



The conservation work that Aga Khan Foundation has carried out on Humayun's Tomb and its neighbourhood in Delhi is outstanding **ARTS & MORE page 2**



Nothing matches the fun and charm of train travel, especially across Europe's historic and beautiful cities and its scenic countryside **TRAVEL page 5**



Palestinian director Elia Suleiman's cinema leavens the pain of displacement through black humour while capturing the fear and foreboding **ENTERTAINMENT page 6**

The dawn of a new year and a new decade is a good time to take stock of where we stand in life and how to help shape a world we would want to live in

Be healthy, wealthy & wise

ROOPINDER SINGH

HOW is this New Year different? Among other things, this is the dawn of a decade. The shift in perspective from a year to 10 makes a difference! As you take a broader time frame, you move away from the imperatives of the immediate — to dream, to plan, to strategise, to look beyond the horizon limited by the here and now. The beginning of a year is a good time to take stock of the time gone by, and to look at the future. As we stand at the dawn of the 2020s, we are at a point where we can look back and remember what our life was like a decade ago and see where we have arrived. Indeed, many of a certain vintage, like this writer, can go further into time to ponder over the longer distance covered. Over the past few years, we have been exploring ways in which we can make our life better. As we take a broader look, let's expand our horizon and include the world around us. Let's plan for a decade.

Healthy, wealthy and wise. These are the primary human goals. Simple to state, but challenging to achieve. Let's see what

happens when we look at them from a long-term perspective. We can think about using time as a building block, and the first thing that we realise is that they can only be achieved if we invest in them over a long period.

HEALTHY

The most under-valued asset we have is health, often taken for granted until an emergency arises. Be healthy, stay tuned to the needs of your body. We need a long-term perspective to think of taking responsible steps for our good. No matter what age we are, remember the body begins its slide once it is past the teens. The good news is that the process can be slowed down considerably by taking adequate care. Regular medical examinations will ensure that you have the required information about your health parameters. Sometimes it takes a doctor to nudge us in the right direction.

FITNESS

One sure way of pushing back ageing is to gain and maintain fitness. We all read about the studies that show how a routine of even mild exercise will make a significant, measurable difference. The key is to get going and to keep it up. The more you invest, the better the results, but the process must be gentle. Incremental progress will be the foundation of long-lasting benefits. Start with a walk and add cardio, weight training, etc., as you progress.

FOOD

North India is a region known for an unusually large number

of obese people. What we put in our tummies shapes our bellies. We may indulge in what we like; after all, no one wants

to be a spoilsport! Just be moderate, and keep the long-term perspective in mind — even a few grams a week will add up to kilos over time! The decade-long horizon is of particular significance here. A part of what we eat stays in our body, and thus it only makes sense to eat good nutritious food. Avoid 'diets'. These have all proven to be fads or of marginal use at best. Moderation is the key here. Do follow the doctor's advice, particularly on restrictions.

WEALTHY

Most of us are not born into wealth. We work towards it. The process is all-consuming, but the biggest hurdle is lack of financial literacy. Save — it is as simple and as complicated as that. No matter what your salary or earning, you have to save some money out of it for the rainy day. There are so many temptations. It is easy to succumb to them. Don't! It takes guts to take the path less travelled. Still, Indians are a thrifty lot, or at least were till the last decade when increasing material wealth and easy availability of credit resulted in financial profligacy, which can have painful results.

INVEST IN FUTURE

With the sole exception of big-ticket items, earlier everything was bought in cash. Loans,

when they were taken for a house, or sometimes a car, were treated as an embarrassment, something to be repaid as soon as possible.

Now millennials are racking up debt, often through credit cards, which fuels unnecessary purchases. What we want is often more than what we need. Our attitude makes all the difference. The systematic investment plan (SIP) route has proved to be popular with most Indians. For the risk-averse, a recurring deposit takes out a fixed amount every month into a special account, where you get better rates.

Once you have a certain corpus, your investment options increase manifold. Commit yourself to a deposit plan and see how much it will grow over the next decade. That will set you on the path to financial stability.

WISE

It is impossible to progress in the world without education. The journey begins in school, and continues through life. Don't think of education as a means of getting a job. A decade or two ago, if you had a degree, you had a job. Not anymore. In fact, there is an academic escalation, where you needed a BA, now you need an MA. One of the worst mistakes we can make is to believe that our education ends with our getting a degree. It is how we enrich our mind and tap into our creativity. Those who continue to educate themselves throughout their life are often the most successful individuals.

FILTER INFORMATION

One of the ironies of living in the information age is how it has led to a 'post-truth' scenario of a highly polarised world fuelled by half-truths and fake news. Please learn to identify sources of credible information and sieve out the debris of factoids that masquerade as facts. Be self-aware and be conscious not to spread the toxic viruses by forwarding unverified junk.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Attitude matters tremendously in our quest for wisdom. What we earn from work is far more than money. Our work gives us a chance to interact with equally qualified individuals, learn to collaborate, form friendships, tackle challenges, and be rewarded for them. Looking at it from the perspective of a decade, you can evaluate where you will be 10 years from now, and whether you are satisfied with that. If not, then you may need to find the courage to make the changes that are more in tune with your goals.

