi Mangat & Co. 98155-70290. (CL2101031)

Newly built One Kanal full / floorwise, Duplex, Sector-16, 11, 8. Posh area. 7340-748-748. (CL21010172)

Modern Complex independent duplex corner facing park also triple storey (North-East) another raw, all keys/ papers with authorised Avin Properties 98151-25155. (CL2101245)

Modern Complex Cat-1, ground/ second floor, Cat-3, first/ second floor keys/ papers with Avin Properties: 98151-25155. (CL21012046)

Sale: Rajeev Vihar, first floor Economy- drawing/ dining 3 bedrooms, two washrooms, nice location, immediate sale, keys/ papers with Avin Properties: 98151-25155. (CL21012047)

Economy- drawing/ dining 3 bedrooms, two washrooms, nice location, immediate sale, keys/ papers with Avin Properties: 98151-25155. (CL21012047)

7 marla, second floor, three bedrooms, new construction, 3257, Sector 35D, Chandigarh. 78378-03000. 98143-78566. (CL21010575)

1 kanal kothi Sectors 8, 18, 28, 33, 35. New Builders floors 1-10, 10-10 marla Chandigarh. 96468-09090. (CL21011457)

Chandigarh: Wanted one kanal, two kanal old house/ plot any sector, ready buyer, biana in hand. Contact: Gagan Reetach 99880-06114. (CL21011478)

MIG ground floor # 490, Sector 61, corner, side big park, excellent work, MIG ground floor # 450, Sector 42A, renovated. Puri & Co. 99141-19274. (CL21011448)

2 kanal kothi old prime Sector facing North East, from side big parking space best location. Keys/ papers with authorised Avin Properties: 98151-25155 (only direct/ genuine buyers may contact). (CL21011506)

4 kanal bungalow lush green surrounding 3 kanal B-Road Northern Sector 5, 2 kanal 15 Chandigarh. Jeet Associates: 96468-09090. (CL21011590)

Two kanal freehold industrial plot Phase 1. Rare availability, dealer Excuse. Contact Sandeep 99883-78787. (CL21011659)

PANCHKULA

14 marla plot facing park MDC Sector 6, Panchkula. Contact Gulati Estates 88006-66233. (CL21010296)

10 marla facing park kothi Sector 7 and 8, Prime location. Gulati Estates 88006-66233. (CL21010361)

16.5 marla, East and park facing corner house Panchkula, best for hospital and professionals. Demand 3.90 Cr. 81958-49999 (Broker excuse). (CL21011452)

10x45 basement + 4 floors, with independent kitchens, washrooms every floor, Bataan. Opposite Old Housing Board, Sector 19, Panchkula. 92161-83238. (CL21009834)

Housing Board Colony Himshikha: 8 marla double storey kothi for sale behind DLF. 98769-55966. (CL21010596)

10 marla house, on green belt, A-Road & North facing, #947-P, Sector 26, Panchkula. Ph. 94650-33140. (CL21011473)

Panchkula: Fourteen marla liveable house, 21, ten marla old 9, 10, 10. Nand Estate: 98140-3277, 99888-99131. (CL21011484)

Sector 80:

Available 206.66 sq. yds single storey structure corner location. 87250-15782. (CL21013015)

Commercial:- GMADA SCO site 18x50 facing big parking, near Judicial Court Complex Sector 89. Smart Move Realty 87250-15782. (CL21010316)

Aerocity: 8 marla single storey 3 BHK newly built up house East facing reasonable price. Smart Move Realty 87250-15782. (CL21010318)

Aerocity: 1 kanal plot corner/ facing park/ single line Block-D, near Airport Chowk. Smart Move Realty 87250-15782. (CL21010320)

Sector 80: 250 sq. yds plot North-East facing near park rare availability: 87250-15782. (CL21010322)

Mohali sixteen marla corner double storey Sector 71, eight marla three storey single lane Phase 3B1, Marwaha 204, Phase 3B1, Mohali. Phone 98140-10193, 98145-03193. (CL21010343)

4 marla floors available facing park 2 rooms, 2 washrooms on each floor ground floor @ 43 first floor @ 35, Sector 80, Mohali. 98760-52353. (CL21010513)

Mohali: One kanal B-Road, double storey, Phase 2, big corner Phase 3A, facing Park Phase 3B2, 7, Sector 69. Empire Estates 98159-50922, 90566-66055. (CL21011121)

Mohali: 10½ marla, triple storey, fully marbled, B-Road, Phase 5, single lane, triple storey, Phase 7, 10. Empire Estates 90566-66055. (CL21011124)

Janta Land: Showroom newly builtup, size (18x80), (20x80), huge parking, lift, Sector 66-A. Empire Estates: 98150-83500. (CL21011369)

1 kanal kothi old prime Sector facing North East, from side big parking space best location. Keys/ papers with authorised Avin Properties: 98151-25155 (only direct/ genuine buyers may contact). (CL21011506)

4 kanal bungalow lush green surrounding 3 kanal B-Road Northern Sector 5, 2 kanal 15 Chandigarh. Jeet Associates: 96468-09090. (CL21011590)

Two kanal freehold industrial plot Phase 1. Rare availability, dealer Excuse. Contact Sandeep 99883-78787. (CL21011659)

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Two kanal freehold industrial plot



Traditional summer drinks have many cooling properties. Some of these drinks are also immunity boosters, much needed in today's times

FOOD page 10



Two memorable defensive battles were fought in Poonch and Chhamb in 1971. Recalling the valour of 6 Sikh and 5 Sikh troops, and their inspirational leaders

TRIBUTE page 11



One of the most iconic, trendsetting singers of our times, Begum Akhtar was in equal parts enigmatic and receptive to inputs about her craft

BOOKS page 12

Bangabandhu

by Shyam Benegal



50 years after the creation of Bangladesh, a biopic on the 'Father of the Nation', Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is in the works. At the helm of the Indo-B'desh production is another unique individual — director Shyam Benegal

NONIKA SINGH

"You can kill a man but you can't kill an idea."

MUCH like a Greek tragedy, the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the first President of Bangladesh and later its Prime Minister, is as much about victory as it is about an unfortunate twist of events that led to his assassination and finally a legacy that endured. As his inspiring story of epic proportions is about to leap onto silver screen in a Bengali film by stellar director Shyam Benegal, here's a look at what all has gone into the making of the biopic 'Bangabandhu'.

The journey of Bangladesh's 'Father of the Nation' from real to reel can't possibly be a simple retelling of events. As Atul Tiwari, who along with Shama Zaidi has written the screenplay in English, says, "When the man at the helm is Benegal, you can only expect tomes of research." The fact that Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina, the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, has been instrumental in creating 12 volumes of research on her father and has been witness to many events has ensured that facts are not a casualty. Indeed, a father's life as seen through a daughter's eyes can be problematic and a rather sentimental viewpoint. Tiwari agrees but says by no account is the film "a tale told by a daughter". Rather, to bring in greater objectivity, they have factored in many voices, including that of Kamal Hossain, architect of Bangladesh's Constitution, who later became one of Mujib's detractors.

In an Indo-Bangladesh production if you believe that the government interference would be enormous, Benegal insists that he has the complete freedom and support of the Bangladesh government to make the film as he desires, for creative liberty is an integral part of the filmmaking process. Benegal, who has given us some superlative biopics like the 'The Making of the Mahatma' and 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero', does not believe in inventing facts. Yet, a film has to be told like an engaging piece of fiction — with a beginning, middle and end. As Tiwari adds, "In movies, there is always a hero through whom you tell a larger story. A biopic is no different." Only here you can expect the birth of a nation also through the journey of a man. Yes, at one level it would be a political, social and cultural document with complete attention to details, but would equally be a human story as well.

Benegal views Mujib as a quintessential family man. Tiwari pitches in, "He was one of those rare men who hailed his wife as his political guru." Arifin Shuvoo, the Bangladeshi star who got the lead part after five rounds of auditions, dubs Mujib as a "limited edition". A man so transparent and one with no filters that the more Arifin delved into his character, the more he realised how Mujib and he are like North and South Poles.

Yet, today he says with pride how Mujib's truthfulness and spunk to call a spade a spade has rubbed on to him too. What made Mujib, who led the movement of Bengal's cultural and linguistic identity, unique was also his abiding faith in secularism. As Benegal puts it, "He did not equate nationalism with religion." In fact, it was due to his secular beliefs that the Muslim Awami League was rechristened as the Awami League.

More than any other trait, Benegal can see commitment as the common factor between Bangladesh's 'Father of Nation' and our own. Tiwari did not feel the need to draw any obvious parallels while writing



PICTURES COURTESY: INSTAGRAM@ARIFIN_SHUVOO



The cast of the film with Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and (above) her father, 'Father of the Nation' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, during a visit to India in April 1974

FROM THE TRIBUNE ARCHIVES



PERFECT CHOICE

"Benegal's vision is crystal clear. He looks for authenticity. I had to pinch myself when I met this god of cinema." ARIFIN SHUVOO, BANGLADESHI

ACTOR WHO PLAYS SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN



THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Mujib was very transparent, open and did not hide anything which is a great quality but a bit of a disadvantage when you are a political figure. In the biopic, you get to see the politician, the leader and the human being, who was a quintessential family man. The film won't be a birth-to-death story, but more of his political maturation and the values that he stood for. — SHYAM BENGAL



An event in Indian High Commission at Dhaka to mark the joint production of 'Bangabandhu'; and (R) Shyam Benegal and Atul Tiwari on the sets of the film.



the film, as "viewers are intelligent enough to make their own interpretations".

Call it fait accompli, India's role in creation of Bangladesh can only be duly acknowledged. The 1971 war scenes are yet to be canned and will be shot in Bangladesh once the Covid-19 situation improves. But, says Tiwari, "Unlike the popular sentiment that we gifted freedom to Bangladesh, we will stick to the inalienable fact that freedom is not a gift and individuals involved must have the quest to seek it." Whether 'Bangabandhu' will end up showing Pakistan in bad light or not, he quips, "This is no Pakistan *hai hai* film, but it can't possibly condone that country for not paying heed to the genuine demands of its Bengali population."

In the same breath, he reminds how the freedom of Bangladesh exacted a much higher price in terms of human lives, far outnumbering the number of people India lost in its nearly 200 years of freedom struggle.

In the hands of Benegal, the film may not be a hagiography but nor is it likely to be unnecessarily/brutally critical of the man voted as 'The Greatest Bengali of All

Time' by a BBC poll in 2004. Arifin feels that no actor is good enough to play Mujib. However, to direct a film on him, he feels there couldn't have been a better choice than Benegal. "Here is a director who knows exactly what he wants. His vision is crystal clear. Instead of dwelling upon the technicalities, he looks for authenticity and emotional heft."

Though casting director Shyam Rawat went out of the way to select nearly 15 noted actors from Bangladesh, the Director of Photography did find Arifin's broad shoulders a bit of a hindrance. Recalling the

moment, Arifin remembers what Benegal said, "He put his hand on my shoulders and said 'don't worry, just get into the character'." Benegal, on his part, considers Bangaldeshi actors a terrific value addition. His decision to opt for actors from Bangladesh has not only been sagacious but also practical, as the film is shot not just in Bengali, but has the dialect and accent spoken in Bangladesh as well.

Culture specific to the T, as Benegal has a penchant for getting even a *thaali* or a *lota* used in the film just right, the narrative is bound to have a universal resonance too. To

CENTRAL FIGURE OF THE BANGLADESH LIBERATION MOVEMENT

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was born on March 17, 1920. He fought against discrimination of Bengalis in East Pakistan and was the central figure behind the Bangladesh Liberation Movement and the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. He indirectly announced independence of Bangladesh on March 7, 1971. On March 26, 1971, the Pakistan army launched Operation Searchlight and he was arrested. During his absence, many Bengalis joined the Mukti Bahini. The Indian armed forces defeated the Pakistani forces during the war in December 1971. Mujib was released from Pakistani custody and served as the first President of Bangladesh briefly and later as the Prime Minister. He was assassinated on August 15, 1975, by renegade army officers during a coup.



be dubbed in several languages, the story of Mujib is likely to work at the world level. For the citizens of Bangladesh, which is where the film is likely to premiere, Tiwari already has a disclaimer ready. "If inadvertently there is any mistake of information/interpretation/understanding and if we end up hurting people, let me say we are as proud of Mujib as Bangladeshis are."

Of course, there is ample reason to be proud of Benegal, who, at 86, has as astute an eye as when he began to make celluloid history in the 1970s with social commentaries like 'Ankur'. Ask him from where he finds the energy and he shoots back, "Why? Do you want me to retire?" God forbid, nobody would wish so. Right now he is busy building new bridges in the history of India-Bangladesh friendship. He also reveals political biopics have come to him by accident and he didn't set out consciously to make them. But if ever there is a cinematic measure of a political man, trust Benegal to do full justice. Related to Guru Dutt but inheritor of Satyajit Ray's worldview of cinema, he has mastered the art of capturing micro and macro, the 'I and we', in the same frame.

Nature's natural seasonal coolants

With the mercury rising, it is time to look at traditional drinks across India that are a summer staple for their cooling properties. Some of these preparations are also immunity boosters, much needed in today's times

BINDU GOPAL RAO

WITH its diverse culinary geography, India's rich history of traditional foods and drinks is unparalleled. As the temperatures peak, try some of these seasonal health drinks.

RAGI AMBLI

Ragi Ambli is a healthy drink, popular in Karnataka during summers. Pavithra Raj, a Bengaluru-based dietitian, says, "Ragi or finger millet is a rich source of fibre and helps in lowering cholesterol and controls weight. This is good for diabetes and is a good source of carbohydrates, proteins, micronutrients, vitamins and minerals. The phytochemicals present in ragi help slow down digestion and aid in controlling blood sugar levels."

Ingredients

- Water 1 glass
- Ragi powder 2tbsp
- Butter milk ½ glass
- Salt to taste

Method: Boil water and add ragi powder to it. Cook on a low flame till the ragi powder gets cooked completely. Once the mixture cools down, add buttermilk and salt as required.

SATTU SHERBET

Sattu is a staple of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and has many cooling benefits and a high nutritional value. "There are two variants — one made from roasted chana dal and the other from roasted jau (barley). Both contain insoluble fibre that address Vata issues," says Roopashree Sharma, founder, Atharvanlife.com.

Ingredients

- Roasted sattu powder 250gm
- Jaggery/coconut sugar/palm sugar 50gm
- Jeera powder 2tbsp
- Himalayan salt 2tsp
- Lemon juice ½ tbsp

Method: Blend all ingredients to make the sattu mix powder. In a glass of water; add 2 tbsp of this powder with ½ tbsp lime juice. Stir well and serve.

NANNARI SHERBET

Popular in South India, Nannari has cooling medicinal properties. The herb sarsaparilla, called Nannari in Tamil or Naruneendi in Malayalam "helps keep the body cool, reduces urinary infections, arthritis and constipation and is a blood purifier. Drink this in morning on an empty stomach," says Chef Raji, Beyond Dining Co.



SATTU SHERBET



NANNARI SHERBET



MANGO LASSI

GREEN DELIGHT

Kamalika De, a Mumbai-based food blogger, says, "Khus khus is known for its soothing effects, checks inflammation and boosts immunity. Cucumber contains antioxidants and lemon is a good source of vitamin C."

Ingredients

- Khus khus (available in supermarkets and online) 2tbsp
- Cucumber juice 1tsp
- Lemon juice 1tsp
- Mint leaves 1 sprig
- Sugar syrup 1 tsp
- Water 1 ½ cup

Method: In a glass add all ingredients to water. Add ice cubes and serve.

MANGO LASSI

Mango is rich in vitamin C and fibre, while yoghurt is rich in calcium and is good for bone health.

Ingredients

- Mangoes (chopped) 2 cups
- Yoghurt 2 cups
- Sugar 2 tsp (optional)

Method: Blend mangoes and yoghurt in a blender. Add sugar if needed. Garnish with chopped mango and mint leaves.

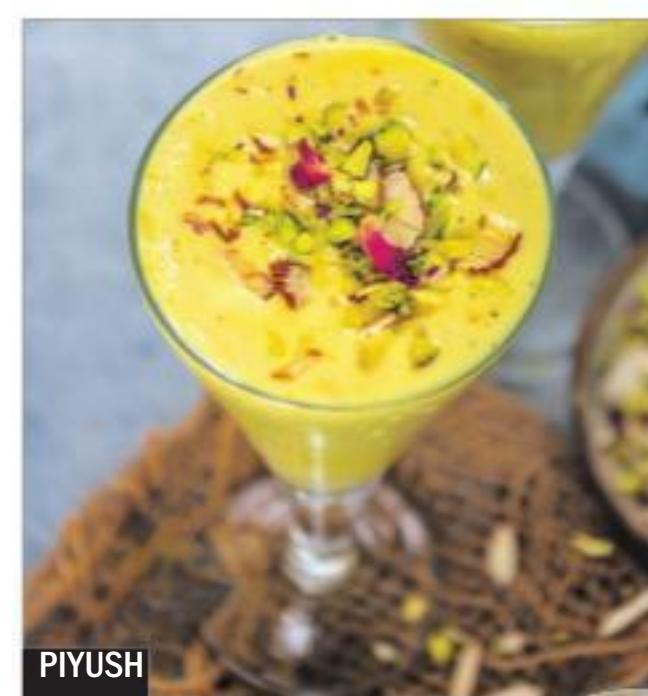
PYAR MOHABBAT KA SHERBET

It is Old Delhi's popular summer drink. Godhuli Sengupta, a fitness and nutrition coach, says, "I use falooda-flavoured whey protein as it's low in calories."

Ingredients

- Milk 1 cup
- Sugar 1tsp
- Watermelon cubes ¼ cup
- Watermelon juice ¼ cup
- Rooh Afza sherbet 1 tbsps

Method: Add sugar, Rooh Afza, ice to milk and blend. Add watermelon cubes and juice and mix. Serve chilled.



PIYUSH



JIGARTHANDA



IMLI KA AMALANA

TAAL/NONGU SHERBET
Palmyra fruit or *nongu* or *tadgola* is seasonal and local fruit but is available across the country. The British called it 'ice apple' for its cooling and hydrating effects. "A rich source of electrolytes, calcium, phosphorus, vitamins C and B, it is anti-inflammatory and has healing powers to soothe the digestive tract, inflamed skin, acidity and nausea," says Manasa Rajan, a holistic health coach.

Ingredients

- Tender nongu/palm fruit (chilled) 5
- Liquid palm jaggery 1.5tbsp
- Pulp of passion fruits 2

Method: Peel and scoop out gel-like pulp. Mash with a spoon. Add liquid

palm jaggery and passion fruit pulp. Mix and serve with mint leaves.

IMLI KA AMALANA

Imli ka amalana, a popular drink in Rajasthan, is ideal for summers. It aids in digestion and helps in checking bloating. It's also a natural painkiller for stomachache. *Imli* or tamarind is also good for skin and boosts immunity, says home chef Swati Mane.

Ingredients

- Imli 50gm
- Jaggery 50gm
- Ginger 2-inch piece
- Cinnamon powder 2tsp
- Cardamom powder 1tsp
- Black pepper 1tsp
- Water 0.5 litre
- Salt to taste
- Mint leaves for garnishing

Method: Soak imli for 30 minutes and boil in hot water. Add all ingredients and boil for 20 minutes more till the jaggery is melted. Cool, strain. Add to water and serve chilled with mint leaves.