Work is worship, but your god is your life. You must remind yourself that the goals that seem so important right now may not

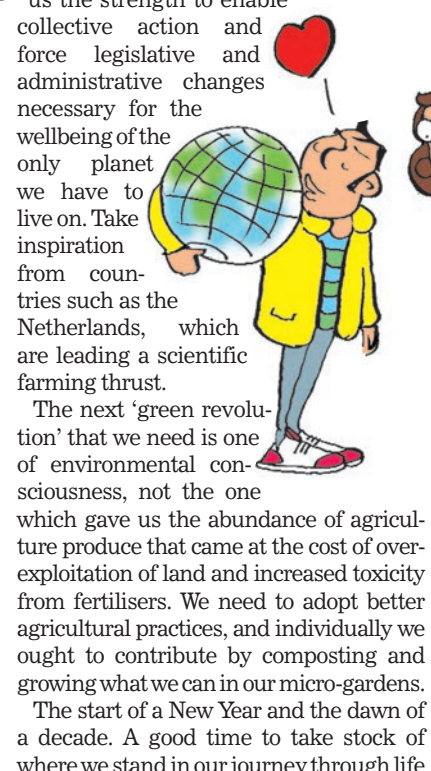
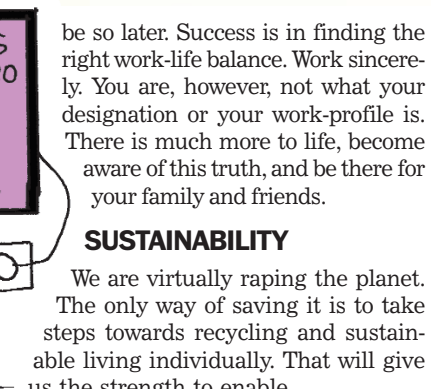
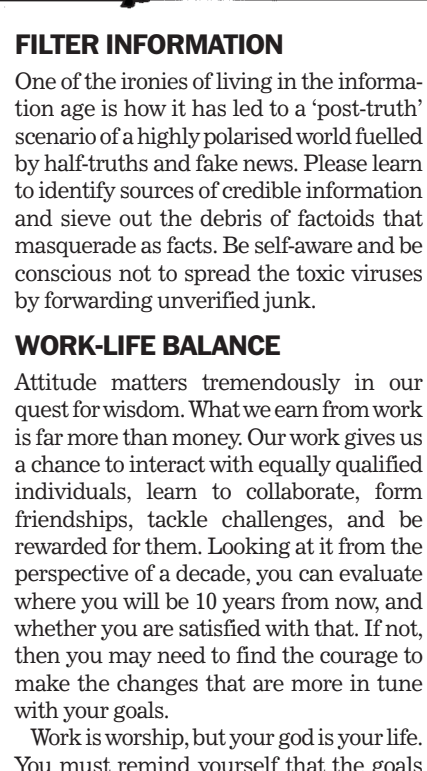
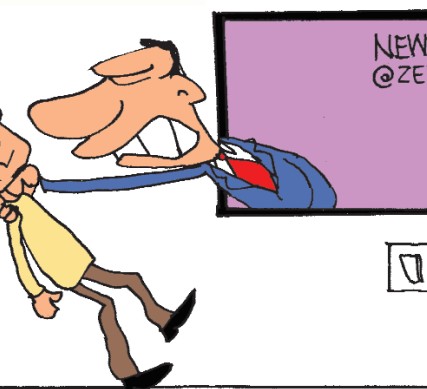
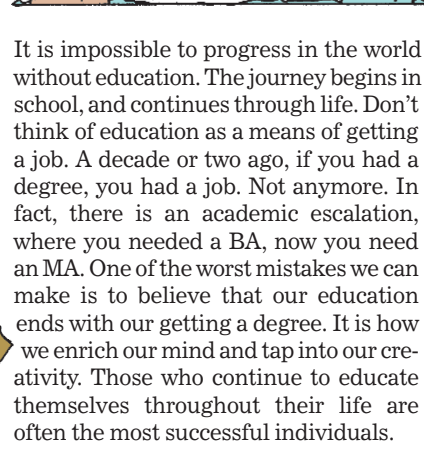
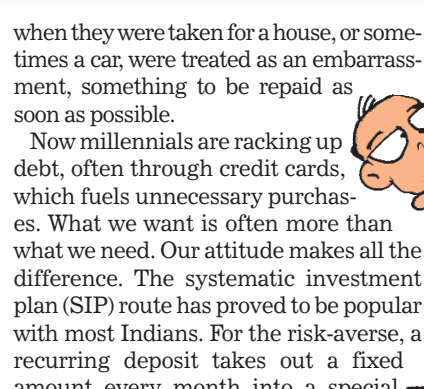
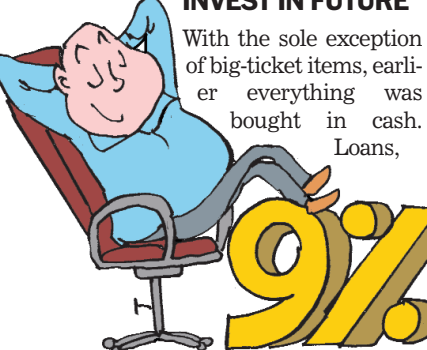
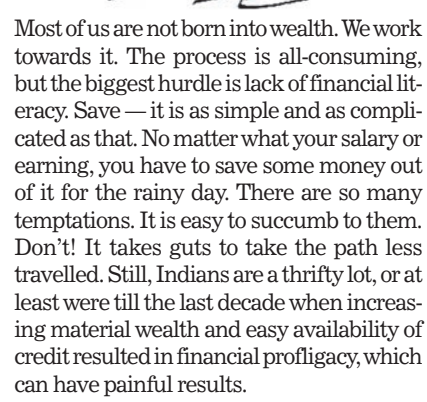
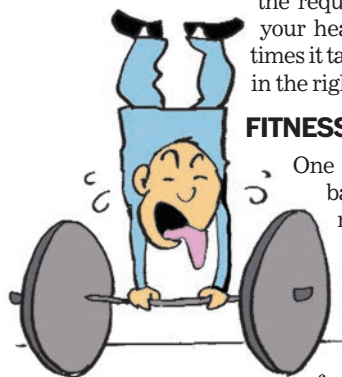
be so later. Success is in finding the right work-life balance. Work sincerely. You are, however, not what your designation or your work-profile is. There is much more to life, become aware of this truth, and be there for your family and friends.