PIYUSH

Piyush, popular in Maharashtra and Gujarat, is made with shrikhand. "Rich in probiotics, it helps with digestion, has protein and calcium and keeps the body cool and develops immunity," says Neha Mathur, founder, WhiskAffair.

Ingredients

- Plain shrikhand (chilled) 2 cups
- Yogurt (chilled) 1 cup
- Milk (chilled) 2 cups
- Cardamom powder 1tsp
- Nutmeg powder ½ tsp

Method: Blend all ingredients together. Add chopped almonds or cashew nuts. Serve chilled.

JIGARTHANDA

Jigarthanda, a popular drink from Madurai, is known for its cooling properties.

Himanshu Rai, chief dietitian and nutritionist, Think You, says, "This is helpful in easing different body pains and good to counter acidity."

Ingredients

- Full fat milk 1 cup
- Condensed milk 1 tbsp
- Nannari syrup (available online) 1tsp
- Badam pisin or almond gum or katira gond 1 tsp
- Ice-cream of any flavour 1 scoop

Method: Soak badam pisin overnight. Next morning, discard water and refrigerate. In a pan, add milk and condensed milk, mix well and keep aside. In a glass, add badam pisin, Nannari syrup, mixed milk and a scoop of ice cream. Blend all ingredients together. Add chopped almonds or cashew nuts. Serve chilled.

IMLI KA AMALANA

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Ingredients

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- Liquid palm jaggery 1.5tbsp
- Pulp of passion fruits 2

Method: Peel and scoop out gel-like pulp. Mash with a spoon. Add liquid

How to make a lazy summer meal



FOOD TALK

PUSHPESH PANT

IT may have been possible for the Bard to compare his beloved to a summer day in England perpetually blighted by depressing winter. However, we in India live in a different clime. When the sun shines in summers, it scorches, taking away our appetite and draining out all the energy. In such conditions, who would want to cook in the kitchen? This is the time when our mind turns to one-dish meals that are tasty, nourishing, different, and above all easy to prepare. Many takeaway services have started offering bowl meals prepared according to Indian and foreign recipes. Such meals not only cut down the cooking time but also reduce the number of dishes to be washed. Let's not get carried away. What we are sharing with you is not necessarily a one-dish meal or meal in a bowl, but does have many features to rival these.

Indians are habituated to eat steamed rice with lentils or other gravies. So powerful is the conditioning that some of our friends ruin a perfect biryani or pulav by drowning it in *shorba* of *salan*. But we digress. Our Asian brethren enjoy rice with dry dishes — vegetarian and non-vegetarian. This is what has inspired us to improvise this lazy lunch or dinner for the summers.

ONE-DISH MEAL

Ingredients:

Rice	250gm
Chicken (boneless from thighs, cut in small pieces)	250gm
Or tofu/paneer (vegetarians can use these, cut in cubes)	150gm
Broccoli	100gm
Sweet bell peppers (small, red or yellow)	1/2
Carrots (yellow)	100gm
Button mushrooms	50gm
Baby corn	50gm
Onion (medium-sized)	1
Spring onions (retain the green leaves)	50gm
Garlic cloves	4
Soy sauce	2 tbsp or to taste
Chilli sauce	1 tsp
Black bean sauce	1 tsp
Sugar	1/4 tsp
Salt	To taste
Corn flour	1 tsp
Sesame oil	2-3 tbsp

Method: Boil rice and fluff it with a fork. Wash chicken well and marinate in soy and all other sauces for an hour. Sprinkle corn flour over it evenly. Peel and cut the onion into thick slices. Break broccoli into small florets and wash well. Wipe clean the mushrooms to remove all grit and slice finely. Scrape and wash carrots and cut in thin discs. Cut baby corn in preferred shape. Cut spring onion bulbs after cutting roots and washing well. Chop green leaves. Wash and cut the pepper in small pieces. Heat oil in a pan and pan-fry the chicken pieces on medium heat for two minutes on each side. Add vegetables (along with any remaining marinade, sugar and salt). Add onions, then carrots and baby corns, followed by mushrooms. Add bell pepper and spring onions and their chopped leaves in the end. Stir gently. Add two table spoons of water, cover and steam on low flame for 2-3 minutes. Uncover, check seasoning and remove from gas. Remember, you aren't cooking a gravy dish or even a sauce. Some moisture should remain, but just. Put boiled and fluffed rice in a bowl or plate, top with vegetables cooked with chicken or tofu/paneer. You can reduce rice quantity and increase chicken and/or veggies as per taste.



CAPTION CONTEST 1303



Entries are invited to suggest a caption for the above photograph. The caption should only be in English, witty and not exceeding 10 words, and reach Spectrum, The Tribune, Chandigarh, 160030, by Thursday. The best five captions will be published and

awarded ₹300, ₹250, ₹200, ₹150 and ₹100, respectively. Each caption must be accompanied by a clipping of the caption contest and its number. Photocopies of the caption photo will not be accepted. Please mention the pin code in your address.

You have a camera or a phone camera? Click and send us a picture for the caption contest. The selected picture will be used for Caption Contest. Mail the high resolution picture (.jpg format) at captionpics@tribunemail.com

Selected entries for Caption Contest 1302

April 25 issue (see photo)

- God boy — Neeraj Kumar Gupta, Chandigarh
- Dyeing to be recognised — Amarinder Singh Brar, Chandigarh
- Rare view mirror — Pankaj Goyal, Ambala city
- Colourful facelift — Narinder Sharma, Panchkula
- Cosmetics for the ascetic — Alisha Chandra, Chandigarh



Defenders of Poonch, Chhamb

Recalling the valour and steadfastness of 6 Sikh and 5 Sikh troops, and their inspirational leaders



The defence of Poonch by 6 Sikh has gone down as one of the most successful defensive actions by a battalion; 5 Sikh went on to fight an epic defensive battle in the Chhamb-Jaurian sector

TWO memorable defensive battles were fought south of Banihal Pass, amidst the rigours of the Pir Panjal mountains of Poonch and the undulating rough plains of Chhamb-Jaurian west of Munawar Tawi. The assaulting enemy numbered several times the men who manned the defences; however, they were met squarely with rare steadfastness, valour and dedication, inflicting crushing defeats on the enemy in both these encounters.

6 Sikh ('Chhe', as popularly known) occupied defences over a 13-km frontage on the heights above Poonch; two of these, Points 405 and 406, were of strategic importance, standing as sentinels. Loss of these would directly threaten Poonch town itself. Pakistan always prized this option, and on the night intervening December 3 and 4, it launched a heavy punch with two brigades (six battalions). Coincidentally, one of these was 5th Frontier Force, originally the 53 Royal Sikhs! Two enemy battalions launched feint attacks, while one infiltrated to cut off the road leading to Poonch. 'Chhe', fully entrenched, lay in their path to upset their well-laid out plans.

The artillery bombardment announced the enemy's intent; an advance position at the helipad, held by two platoons under Captain Mamik, received the heavy rush, but they stood rock solid. A young Sepoy, Sampuran Singh, manning a Light Machine Gun (LMG) stood out. 'He poured ceaseless rapid fire on the incoming enemy; a head injury didn't perturb him, he stuck to his assigned task till he was unconscious due to loss of blood and was only then evacuated.' Repeated attacks were beaten back, the heavy casualties inflicted held up the attack. These troops achieved their task to delay the enemy and as planned, pulled back to the defences on Point 405.

Soon, the next position at 'Tund' was under bi-directional attack. Major Pun-



Lt Col Rattan, in the middle with turban, and his team. Traditionally non-Sikh officers don the turban and may also grow a beard to merge identity with the Sikh troops.

jab Singh, the company commander, 'was the man of the moment; he quickly readjusted the defences and beat back the enemy on the first night. The next night, when the enemy returned, Punjab Singh had skillfully positioned the reinforcements and rushed forward.' Two junior leaders, Havildar Malkiat Singh and Naib Singh, need special mention who with disregard to their own safety struck the enemy where most wanted. The enemy withdrew, their bodies and weapons scattered all over. Desperate, the enemy sent in their Special Forces (SSG), who managed to come within 30-40 metres of Point 405, but were also forced back.

From December 3 till the dawn of December 7, on display was the true mettle of Lt Col (later Maj Gen) KL Rattan — 'unmindful of the heavy shelling and firing, he was present wherever an attack developed; with his skillful professionalism, he ensured the right moves, his hearty words kept the men in high morale and charged up throughout.' He was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra. His motivation energised Sepoy Safaiwala Mangat Ram, 'who without any fear or adversity continuously supplied ammunition to points under attack till his last breath, and was killed in the act.'

Five Vir Chakras were awarded to Maj Punjab Singh, Havildar Malkiat Singh, Sepoy Sampuran Singh, Naik Naib Singh and Sepoy Safaiwala Mangat Ram (the latter two were posthumous).

The defence of Poonch has gone down as one of the most successful defensive actions by a battalion; they were deservedly awarded the Battle Honour 'Defence of Poonch' and Theatre Honour 'Jammu and Kashmir'. After the war, special appreciation of outstanding valour displayed by an enemy soldier, identified as Lance Naik Noor Shahjahan, was conveyed to the enemy, which led to his being awarded the 'Sitar-e-Jurat,' the third highest Pakistani award for gallantry.

Protecting Chhamb-Jaurian

The Chhamb-Jaurian sector, west of Jammu bulging towards Pakistan, in military terms, is considered a 'soft belly' of the defences, as Pakistan has tremendous advantage which they have repeatedly exploited. 1971 was no different as Pakistan launched their major offensive here, aiming to capture Akhnoor and cut off the main Rajouri-Poonch axis. Pakistan employed its 23rd Infantry Division with five infantry brigades (15 battalions), three armoured regiments (approximately 150 tanks) and paramilitary forces.

5 Sikh went on to fight an epic defensive battle here.

MAHA VIR CHAKRA RECIPIENTS



Lt Col (later Maj Gen)
KL Rattan, MVC



Lt Col (later Maj Gen) PK
Khanna, MVC



Major (later Col) Jaivir
Singh, MVC

VIR CHAKRA AWARDDEES



Maj (later Col) Punjab
Singh, VrC



Naik Naib Singh, VrC
(Posthumous)



Major DS Pannu, VrC
(Posthumous)



Hav (Hony Capt) Malkiat
Singh, VrC



Sepoy (later Havildar)
Sampuran Singh, VrC



Sepoy Safaiwala Mangat
Ram, VrC (Posthumous)



The Tribune



THRUSTS REPULSED IN WEST: MANY PAK POSTS CAPTURED

FROM OUR STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JULLUNDUR, December 8 — The Indian Army captured two posts of Pakistan in the Partapur sector area, joining north of Ladakh, after inflicting heavy casualties today, according to a spokesman of the Western Command.

New Civilian Govt. Formed

The Indian Army further captured two posts in the Kargil sector, making a total of four posts captured in the sector. Indian Army units holding posts in the Meethar sector, Pak forces launched four attacks on our position but were beaten back. At 10.30 a.m. today, considering the number of Pak planes involved in the attack, our light machine-guns shot down one plane.

Earthquake-like, the ground shook on and around the Indian forward posts around 2100 hours on December 3 as

Pakistani artillery opened its barrage. The initial targets were our posts at Pir Jamal and Moel and by midnight, the

posts at Phagla, Mandiala and Point 303. These posts and Point 303 were under the command of Maj DS Pannu, an intrepid soldier and outstanding sportsman, with a special passion for riding. Like a true aggressive horseman, not caring for personal safety, he rushed to join his forward troops at Pir Jamal and Moel, which were soon under intense attack with tanks and infantry. The small Indian force beat back three attacks, which delayed the enemy for 16 hours and upset their overall plan.

The casualties were heavy, but Maj Pannu, with a handful of survivors, pulled back to his main position at Point 303, which too soon came under attack. The enemy was held up through December 4 and on the evening of December 5, Maj Pannu was killed. Point 303 fell for a short time, but the gallant Capt Kamal Bakshi rose to the occasion and counter-attacked; the post was regained but he went missing in action, reportedly killed. In the entire surroundings could be seen the bodies of enemy soldiers; two MMGs and 70 rifles were recovered.

Simultaneously, Phagla, some distance away, also came under heavy attack. The company was led by the dynamic Maj Jaivir Singh, who was at the forefront. The battle raged for 72 hours; repeated attacks were beaten back. The enemy managed penetration at one point, but 'Maj Jaivir Singh led a counter-attack, stiff hand-to-hand fighting followed, the enemy withdrew. If this was not enough, a nearby post overrun by the enemy was counter-attacked and regained'. The officers and troops were near exhaustion but the inspiring leadership of Lt Col Prem Khanna, 'whose cool calculated courage, skill and imaginative tactics ensured that incessant attacks by overwhelming numbers of infantry and armour were beaten back, his directions and personal touch ensured a high level of will of his men!'

5 Sikh lost two officers, a JCO and 39 other ranks but the enemy paid with 586 killed and a costly lesson in battling the Sikh troops. An issue of *Pak Defence Journal* in 1999 acknowledged 'the tenacious courage of 5 Sikh and troops of 9 Deccan Horse' and remarked, 'If the Indian commander now knows full details of what was coming for him on the morning of December 5, he can rightly congratulate the CO of 5 Sikh and the tank troop commander... they saved a sad day for him!'

5 Sikh was decorated with 'Theatre Honour Jammu & Kashmir', Lt Col Prem Khanna and Maj Jaivir Singh with the Maha Vir Chakra, and Maj DS Pannu and Naik Richpal Singh with Vir Chakra. Capt Bakshi was Mentioned in Dispatches.

If planning a house in pandemic, follow these tips

Constructing your dream home in the present times is likely to come with its share of problems as well as health safety concerns

JAGVIR GOYAL

THE second wave of Covid-19 has taken the country by storm. Death, destruction and despair are ruling the cities as new strains and initial vaccine hesitancy have added to the surging wave. Just like last year, many migrant labourers have already started going back to their hometowns. Under such circumstances, a house builder is likely to face many challenges while constructing the house. Here are some suggestions that need to be kept in mind when constructing a house in these tough times:

Ensure house plan approval

Be prepared for the delay in house plan approval but ensure it before beginning the construction work. Work from home is the new norm and house plan approvals may take more than normal time.

Procurement of material

One fear that constantly haunts the house builder is the likelihood of imposition of lockdowns, which can hamper the supply of construction material to the site. Therefore, the foremost task that needs to be taken care of is getting the estimated material requirement from an estimate provider and planning the supply to the site accordingly. It would be a good idea to tie up with the material suppliers

on phone, ordering and stacking basic material like cement, steel, bricks, sand, coarse aggregates, pipes and conduits required in the first two months at the site by making proper

arrangement for the storage. Ensure payment to suppliers through RTGS for unhindered supply of material. Plan for further requirement as well.

Water supply and electricity connections

The house builder should ensure provision of water supply and electricity connections to the house site by applying to the departments concerned. Ensure that electricity cables and water supply line to the house site are given enough earth cover to avoid any disruption in them due to the running of traffic on the road in front of house. No disruption in these two services can be allowed, nor expect immediate attending to a problem in these if a problem occurs. Better to ensure that there is a secure and foolproof provision.

Manpower vaccination

Enter a new clause in the agreement with working gang contractors that only those workers shall be hired who have undergone vaccination. Vaccine hesitancy is now over, yet vaccination may take time to reach villages, remote areas and labour class. Therefore, ensuring this agreement may be in writing or verbally will help in non-occurrence of spread of infection at house site.

Thermal screening

To avoid spread of viral infection, the house builder should hire a guard at the entry of house who should do thermal screening of anyone entering the site premises. Anyone having fever shouldn't be allowed to enter the site.

Labour huts

An essential requirement in these times will be to create labour huts for work-



Make sure that the workers wear masks and their thermal screening is done, besides adequate arrangements for washing of hands. PTI & ISTOCK



ers engaged at house site. Normally, a house builder doesn't provide such huts but to avoid disruption in work during the pandemic, worker availability near the house site will be highly beneficial. Work out a mutual agreement with the labour contractor by sharing the expenditure on huts. Once the first floor RCC slab is laid, some of workers can move inside the structure and the number of huts can be reduced.

Hand washing & toilet arrangements

The house builder should resolve to spend extra in providing proper toilet facilities and a hand washing sta-

tion for the workers. This will ultimately help in avoiding workers from getting infected and spreading the disease.

Follow SOPs issued by the govt

During the pandemic, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are issued by the government from time to time. The house builder must go through these as following the SOPs is mandatory.

Woodwork workshop

Once the house plans are ready, the house builder should procure seasoned wood of desired quality and choose a woodwork yard for carpenters to work on it. The yard may be available at carpenters' premises or a safe space can be hired on rent for it. Let woodwork continue as a parallel activity. Once the walls are erected, the carpenters can visit the site to have actual measurements and assemble door and window frames and shutters accordingly.

Tie up with shuttering team

Scaffolding and shuttering can be in a labour contractor's scope. Otherwise, tie up with their supplier for timely supply of shuttering plates, pipes, concrete mixer, vibrators and other items on rent when required.

Have patience

Some delays in construction are obvious under these circumstances. Production is down and material supplies too may get delayed due to frequent lockdowns. Have patience to accommodate such delays.

Enduring legacy of Begum Akhtar

SHAILAJA KHANNA

ONE of the most iconic, trend-setting singers of our times, Begum Akhtar was in equal parts enigmatic and receptive to inputs about her craft. "Akhtari" comprises a series of essays by eminent writers and artistes, including Saleem Kidwai, Sheila Dhar, Yatinra Mishra (who has also edited the book), Shubha Mudgal, Sunita Budhiraj and Aneesh Pradhan, on the life and times of Begum Akhtar, initially famous as Akhtari Bai Faizabadi. As historian Kidwai puts it, "Begum Akhtar gave the ghazal an identity and respectability by adding the dimension of singing to it."

Born in 1914, she recorded her first 78 rpm disc when she was only 13; by the mid-1930s, she was a rising star in the music circuit, performed in plays in Calcutta, and after that acted in films. However, she realised films were not really her métier, and singing was also more lucrative. So, she shifted back to Lucknow, creating an elegant base for herself.

As Kidwai says "There came a time when every poet, expert or novice, yearned for Begum Akhtar to sing his creation. With complete command over her musical idiom, she inflected nuances into the love



For her countless fans, Begum Akhtar had a unique magic 'that nothing can explain'. PTI

poems that might have surprised and delighted the poets themselves."

It was also the city of Lucknow that allowed her to transform from "a seductive Bai into a respectable Begum". Her marriage to Barrister Ishraq Ahmed Abbasi from the aristocratic family of Kakori gave her an entry into a world she had hitherto only entertained from the outside. But it was not easy—in the words of Abbasi, "For six months, Lucknow talked of nothing else." Marriage brought

its own problems; as she put it, "I was the daughter-in-law of that house. I would shrink every time I heard my records play anywhere. My voice was my biggest treasure and now that was scaring me."

The essays paint a picture of a fascinating person. Incredibly generous, she used to invite patrons to her house; unusually, she even gave them presents rather than the other way round. Kidwai mentions that she gifted the Nawab of Rampur's son an expensive car! Mishra writes how,

when she was leaving Faizabad in the 1930s, she returned the 50 or so acres that the ruler had presented her. Another interesting anecdote is her presenting a life-sized mirror from her home to her fan, the ruler of Bauri, as he had admired it!