SUSTAINABILITY

We are virtually raping the planet. The only way of saving it is to take steps towards recycling and sustainable living individually. That will give us the strength to enable collective action and force legislative and administrative changes necessary for the wellbeing of the only planet we have to live on. Take inspiration from countries such as the Netherlands, which are leading a scientific farming thrust.

The next 'green revolution' that we need is one of environmental consciousness, not the one which gave us the abundance of agriculture produce that came at the cost of over-exploitation of land and increased toxicity from fertilisers. We need to adopt better agricultural practices, and individually we ought to contribute by composting and growing what we can in our micro-gardens.

The start of a New Year and the dawn of a decade. A good time to take stock of where we stand in our journey through life and how to help shape a world we would want to live in. A Happy New Year to you!



Every third Indian is a millennial. Growing up in the Information Age, these echo boomers will take centre stage in this new decade with their all-inclusive attitudes and liberal values shaped by a digital world without boundaries. Will they be the change they want to see? Let's find out...

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CALM DOWN, REUNITE WITH YOURSELF
Dub Sharma, Gully Boy's music producer

LET'S BE MORE INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING
Ekta Bhatnagar, international para athlete

I WANT TOKYO TO BE OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL OLYMPICS
Deepak Punia, World silver medalist wrestler

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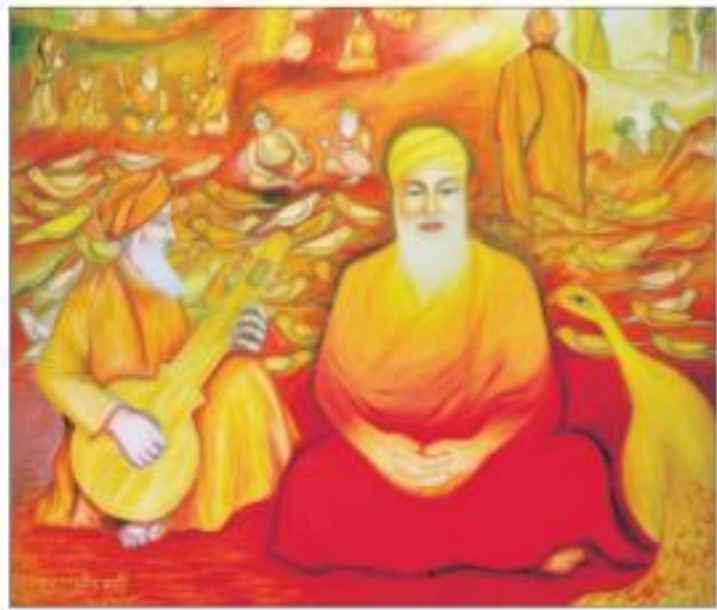
MORE POWER TO YOUTH
Naveen Choudhary, ITian poet

PROTEST, FOR A FAIR INDIA
Yogesh Maitreya, Dalit author and translator

A LOT MORE THAN MERE DESIRE
Prateek Vats, Award-winning filmmaker



‘Rabab to Nagara’ explores various expressions of the Guru’s teachings and their implementation



Swaranjit Savi depicts Guru Nanak's Udisi, his travels, his visit to Mecca and his dialogue with Yogis and Sidhas.



A rare Janamsakhi painting depicting Guru's doli being received by ladies of the house in Sultanpur Lodhi.



In Rigved Ghia's work, Guru throws water in the opposite direction, indicating futility of the ritual of water reaching their ancestors.



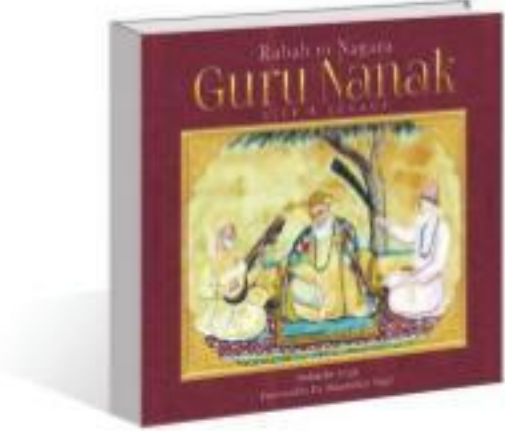
Moolmantar in calligraphy, by Sidharth.

Envisioning Guru Nanak Dev

ROOPINDER SINGH

THE 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev brought about a much-awaited focus on the founder of Sikhism. With his unique vision, he saw the world as one created by the Creator, and all beings as his creation. His message of unity of mankind has transcended centuries and guided his followers.