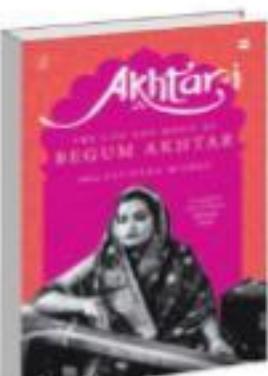
On her art, Dhar puts it: "Akhtari Bai sang the ghazal with such insight and sensitivity she created a new area where poetry and music were simultaneously enhanced. She flowered into almost a cult figure, an ideal figure invested with such charm and charisma, an entire generation of women passionately wished to emulate her." The Princess of Bhopal, Hyderabad, Rampur, Kashmir and Ayodhya gave her the status of court singer, not a small achievement.

Great musicians like Pt Jasraj took to singing because of the magic of her voice; even Pt Hari Prasad Chaurasia apparently was besotted with her as a child! Lata Mangeshkar shared that in the mid-1940s, she requested that a ghazal of Begum Akhtar be played on AIR's "Apki Farmaish"; "I am being honest when I say the thrill of listening to my name with Begum Akhtar's ghazal has been unmatched."

As Dhar points out, there were many other singers as gifted, as well trained, with larger repertoires, wider voice range, and were possibly more hard-working; but Begum Akhtar had a unique magic "that nothing can explain". Tabla exponent Aneesh Pradhan quotes the singer herself trying to explain that special "taaseer" her voice had, as being due to "sur kee sacchaayee", or perfect pitch. Vocalist Shruti Sadolikar quotes Begum Akhtar as saying "it is important to have that pain inside you. When that pain is a part of you, you can convey whatever you want, and it will be effective. It is with pain that music is enriched".

She sought refinement in everything in life. Dhar remembers an incident when she was genuinely pained that an organizer thrust her fees into her hands, not even bothering to put the notes in an envelope.

Some of the essays are merely personal recollections, and there is also a lot of repetition of material which could have been avoided. Perhaps the most interesting parts of the book are the memories of her disciples Shanti Hiranand and Rita Ganguli, and her own interview with Acharya Brihaspati. The comprehensive discography will delight her diehard fans.



AKHTARI
edited by Yatinra Mishra.
translated from Hindi by Maneesha Taneja.
HarperCollins.
Pages 272.
₹699

Treasure trove of tales from green

ROHIT MAHAJAN

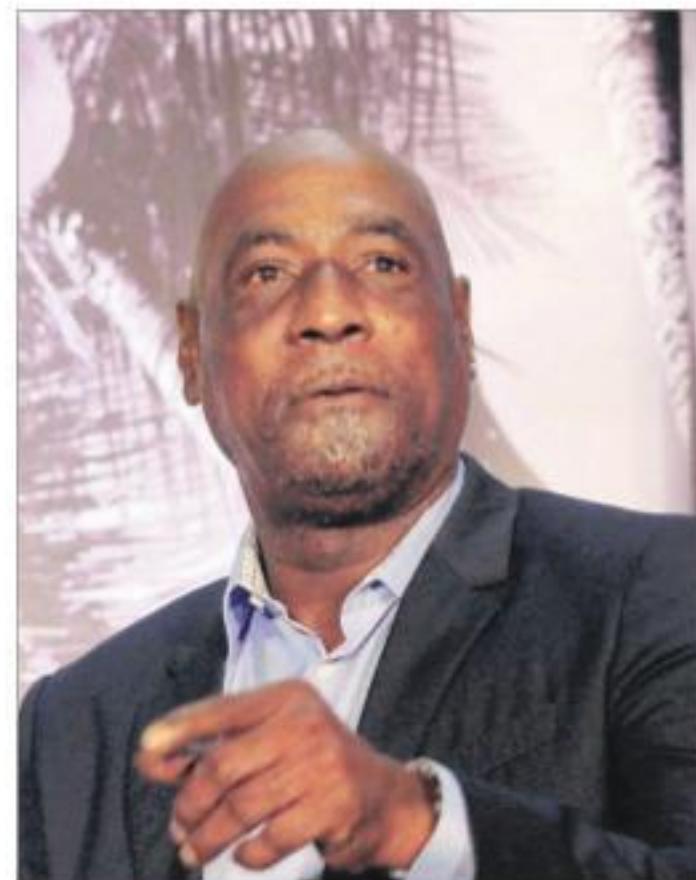
VIV RICHARDS, probably the most fearsome destructor of bowlers, trusted God to protect his head from the hard red ball hurled at him by fast bowlers. In an interview in 2013, he talked about playing for his team, West Indies, in nearly spiritual tones: "I don't think I would have done that cap any justice if I had anything else on the head... I felt God will protect me from whatever I was facing out in the middle."

It seems that Richards didn't trust God and his cap completely — at least not when he was donning the cap of a team in Australia or England. Gulu Ezekiel writes that the great West Indian occasionally did come to the conclusion that, just in case God decided to forsake him, a helmet might be useful to protect his skull.

Richards was lucky he never had to face the scary West Indian fast bowlers in international cricket; in domestic competition, he averaged 27.32 against Barbados and Jamaica, the best fast bowling teams in the West Indies, with only one 100 in 24 innings.

There is circumstantial evidence, writes Ezekiel, that Richards did don the helmet when playing in Kerry Packer's World Series Cricket (WSC) in the late 1970s. The series had several fast bowlers Richards had to face. After extensive research, Ezekiel writes, he found one photograph of Richards in a helmet — "in the nets during the second season of WSC (1977-78)".

Ezekiel thinks a blow to the head from Greg Chappell — of all people! — in 1978 may have made Richards aware of the softness of his head and the absenteeism of God in cricketing matters. Ezekiel also quotes an interview of English cricketer Pat Pocock, who says: "Viv Richards says he didn't wear a helmet. He bloody did: he wore one twice against Surrey when Clarke was playing. Fearsome, fearsome bowler." This Clarke is none other than the legendary Barbadian Sylvester Clarke — who died aged only 44 in



Did Viv Richards ever don a helmet? 'Mankading' generated a row, but why? Did Salim Durani really hit sixers on demand? Was the famous Madras tied Test of 1986 really tied? Gulu Ezekiel tackles cricketing myths, and busts them

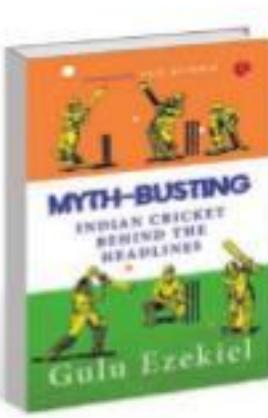
1999 — who is considered as the meanest and scariest of all fast bowlers. Pocock says even Richards was wary of him. In short, the fearsome Richards was not fearless.

The great Vinoo Mankad's family has ceaselessly tried to get the term "Mankading" erased from cricketing vocabulary. Running a batsman out while he's backing up too far at the non-striker's end continues to arouse passions. Mankading has long been a legal mode of dismissal; it's only in recent years that the MCC, the custodian of cricket's laws, has tried to remove stigma from it — now the laws state

Dam scheme, and on the other he wanted to bring down the water charges by nationalising these in accordance with the agricultural process, and removing corruption and inefficiency in the irrigation department. Bhakra was conceived as a water storage project, without any idea of generating power. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, referred to the project many times in his speeches during 1916-19, and declared at the Rohtak Darbar held in his honour that the forests of Hisar and Rohtak would be turned into smiling fields. It is another matter that it took decades for the project to become a reality.

Well researched, easy to read, packed with facts, the book is a veritable source of information and takes a holistic view of what agriculture and the processes associated with it meant for those living in the region before Partition, and how it was viewed by those ruling the country.

Care has been taken to explain the terminology in use and give a background. The book by Dr Mahender Singh, who incidentally is a student and teacher of history, is a welcome addition to other works on the subject and the region. — TNS



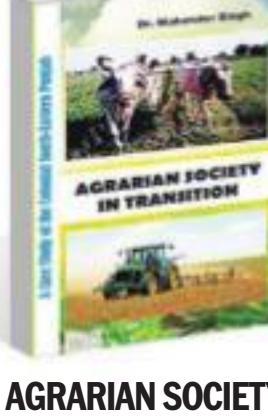
MYTH-BUSTING INDIAN CRICKET BEHIND THE HEADLINES
by Gulu Ezekiel.
Rupa.
Pages 264.
₹295

Farming in region, before '47

AGRICULTURE has been the principal occupation of the Indian people, points out the author, Dr Mahender Singh, as he attempts to focus on agriculture of the south-eastern part of Punjab province between 1858 and 1947 in his book 'Agrarian Society in Transition: A Case Study of the Colonial South-Eastern Punjab'.

The study includes the districts of Ambala, Karnal, Hisar, Rohtak and Gurgaon; the area of these five districts of the British time, he writes, forms 22 districts of Haryana. The in-depth study looks at various aspects of farming, land revenue, irrigation, cultivated land, crops and sowing patterns, agriculture machinery, demographics, rural wages, forms of rent, the village life, even the kind of food eaten.

The book is replete with interesting insights. Like how Sir Chhotu Ram had a broad-based irrigation policy on his mind. On the one hand he wanted execution of a number of major and minor irrigation projects, ranging from tubewells, non-perennial canals to hydro-electric projects like the Bhakra



AGRARIAN SOCIETY IN TRANSITION
by Dr Mahender Singh.
Writers Choice.
Pages 299.
₹875

scheme, and on the other he wanted to bring down the water charges by nationalising these in accordance with the agricultural process, and removing corruption and inefficiency in the irrigation department.

Bhakra was conceived as a water storage project, without any idea of generating power. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, referred to the project many times in his speeches during 1916-19, and declared at the Rohtak Darbar held in his honour that the forests of Hisar and Rohtak would be turned into smiling fields. It is another matter that it took decades for the project to become a reality.

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Quest to demystify life's gamut

CHANDNI S. CHANDEL

FEMINISM is one of the most over-rated topics in panel discussions, protests, drawing room conversations. Krupa Ge's book, as the name 'What We Know About Her' suggests, may give a premonition of sorts regarding its content. But how she treats the subject of womanhood is far from sermonising.

The story is about a young researcher, Yamuna, who has a mind of her own, and stuck on her idiosyncrasies, wanders around to uncover her maternal family's secrets which nobody, from her mother to aunt to grandfather who are in different ages and stages of life, wants to talk about. In the quest to find answers to her questions, she learns the deep secrets of life which usually dawn with age.

It's not always about equality with men that women want to talk about. Womanhood has been given the respect which not everybody acknowledges. The story gives an insight into how marriageable age

has evolved, how a suppressed woman's thoughts take wings; how women, who constantly have young girls on their radar of criticism, impose their own beliefs through their behaviour. It explores the 'rhythm' in our everyday lives which tends to make us bear every wrong and every right as part of our destiny.

The most impressionable character is her maternal grandfather towards whom not just Yamuna but the reader also feels the warmth of a family elder. Every family generally has enigmatic characters like her revolutionary maternal grand-aunt Lalitha, whose lifestyle most people would envy but were they to live through it, they would have given up on life.

The book brings you face to face with the vicissitudes of life — women facing lewd situations in overcrowded buses; the adrenaline rush youngsters feel in the presence of the opposite sex; feeling sorry for old people when youngsters make the vanishing act.

The story talks about the relation-

ship of the mother-daughter duo and how generally a young daughter never sees her mirror image in her mother, but could actually be one.

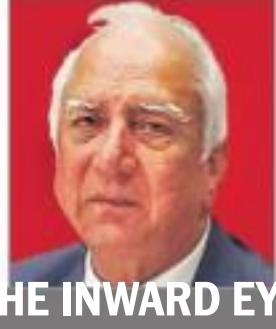
Music and old letters help weave the story and are in sync with the story-telling format. The author has been able to maintain the suspense of the life-shattering letter which she had been looking for, but fails to impress at the end with any explosive revelation. There are a few loose ends — how did Lalitha die, where did the atypical smell emanate from the house which everybody else except Yamuna had the laboratory for?

The story is open-ended with no 'lived happily ever' ending which we usually see in Indian films and novels. Life's lessons have been replicated in a soul-stirring way; it might instill an urge to be closer to your parents, grandparents, relatives by the time you finish reading the book.



WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HER
by Krupa Ge.
Westland.
Pages 204.
₹499

Good governance, RIP



THE INWARD EYE

GURBACHAN JAGAT

There is one main reason for this tragedy — 'hubris' from the top to the bottom rung. Top ministers ridiculed the Opposition and in spite of repeated warnings from various quarters that a second wave would come soon and would be a more virulent one, state after state started dismantling its anti-Covid infrastructure. The Centre had no national plan in place. We should learn our lessons and take corrective steps as there is already talk of third and fourth waves.



Both at the Centre and in the states, responsibility should be fixed, especially in the departments concerned, and action taken against bureaucrats, politicians. PTI

ICAME across the following few lines and reproduce them here because they neatly sum up the situation in our country today:

*"Baazarkhali, Sadke sooni, Mohalle viran hain,
Khauf barpa hai har taraf,
Log hairan hain,
Yeh woh khauf hai,
Jo dunya ko darane aaya hai,
Itihas gawah hai,
Ki yeh masla bhi sulajh jayega"*

Not great poetry but it sums up today's reality neatly and also concludes on a positive note. How did we reach this situation in such a short time and how have we been caught with our pants down a second time? The first wave was not a very virulent one and we fought it successfully with our limited infrastructure. There has been plenty of coverage of what went wrong with the second wave and I do not want to repeat it.

However, there is one main reason for this tragedy — 'hubris' from the top to the bottom rung. The leadership was in a self-congratulatory mode and paeans were being sung in praise. The ruling BJP's February 2021 political resolution states that India had 'set an example in front of the world for what work can be done during Covid'. We claimed that we were on the verge of producing vaccines that would help the whole world. We had the highest capacity to manufacture vaccines developed by other countries and we could supply them to the rest of the world. Our External Affairs Minister told the western countries' media that India would not run on the dictates of a few western newspapers and we would 'push back' if any governments tried to push us. We upped our claims to being the new economic powerhouse and also the 'vishwa guru'. We boasted of our military power as exhibited by our stopping of the Chinese in their tracks — the jury's still out on that one. Top ministers and politicians of our ruling party ridiculed the Opposition, so much so that the Union Health Minister had the audacity to write an insulting reply to the former PM Dr Manmohan Singh's letter making some suggestions. The short point is that euphoria prevailed, and hubris hit our leadership.

In spite of repeated warnings from various quarters that a second wave

would come soon and would be a more virulent one, state after state started dismantling its anti-Covid infrastructure. On April 26, *The Indian Express*' front-page story narrated this in detail: Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Bihar, etc, started dismantling the additional infrastructure early this year in the mistaken belief that the pandemic was coming to an end. Makeshift hospitals were folded up, contract health staff were laid off and little effort was made to ramp up critical health infrastructure like ventilators, medical oxygen, ICU beds, staff and additional temporary hospitals. The states should also have made independent plans to meet the next wave — after all, health is a state subject. The Centre should have drawn a national plan to meet all kinds of demands of technical equipment and other infrastructure, especially since they are controlling the vaccine rollout and the states have become totally dependent financially on the Centre.

The Centre's allocation for the health department has always been low, even in the last budget it was a mere 2 per cent. As the tsunami hit the country, the states started making huge demands but critical things like oxygen, ventilators, vaccines, etc, were not available with the Centre because there was no national plan in place. We did have vaccines but, in our over-confidence, and in the exercise of vaccine diplomacy, we gave away a lot of these to other countries, courtesy the MEA's aggressive diplomacy. Having claimed a superior pandemic response than the rest of the world and after proclaiming victory, we are today forced to seek

help from other countries, who were initially cold in their response but have now warmed up and are sending help. The western press also went after our leadership (especially our PM) hammer and tongs and depicted us in a very poor light. It never pays to disparage respected media giants; no need to kowtow to them but no need to needle them either.

Meanwhile, the pandemic surges ahead with no signs of tapering off. We should learn our lessons and take corrective steps as there is already talk of third and fourth waves. We are currently facing a very tough situation and should step up our preparation. Manufacture what we can, import what we have to, add staff where needed, etc. The Centre and the states should take this opportunity to upgrade the entire health infrastructure of the country. As it is, the poor are always demanding better healthcare and educational facilities for their children. The Centre can be more liberal in giving financial help to the states for this purpose and avoid wasteful expenditure on self-aggrandisement such as statues and vistas which have no immediate utility in the war against the pandemic.

Coming to the question of responsibility and accountability, I have not read anything in this regard. This is a very crucial issue as it has resulted in massive loss of life and hospitalisation of lakhs of people in urban areas (the rural countryside data is sparse). I have missed seeing any photographs of top political leaders visiting hospitals and affected areas. Most of these ladies and gentlemen have been fully vaccinated on a priority basis and they can wear masks and PPEs to visit the hospitals and raise the morale of the

staff and patients. One has not heard from the Union Health Minister except for his response to Dr Manmohan Singh. When the going was good in the beginning, the bureaucrats of the Health Ministry were on TV daily to give briefings on Covid; however, they have been conspicuous by their absence in the face of the second wave, especially on the frontline where we have seen horrific sites of our citizens lying on roadsides and outside hospitals and crematoriums. Even the Health Minister, a doctor himself, has only rarely stepped out. I would have expected all MPs to go to their constituencies and look into the welfare of their citizens.

Similarly, the responsibility of the states is even greater. The Chief Ministers, Ministers and MLAs should have been in the field in their areas. The bureaucrats in the Secretariat, and the DMs/SPs should have been moving around in their areas. I fail to understand as to what they are doing in their state or district headquarters. If they are not with their people in their difficult times, will they appear only during elections? Another very big segment that could have been mobilised is the workers and cadres of all political parties. The BJP/RSS have the largest, most disciplined cadre which could have been used, but unfortunately one hears the priority for their services was the election in West Bengal. This is applicable to the other parties as well.

Last but not least, both at the Centre and in the states, responsibility should be fixed, especially in the departments concerned and action taken against bureaucrats, politicians, etc. A message should go out to everyone that this "sab chalta hai" attitude is no longer acceptable, and heads will roll. A calamity of this scale has happened because of criminal negligence of the Centre and the states, and they should be called to the bar of accountability. As far as our country's leadership is concerned, I leave you with an old quotation of Shahab Jafari:

*"Tu idhar udhar ki na baat kar
Yeh bata ke kafila kyun luta
Mujhe rahzana se gila nahi,
Teri rehbari ka sawala hai!"*

— The writer is ex-chairman of UPSC, former Manipur Governor and served as J&K DGP

Ray of hope



TOUCHSTONES

IRA PANDE

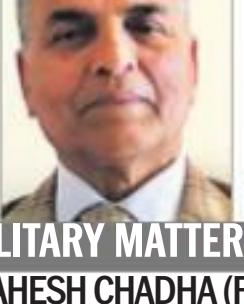
spectator — whether he was from Punjab, the far south or Maharashtra — Ray's films did not present characters that were tied to a narrow parochial world. His characters spoke to us all equally. Every gust of breeze, every patter of raindrops in his films touched us all with the same intensity. The men and women we saw in his films had faces that we knew and empathised with because their wrinkles were etched with our pain.'

Titled 'Amader Shantiniketan', the book is finally ready for release on May 20 except that in these Covid times, it will be all done virtually. It's a slim book but gives us a picture of a Bengal that has all but vanished. At a time when this beautiful land has been reduced to a war zone and the legacy of its great writers and artists has sadly become a game of political football, it is vital that we remember the first flush of the great Bengal renaissance, ushered in by Tagore in his ashram. What is more, it illustrates how a simple lifestyle and a liberal institution where classes were held under an open sky, its wise gurus and the overarching presence of Tagore himself changed the lives of generations of students.