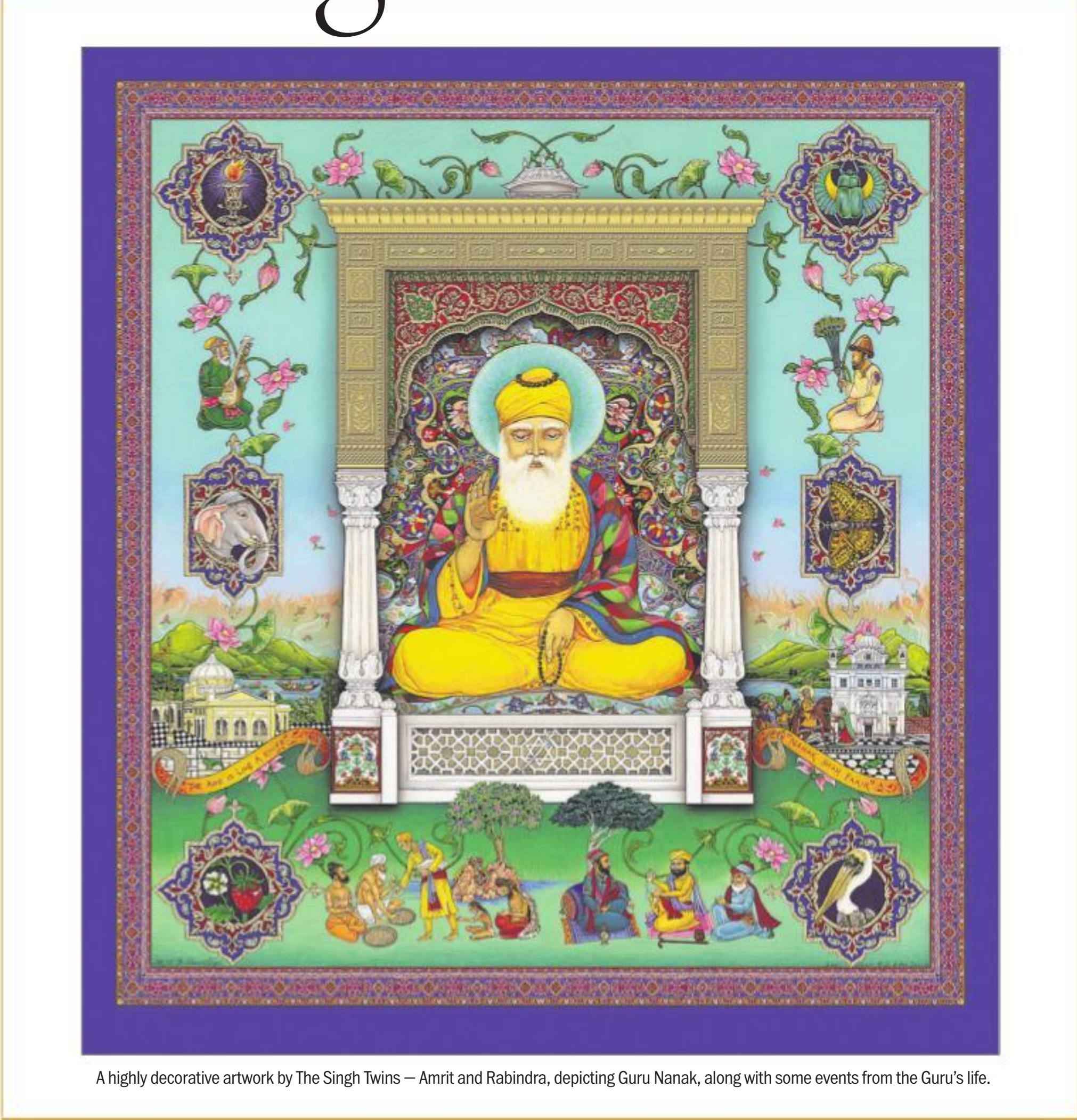
There is only one God, said Guru Nanak, although there were many ways to reach Him. By transcending the ‘my way to my God’ is better than ‘your way to your God’ debate and acknowledging that there are other paths to reach Him, Guru Nanak set the stage for interfaith



RABAB TO NAGARA: GURU NANAK'S LIFE AND LEGACY
by Mohinder Singh.
Himalayan Books.
Pages 193.
₹5,000

dialogue. He sought out scholars and religious leaders and held discourse with them. Today's world, wracked by toxic tribalism in various forms, needs the succour that comes from the teachings of the Guru, who declared: “There is no Hindu, no Mussalman, all are creatures of God.”

The year was marked with seminars, books, documentaries, and exhibitions. It was a time to dwell on the teachings of Guru Nanak and to understand his legacy. Governments, institutions and individuals all enthusiastically participated in the year-long celebrations that began in 2018. The celebrations were international, reflecting the presence and



A highly decorative artwork by The Singh Twins — Amrit and Rabindra, depicting Guru Nanak, along with some events from the Guru's life.

strength of the Sikh diaspora.

Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi, held an early, high-profile event on November 10, 2018. In the presence of former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh

and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Prof BN Goswamy delivered the first lecture in the series, ‘Truth Does Not Grow Old, Ever’. Later, the Dalai Lama inaugurated an impressive exhibition, titled ‘From

Rabab to Nagara: Life and Legacy of Guru Nanak’. It was mounted by the National Institute of Panjab Studies, a unit of Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi, and was a labour of love of Dr

Mohinder Singh, director of the Sadan. ‘From Rabab to Nagara’ explores various expressions of the Guru’s teachings and their implementation.

A series of lectures continued at the Bhavan, even as the exhibition travelled to various cities in India, where it was well received. Now it has been presented in the form of a coffee-table book, with the foreword by Dr Manmohan Singh. The lavishly mounted volume has quite a large collection of pictures that span time and styles of visual representation, representing the world of the Guru envisioned by artists over centuries.

We have paintings, murals, photographs of gurdwaras, along with descriptive passages about their significance. The *Janamsakhis*, or hagiographic accounts of the life and teachings of Guru Nanak, provided the basis for Pahari miniatures that were drawn by talented artists. The same holds true for more recent artists like Sobha Singh, Kirpal Singh and Devinder Singh. The book has their paintings too. Contemporary works of Arpana Caur, The Singh Twins — Amrit and Rabindra, Sidharth, Bhagat Singh, Kanwar Dhillon, Swaranjit Savi and Sharandeep Singh are also represented.

Photographs form a significant part and the works of William Baker, Lala Deen Dayal, Lance Dane, Deidi von Schaeuwen, Raghu Rai, Ashok Dilwali, Sondeep Shankar and Malkiat Singh have been featured.

What makes this compendium particularly useful is the sheer breadth of work that has been collected in one place, and the expansion of the canvas from Guru Nanak to include his successors. A section on photographs that shows how the Sikhs celebrate their Guru’s legacy in various parts of the world gives vignettes of the diaspora and its expression of devotion.

By turning the exhibition into a book, and inserting the text that gives it context and provides valuable information about the Gurus and the Sikhs, the Sadan has created a memorable volume. The colourful compendium is bound to find a place of pride in many libraries. It should.

Overarching legacy of the soft-mannered Brutalist

In pioneering architect Kuldeep Singh’s death, India has lost an icon of modernism in a post-colonial world

SARIKA SHARMA

INDIA was a free nation now and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had wanted it to break free of the fetters of the colonial past. Among the young architects translating this into reality was Kuldeep Singh, a soft-spoken Sikh lad whose experiments in Brutalism, along with his contemporaries, were to change the landscape of Delhi over the next two decades. His death earlier this month has resulted in celebration of his work. He was 86.

“The British had left Delhi with an infrastructure unsuited to the state’s ambitions. Nehru wanted to create a new and prosperous country from the ashes left behind by the Raj. This required an expanded civil service and buildings to house them and facilitate their work. So, Kuldeep was one amongst many, but his buildings were singularly beautiful, challenging, and inventive,” says Michael S Dodson, Professor of South Asian History at Indiana University, Bloomington, who is writing a book on modernist design in Delhi during the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s. This was an era when Kuldeep, along with Raj Rewal, his partner for long, and structural engineer Mahendra Raj, were names to reckon with.

Born in Shimla and educated at the Delhi Polytechnic, the most famous of Kuldeep Singh’s works are undoubtedly the New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) building at Palika Kendra and the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) building in Hauz Khas. Both beautifully exemplify Brutalism — geometric structures making use of concrete, a style fairly new to India then.

Dodson says Singh had a mastery over his



Kuldeep Singh with Mahendra Raj (C) & Ram Rahman.

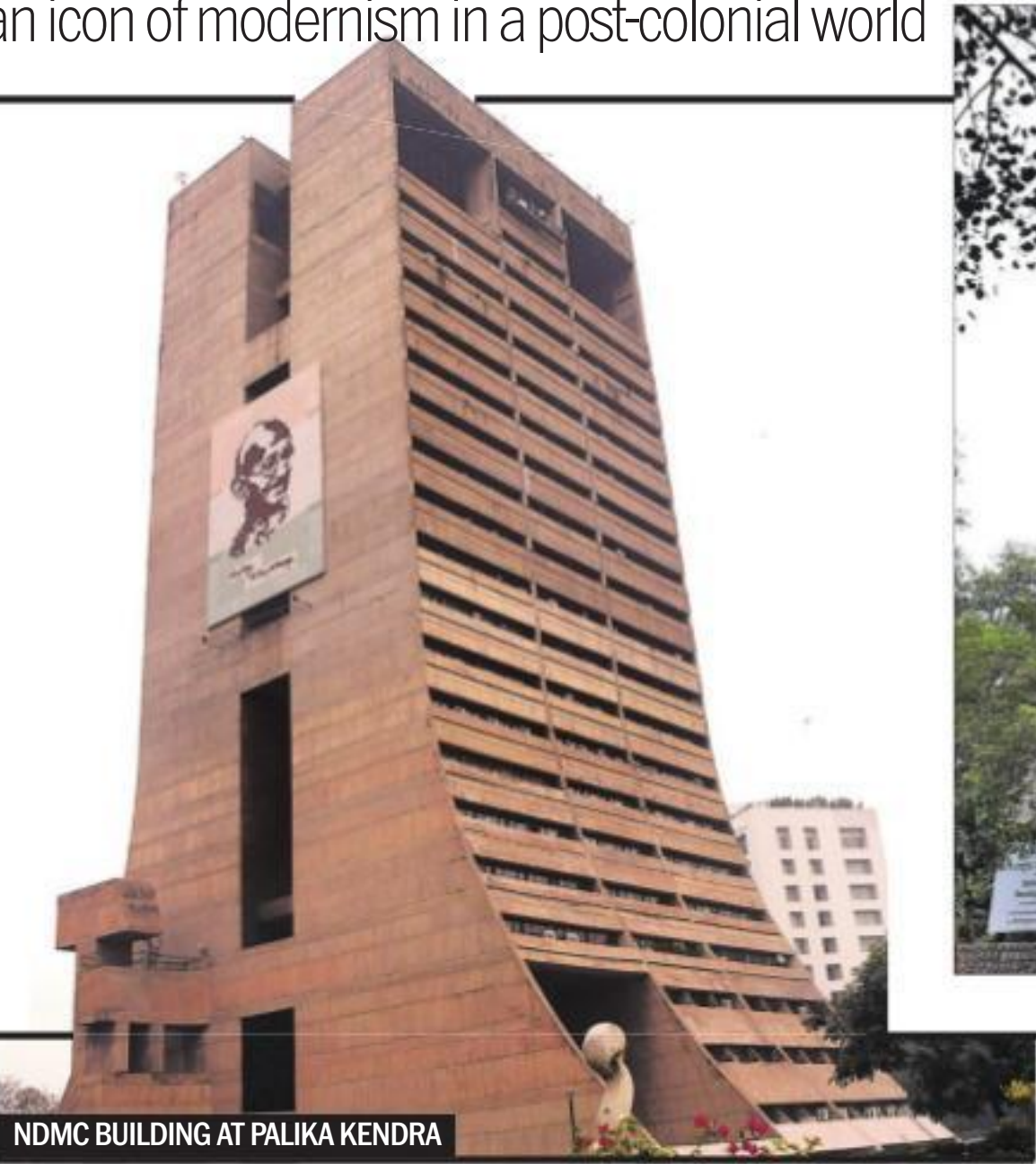
materials. “He knew how to sculpt and finish concrete so that it had a real character to it, and the technical challenge of the two wings that lean together was formidable. In this respect, his relationship with the engineer Mahendra Raj was critical in building new, unprecedented structures.” The two had worked on both NDMC and NCDC.

Ram Rahman, son of architect Habib Rahman, curated ‘Delhi, Building the Modern’, an exhibition of photographs and models, at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art in Delhi in 2017. These included Kuldeep’s work as also those of master architects of the Capital. He says Kuldeep Singh was one of the second

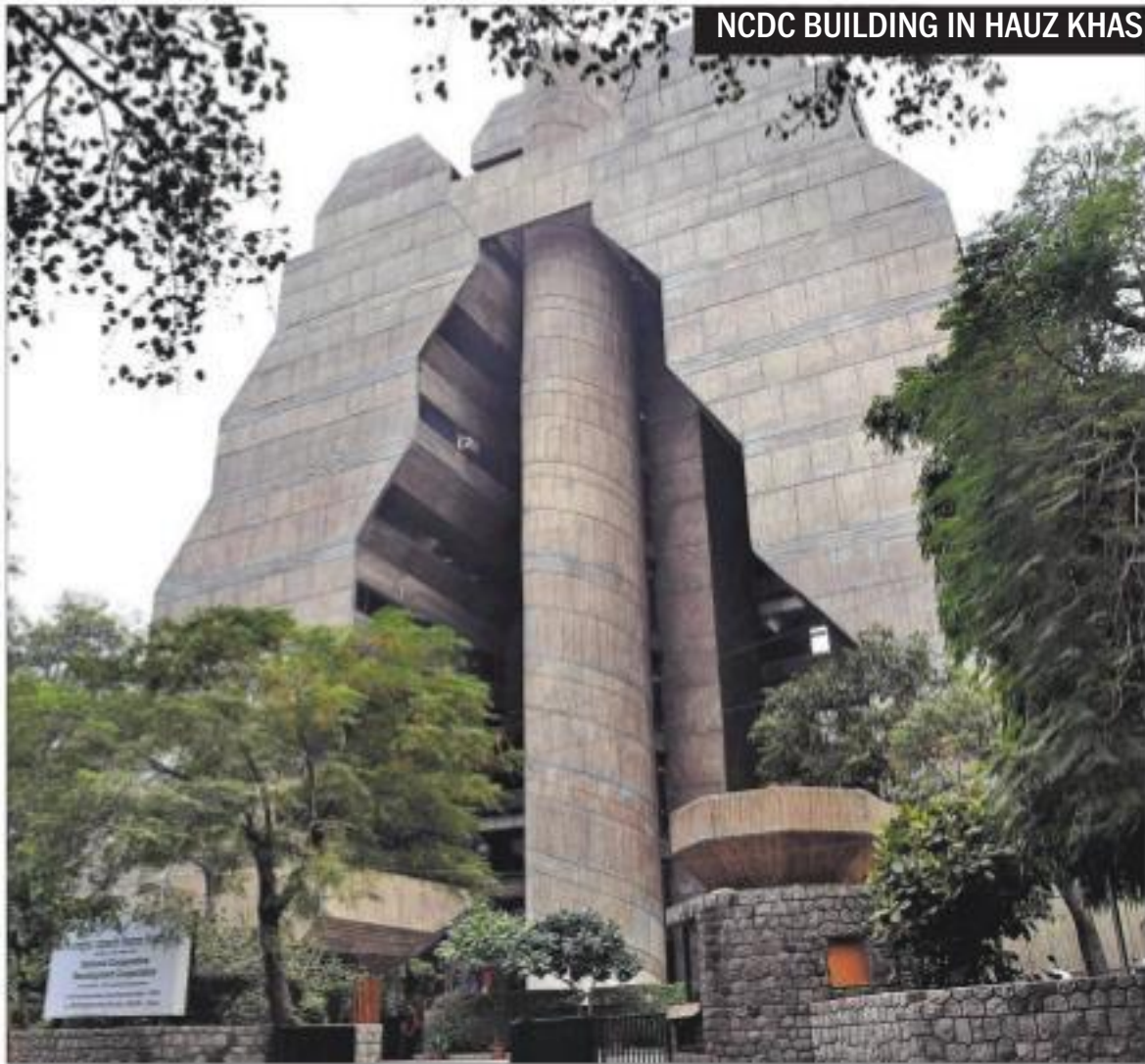
generation architects — first heralded by the likes of his father and Achyut Kanvinde — who were trained in Delhi and started their practice in the 1960s. “They were very aware of the ideals of the Nehruvian period — building a new India with a forward looking scientific perspective. Their designs reflected these visionary ideals specially when budgets had increased and more material progress had been made in steel and cement manufacture. His work was very graphic