I did not realise it then but I am told that this is also the centenary of Visva-Bharati, the university that Tagore set up. So, I am happy that the karma of the book has led it to be published now, even though it was written some 60 years ago, when some of its most important lessons need to be remembered and inculcated into our dying school system. Many have written of Tagore as a poet, musician, nationalist and artist but we must always remember why Mahatma Gandhi called him Gurudev: a wise teacher. His love for children and his unerring understanding of how to mould young minds into realising their potential was his lasting gift to all those who passed through his ashram.

Let me also say how once again this country has shown us how in times of a crisis, it is the ordinary people, and communities such as our redoubtable Sikhs, who have provided help and succour to those whom the government has left to fend for themselves. Oxygen langars! Can any other country match the ingenuity of our gurdwaras where the sangat devised a novel way of providing oxygen through pipes that were set up as lifelines overnight? As far as I am concerned, this is what makes religion meaningful.

Mapping the captured Pak territory



MILITARY MATTERS

COL MAHESH CHADHA (RETD)

As I crossed the Sambharly station in 1972, I was welcomed by an Army board, 'Bash on regardless...'; since I was born in Lyallpur, there was a bit of nostalgia

IN June 1972, posted on the staff of the strike corps which had captured a vast territory in the Shakargarh bulge, the Chief of Staff tasked me with taking photographs of the entire area. Not that I was an established lensman, but such an expert was not available near

Sambharly station, I was welcomed by a board, 'Bash on regardless, you are entering the captured territory of Pakistan, kind courtesy Golden Hawk/Bison (insignia of 36 and 54 Infantry Divisions, respectively)'. My chest puffed up, after all I was a victor driving through the land which my ancestors once called home since I was born at Lyallpur. Moreover, this was the area where in 1965, a Param Vir Chakra was won by Lt Col Tarapore and in 1971 by Major Hoshiar Singh and 2/Lt Arun Khetarpal.

The land appeared similar but barren as the trees had been cut. There were crops of wheat and sugarcane, some mowed down by assaulting infantry, some still standing and elsewhere burnt due to shelling by artillery and armour. The scent in

divisions of the strike corps had advanced and launched successful operations one after the other, striking deep into the hinterland of Pakistan.

As I crossed the Sambharly railway station, I was welcomed by a board, 'Bash on regardless, you are entering the captured territory of Pakistan, kind courtesy Golden Hawk/Bison (insignia of 36 and 54 Infantry Divisions, respectively)'. My chest puffed up, after all I was a victor driving through the land which my ancestors once called home since I was born at Lyallpur. Moreover, this was the area where in 1965, a Param Vir Chakra was won by Lt Col Tarapore and in 1971 by Major Hoshiar Singh and 2/Lt Arun Khetarpal.

The villages were deserted though, houses and shops locked, schools and masjids shut. All over, there was devastation — it was a pathetic scene. The villagers were yet to return as military experts were negotiating modalities of a pullback and restoration of each other's gains and losses at Suchetgarh.

Not to be nostalgic, my mandate was to record and take photographs of areas that were tactically important — the profile of the terrain, weather, marshes, wild growth, natural obstacles, crossing places and bridges across the rivers and nullahs, the flood-prone spots and the anti-flood bundhs, built-up areas, etc. Over one week or so after walking through such tracts day and night, we were able to

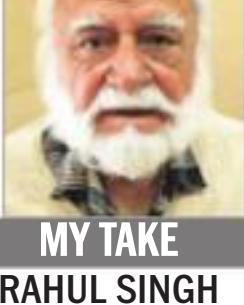
make many a mosaic and submitted it to the Chief of Staff.

Fifty years later, as I look back, the panorama appears different. Surely Pakistan would have built roads over the brick-lined ones made by our Engineers, drunk water from the wells, prayed at the masjids, studied at the schools and lived in houses renovated by our troops.

But the enemy in Pakistan, while not acknowledging the benevolence, continues to invest in a dangerous strategy, that too at its own peril — be it the Kargil misadventure, terror influx in the Valley, Mumbai siege, attacking the Pathankot airfield; and not even learning from the strike at Balakot.

May sense prevail, and though it could be wishful thinking, as the pandemic teaches us new lessons of survival as also how fickle human life can be, one can only hope that the two neighbours embark on a path of harmony and co-existence.

Keep govt out, what social media needs is self-regulation



MY TAKE

RAHUL SINGH

The sooner the main stakeholders get together and formulate ways to keep the negative aspects out while retaining the positive, the better

ALL governments, even the most democratic and transparent, have a sneaky side to them. When the situation gets uncomfortable, instead of coming out clean, they often try to fool the public by slyly sneaking in a concocted excuse. A few days ago, social media platforms were ordered to remove over a hundred posts. Most of them were on Twitter and Facebook. Did they contain "fake news" or pornography? No, they related to what is of paramount concern to the entire country, which is the mishandling by the government of the second — and much worse — wave of the pandemic.

It seems only the other day that the Prime Minister and the inept Union Health Minister were patting themselves on the back for having got the better of the Covid-19 virus. Then came the tsunami of tens of thousands of new infections, the shortage of life-saving oxygen, and of hospital beds. Meanwhile, election rallies and religious gatherings of lakhs of people continued, unhindered and unmindful of social distancing and the need to wear masks. All this was reported by the

media and shown on the screen. But it was the social media, those with their "smart" phones, who went to the crematoriums, to hospitals, and to homes, that brought the unfolding tragedy into the consciousness of millions, here and abroad. The official figures of those infected, as well as the number of deaths, were hugely "under-reported", it turns out. Heart-rending images of car parks, and even public roads, being used to cremate the dead filled the screens of many cell phones.

The conclusion was inescapable. The government bungled badly and the pathetic public health infrastructure simply could not cope. The authorities could do little against the reports of major papers and TV channels, but they could act against the social media, which is exactly what they have done. As I write this comes the news that Facebook blocked all posts that were tagged "Resign Modi", before restoring these hours later. Was Facebook pressured by the government to do the initial blocking? Facebook has denied it, saying rather lamely that it was a "mistake". Make what you like of that admission.

Nevertheless, much the same reasons were given by the government as had been given earlier for the removal of Twitter posts. This was done, officials said, to "prevent obstructions" in the fight against the pandemic and escalation of crimes against public order. So, Facebook was obstructing the fight against the pandemic and also posing a threat to law and order? Make what you like of that accusation as well. The blocking was ordered by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meit), on the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This is nothing but sly censorship of the social media. I believe it is the sinister shape of things to come.

For a fuller understanding of what is really going on, we need to go back to February 25 this year, when the same Meit and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting jointly released "Information Technology (Guidelines for International and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021". Looked at closely, they are a cleverly disguised code for censoring the social media. The "Rules" must have been in the making for a long time. They

were presented as a fait accompli, without even Parliament having been taken into confidence. The irony is that the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party has been the main beneficiary of the social media. Its IT cell used it to great effect in the 2014 General Election. But the Congress seems to have got its act together and is now not too far behind. Clearly, the BJP feels that it needs to retain its hold on the social media by enforcing these self-made new "Rules". And incredibly, these are meant to be implemented by "mid-May", which means in the next few days! They must be resisted by all those who value freedom of speech and expression.

The power and influence of the social media has grown exponentially in recent years. There are an estimated 70 crore Indians who use the Internet and at least 30 crore who also have smartphones. They get most of their information from Facebook, WhatsApp, Google, YouTube, Twitter, and the like, which are also used as a means of communication. Then, there are news portals which tend to be more outspoken than the major TV channels. Critics of the government are gravitating towards them,

after being squeezed out of the more established channels. These portals, too, are under threat from the "Rules".

Needless to say, the social media has its detractors, mainly those who feel it spreads "fake news" and carries material disturbing for young, impressionable minds. But the good it has done far outweighs the harm. The pandemic created a dangerous void for schools and colleges. Fortunately, it was filled by online classes and teaching. Without that, our education system would have been in a limbo. The choking to death of George Floyd by a policeman was filmed by a teenager on her cell phone. That provided clinching evidence for the conviction of the policeman. These are just two telling instances. Let's be clear, the social media is here to stay with us in a big way. We don't need the government to regulate it with any kind of "Rules". That is the sure road to censorship. What is needed is self-regulation. The sooner the main stakeholders get together and formulate ways to keep the negative aspects out while retaining the positive, the better. But keep the government at a safe distance.

— The writer is a veteran journalist

1st lot of 1.5L Sputnik V doses arrives

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, MAY 1 The first batch of 1.5 lakh doses of Russia-made Covid vaccine Sputnik V arrived in India today with another 30 lakh doses expected by May-end. The doses were moved through customs speedily after these landed in Hyderabad for delivery to Dr Reddy's Labs, the Indian partners of the Russian Gamaleya Institute, the makers of the vaccine.

These will be sent to Dr Reddy's Lab, which will start its distribution after mandatory domestic regulatory approvals. The vaccine stocks will first have to be cleared for distribution by the Central Drug Laboratory, Kasauli. Local production of Sputnik V is expected to be augmented to 850 million doses a year gradually.

MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: "Sputnik V vaccine arrives in



GLOBAL RESPONSE: Medical supplies being loaded onto a cargo plane to India. REUTERS

'DEEPLY VALUE RUSSIA'S SUPPORT'

Sputnik V vaccine arrives in Hyderabad from Russia! Will add to India's arsenal to fight the pandemic. This is the first consignment of 1.5 lakh doses of Sputnik V vaccine with millions of doses to follow. Deeply value support from long-standing friend Russia. Arindam Bagchi, MEA SPOKESPERSON

Hyderabad from Russia! Will add to India's arsenal to fight the pandemic. This third

option will augment our vaccine capacity and accelerate our vaccination drive. This is

the first consignment of 1.5 lakh doses of Sputnik V vaccine with millions of doses to

follow. Plans to 'Make in India' for use in India, Russia and 3rd countries. Deeply value support from long-standing friend Russia. Over a decade of India-Russia special and privileged strategic partnership." Russian Ambassador to India Nikolay Kudashev also tweeted: "Happy to share that the first batch of the Sputnik V vaccine delivered in Hyderabad! As Russia India continue dedicated joint efforts to combat the Covid-19, this move is especially important to support the Indian Government's endeavors to mitigate deadly 2nd wave & save lives." Kudashev said the efficacy of Sputnik V was among the highest in the world and this vaccine would also be effective against new strains of Covid.

"Its local production is about to start soon and is planned to be gradually increased up to 850 million doses per year," Kudashev said. The vaccine had posted nearly 92 per cent efficacy, which means it offers 92 per cent chances of disease reduction in those who accept it.

SREEVALSAN THIYADI

ONE trend that veteran Debu Chaudhuri particularly disliked about contemporary Hindustani music was of sitarists swaying the instrument even during meditative moments. "Ye kya hota hai," he would ask, contemptuously imitating the showmanship with a carefree throw of the right hand after plucking a critical note. The demonstration of the "despicable" act amounted to a tacit salute of his beloved guru.

"Our system doesn't permit such indiscipline. My teacher used to be very particular about us never swinging the sitar," the Padma Bhushan awardee would say, referring to Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan (1911-89).

Pride bordering on cockiness distinguished Chaudhuri, who died in Delhi on Saturday amid dementia complicated by Covid-19.

A steady sitar was least the hallmark of Chaudhuri's school. True, Khan sahib styled himself primarily on celebrated Senia gharana, but a ring of austerity defined his artistry. So focal was the Spartan purity of the sound that ornamentation became secondary. Often it looked like the ustad was playing the weighty rudra vina known for its gravitas, old-timers say.

OBITUARY
Debu Chaudhuri (1935-2021)

Stickler for Spartan tradition



The guru was uncompromising in his sitar-playing techniques

Chaudhuri into sitar and soon Khan sahib groomed him in higher music studies as a college-goer in Kolkata. The new master prompted him to start from scratch, following which the teenager consistently topped university-level music competitions.

Into the 1950s, Chaudhuri continued to struggle amid the rise of titans Ravi Shankar and Vilayat Khan.

In 1960, he shifted to the national capital after Delhi University started a music department. He joined there and taught sitar four decades, also guiding PhD aspirants.

Gwalior gharana vocalist Laxman Krishnrao Pandit describes Chaudhuri as a paramparawadi—a stickler for tradition. "He was uncompromising and always sought to nurture that trait in the new practitioners," the octogenarian adds. The sitarist, with assistance from his instrumentalist son Prateek Chaudhuri, founded the UMAK Centre for Culture in 1993, nurturing youngsters. Khayal vocalist Tejal Singh saw an "ideal tutor" in late Chaudhuri. "His alaap would stem from a deep understanding of the raga," he says about the instrumentalist, who had to his credit a day-long CD series of 24 ragas spanning an hour each. Chaudhuri came up with eight ragas and half-a-dozen books on music.

UP panchayat poll: SC nod to counting of votes

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

The SC on Saturday gave its nod for counting of votes in the gram panchayat polls in Uttar Pradesh scheduled for Sunday, subject to strict compliance of Covid protocols. A Bench led by Justice AM Khanwilkar—which held a special hearing on Saturday—rejected petitions seeking to stay the counting of votes. The Bench said only those candidates and their representatives would be allowed to enter counting centres who had Covid negative reports.

Petitioners had cited the Covid pandemic and death of nearly 700 teachers involved in the panchayat poll process.

The Bench allowed counting based on "solemn assurances" given by the EC. —TNS



A distressed relative of a Covid-19 patient in New Delhi. PTI

Provide 150 ventilators at ITBP centre: PMO

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Saturday directed the Union Health Ministry to provide 150 ventilators to Sardar Patel Covid Care Centre (SPCCC) in the city's south Delhi-based Chhatarpur area.

In a letter to Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHF), Mandeep Bhandari, Prime Minister's Adviser Bhaskar Kulbe said: "As discussed with you, 150 ventilators provided under PM CARES Trust Fund, and embedded with GPS enabled devices, may be provided from the available stock on loan basis for a period of six months now, which, if necessary, may be extended further on review." "I also request you

30 nitrogen plants to produce medical O₂

to organise immediate installation of these ventilators by the selected vendors (s)." Kulbe also said to advise SPCCC for the site preparation and necessary training of these ventilators by the selected vendors.

The PMO intervention comes after a request made by the ITBP Director-General, SS Deswal, seeking allocation of 150 ventilators for addressing the needs of critical patients admitted to the SPCCC. The SPCCC was reopened on April 26 with 500 beds but no arrangements were made for critical patients. —TNS

Tribune News Service

CONTRACTED COVID

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1 Former General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command, Lt Gen GS Grewal, passed away at Army's Base Hospital in New Delhi today at the age of 86. He had reportedly contracted Covid-19.

An Armoured Corps officer, he was commissioned into

Western Army Commander from July 1, 1990 to July 31, 1992, during which he oversaw 'Operation Rakshak,' the Army's deployment for counter-terrorism in Punjab.

Popularly known as "Goody Grewal," he was considered an outstanding commander. He is survived by his 35-year-old son Simranjeet Singh. His wife had passed away on April 13.

Ex-chief of Western Command dies

Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH, MAY 1 Former General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command, Lt Gen GS Grewal, had reportedly contracted Covid-19

One Horse (Skinner's Horse), one of the Army's oldest cavalry regiments. He served as the

MISSION FATEH
 Initiative of Government of Punjab for fighting COVID
COVID-19 BED AVAILABILITY IN GOVT. & PRIVATE HOSPITALS

	OXYGEN BEDS		ICU BEDS	
	Total	Available	Total	Available
Government Hospitals	4202	2839	608	38
Private Hospitals	4854	1511	1518	243
Total (Govt. + Pvt.)	9056	4350	2126	281

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, PUNJAB

For queries regarding latest Bed Availability USE COVA APP OR CALL 104 MEDICAL HELPLINE

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of passengers that due to poor patronization, Railway's have decided to cancel the following special train services till further advise as per details given below:-

CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS	
Train No. & Name	Date from Cancellation
09047 Bandra Terminus-Hazrat Nizamuddin Yuva Special	07.05.2021 to till further advice
09048 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Bandra Terminus Yuva Special	08.05.2021 to till further advice
09241 Indore Jn.-Udhampur Special	03.05.2021 to till further advice
09242 Udhampur-Indore Jn. Special	05.05.2021 to till further advice
09307 Indore Jn.-Chandigarh Special	06.05.2021 to till further advice
09308 Chandigarh-Indore Jn. Special	07.05.2021 to till further advice
09325 Indore Jn.-Amritsar Special	04.05.2021 to till further advice
09326 Amritsar-Indore Jn. Special	06.05.2021 to till further advice
09579 Rajkot Jn.-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Special	06.05.2021 to till further advice
09580 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Rajkot Jn. Special	07.05.2021 to till further advice
04303 Bareilly-Delhi Jn. Special	02.05.2021 to till further advice
04304 Delhi Jn.-Bareilly Special	01.05.2021 to till further advice
04301/04302 Moradabad-Saharanpur-Moradabad MEMU Mail/Express Special	02.05.2021 to till further advice
04333/04334 Gajraula Jn.-Najibabad Jn.-Gajraula Jn. Spl.	02.05.2021 to till further advice

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BRIEFLY

NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday demanded a national policy to deal with the alarming Covid situation and urged the government to work out a political consensus on the issue.

In a video message today, Sonia also repeated the party's demand for free Covid vaccines to all and also of invoking compulsory licensing to ensure

more manufacturers can produce vaccines with the rigidity of the patent law exempted.

She said: "This is the time for the central and state governments to wake up and discharge their duties."

"The Congress will stand with the central government in all decisions related to Covid control," she said, urging the PM to put Rs 6,000 in the accounts of the poor. —TNS

Pollard's sixer spree wins it for Mumbai Indians

NEW DELHI, MAY 1

Kieron Pollard smashed a breathtaking 87 off only 34 balls to power Mumbai Indians to a four-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in the 27th match of IPL-14 here tonight. Set a target of 219, MI got there on the last ball of the final over, Pollard getting the 16 runs the team needed with 0, 4, 4, 0, 6, 2 off the last over from pace bowler Lungi Ngidi. Pollard hit eight sixers and six fours in his match-winning innings.

With this, MI move to eight points from seven matches, while CSK remain on top with 10 points from seven matches.

At 81/3 in the 10th over, MI seemed to be in deep trouble, needing another 138 runs off 62 balls. However, Pollard and Krunal Pandya (32 off 23 balls) added 89 runs off only 41 balls to turn the game on its head.

Krunal got the show going when he sent a delivery from Shardul Thakur straight into the sightscreen on the first ball of the 12th over. Pollard then took over, smashing Ravindra Jadeja for three sixers and Ngidi for another two in the next two overs. Pol-



Kieron Pollard of Mumbai Indians plays a shot during match 27 of the Indian Premier League in New Delhi. PTI

Rayudu mayhem

Earlier, Ambati Rayudu smashed a 27-ball 72 as CSK added 82 runs in the last five overs to reach an imposing 218/4. Moeen Ali (58 off 36 balls) and Faf du Plessis (50 off 28) also made blistering half-centuries after CSK were asked to bat first. CSK lost opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (4) early but du Plessis and Moeen plundered runs at will during their 108-run second-wicket partnership. —TNS, agencies



Lanka's Praveen Jayawardene celebrates a wicket. AP/PTI

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