and sculptural on a huge scale with his exposed concrete buildings in Delhi.”

Kuldeep’s friend and Chandigarh-based architect SD Sharma says concrete provides a sculpturous form, has colour of the sky and doesn’t grow old, thus being preferred by the likes of Corbusier. Dodson says concrete was also the material of choice for this period as it was relatively cheap and relied on human labour, which was also plentiful. Even if the budgets had risen in



NDMC BUILDING AT PALIKA KENDRA



NCDC BUILDING IN HAUZ KHAS

comparison to the first decade since Independence, he says there were constraints, and that required them to be creative. “Architecturally speaking, Delhi’s modernist architecture is some of the very finest in the world from this period,” he adds.

Former principal of Chandigarh College of Architecture, Rajnish Wattas says Singh’s buildings were very Corbusian in expression and form. Agrees Dodson, who sees Le Corbusier’s presence in India as just a starting point for post-colonial Indian architecture. “Architects such as Singh and Rewal took those basics of form and material used in Chandigarh and made them truly Indian.”



A Nobel act?

Seventy five-year-old Bob Dylan won Nobel Prize for Literature for his songwriting but did he feel humbled and privileged like other awardees? Not really! The award stirred up a couple of controversies — from what is it that qualifies as an outstanding piece of literature: genre or language to Dylan initially not even bothering to acknowledge the prestigious honour, which did happen only after a five-day wait.

Know your sportstars

Many a book was churned out from this genre. All were given a thumbs up by sports and book lovers alike. The most popular ones were *Driven* and *Ace Against Odds*. The former was based on cricket sensation Virat Kohli's life by Vijay Lokapally. The other was authored by Sania Mirza herself. *My Olympic Journey* by Digvijay Singh Deo and Amit Bose on accomplishments of 50 competing players from India was well-timed with the 2016 Olympics.

Just in case

For readers who seek depth, we had a choice of books on all serious affairs, Indian and international. Shivshankar Menon's *Choices: Inside the Making of Indian Foreign Policy* was well-received, so was *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* by Amitav Ghosh on the threat that climate corrosion is to us. Ujjal Dosanjh's *Journey After Midnight: India, Canada and the Road Beyond* and Kanhaiya Kumar's *From Bihar to Thar* created some buzz as well.

Money, you shrunk my bookshelf

ROOPINDER SINGH

Up & above, once more

Chetan Bhagat's *One Indian Girl* broke all records of Amazon's pre-order history. The book beat day 1 pre-order number of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, that too within just half an hour of going live on the platform. The banker-turned-author promoted the book across all mediums, even on reality shows.

KHAN Market, New Delhi, has long prided itself on its book stores... but they were empty recently... half shuttered, actually, as everyone, including employees, was engaged otherwise — standing in a long, serpentine queue paying obedience to the post-demonitisation god — the ATM. It comes as no surprise that publishing industry has seen a precipitous drop in business after *notebandi*.

We know that books are a discretionary expenditure for a vast majority, and this was bound to happen, yet this is but one, hopefully transient, assault on the culture of reading books. There were endless skirmishes on social media platforms that raised noise to a level where thinking became impossible; factoids, half-truths and planted stories with nebulous relationship to truth, all contributed to an environment that treated treatises as antediluvian, what with the 140-character feeds, or their extended versions enchanting the chattering classes.

Anti-intellectualism rose to a fevered pitch, as most recently seen in the prelude to the election of Donald Trump as president of the US. It was in books like *The Year of Voting Dangerously: The Derangement of American Politics* that readers sought to figure out the contest between two of the most unpopular US presidential candidates. In India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspired a thousand titles, most of these regurgitating publically-available information. *The Turbulent Years: 1980-1996 by President Pranab Mukherjee* was a memoir memorable for not creating ripples. Sanjay Baru's *1991: How PV*



STACKED WISDOM: For once, empty bookshelves had an easy explanation — demonitisation. Even with some blockbusters, the publishing industry saw a dip in business

Narasimha Rao Made History reminded Indians of a forgotten Prime Minister, and Mamata Banerjee proved a prolific writer — she released 10 books together, including one on... *Tolerance*.

Beyond politics, there is the need to

understand and heal our body. *The Gene: An Intimate History* by Siddhartha Mukherjee expectedly hit the bestsellers list and the critics' admiration. The poignant *When Breath Becomes Air* brought home the struggle of a cancer

victim, and the medical profession and doctors came in for uncomfortable scrutiny with *Dissenting Diagnosis* by Dr Arun Gadre and Dr Abhay Shukla.

As we look beyond individual books, we see how the Indian publishing indus-

try is growing, even in e-books, which have been slow to start. *Notebandi* shall pass, many of us are voracious readers, and authors and publishers shall continue to satiate our appetite, even as they whet it. Amen.

Surrogacy Bill & its rationality

Apparently, the new Surrogacy Bill was passed aimed at protecting the rights of poor surrogate mothers against the inhuman commercialisation of the practice. The new law almost bans the practice, which grew into an unregulated industry worth \$2 billion, by making it altruistic to the extent of turning it unfeasible. On the flip side, instead of providing sound regulations, it took away poor women's means to earn a decent livelihood.

Is it just woman versus woman?

The Domestic Violence Act removed legal insulation accorded to women. The change was brought in to protect senior citizens. Under the new provision, a mother-in-law can file a case of domestic violence against her daughter-in-law and vice versa, eliminating men folk from the domestic battleground. Although in rural India, wife bashing is seen as a rightful act, only few cases of domestic violence get reported despite the laws.

Women enter temples and mosques

Many campaigns were launched by women's groups against ban on their entry to several religious places across India. Bhoomata Brigade Leader, Trupti Desai and her supporters made many attempts to enter Shani Shingnapur temple. The temple trust had to give in after the Bombay High Court intervened. Haji Ali Dargah also witnessed a change of heart of its trustees. After winning a bitter legal battle by Muslim women activists, the ban was revoked.



On an equal footing, not quite

VANDANA SHUKLA

More maternal care

On August 11, the Rajya Sabha passed amendments to the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, increasing the period of maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, which is over six months. The six months leave will be paid. The amended law also mandates a company to have a crèche, if the number of female employees exceeds 50. But it covers only organised formal sector, leaving a large workforce outside its ambit.

THE focus shifted from women's safety to changing male mindset. Several popular ads showed concern towards gender sensitivity. Actor Ranveer Singh apologised for his oversight of doing a sexist ad for men's clothing brand. The ad showed the actor with a woman over his shoulder, watched by a grinning butler. The ad's tagline said, 'Don't Hold Back. Take Your Work Home.' The ad was pulled down by the brand instantly after it was slammed on Twitter. It set a precedent.

The battle for gender equality moved to online campaigns, preparing a ground for female empowerment, albeit, tools of equality were delivered by the legislative and the courts.

This year, thus, can be called the year of power of public campaigns. All the major decisions that went in favour of women were initiated on the ground by public awareness or were a result of filing PILs. This reflects proactive approach, unlike the reactive demand for amending laws on gender violence raised in response to public outcry in the aftermath of the Nirbhaya gangrape case. The year witnessed a reduction in reported number of heinous crimes against women as compared to previous years. But instances of sexual harassment, assault or use of criminal force intended to disrobe and stalking, showed an increase.

While laws enabled women to enjoy greater equality — by doing away with discriminatory practices like ban on women's entry into religious places, allowing abortion rights to unmarried women, protecting poor women from commercialisation of surrogacy, extending maternity leave and supporting Muslim women in their fight against triple *talaq*, the changing legislation also placed greater responsibility.

Changing legislation is only a small step towards changing societal behaviour. Gender equality still remains a dream for a majority of women in India.



POWER TO WOMEN: Gender equality became a reality to some extent as women won equal prayer rights and the fight against triple *talaq* gained momentum



Fight continues against triple *talaq*

Zakia Soman and hundreds of activists of the Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (BMMA), conducted a national survey on Muslim women to find that one in 11 Muslim women were survivors of triple *talaq* — most receiving no compensation. These women are fighting the powerful AIMPLB, the decision-making body for Indian Muslims, opposed to any change. In its affidavit, filed before the SC, it argued that in the absence of the right of instant divorce, a husband may resort to illegal, criminal ways of murdering or burning his wife alive. The issue of human rights violation was entangled into the Uniform Civil Code debate by political forces. The Allahabad High Court stated the practice of triple *talaq* to be unconstitutional, in violation of the rights of Muslim women.

The Sunday Tribune Spectrum

The spirit of Kartarpur

ROOPINDER SINGH

AN entreaty to the Almighty to enable the followers of Guru Nanak to have the freedom to worship at the gurdwaras that have been taken away from the *panth* is an integral part of *ardaas*, the Sikh daily prayer. The need for this *ardaas* arose because Partition tore apart Punjab and its people. It also rendered much of the Sikh sacred spaces inaccessible to a vast majority of Sikhs.

Nankana Sahib is where Guru Nanak was born, and Kartarpur — the town he founded, lived in for over two decades and where he breathed his last, after finding and naming his successor on merit — are among the most important historical gurdwaras associated with the founder of the Sikh faith. Naturally, there are many other gurdwaras connected with Guru Nanak and his successors that have been inaccessible to the Sikhs on the whole since 1947. The longing to pray there led to the fore-mentioned addition to the *ardaas*.



GUIDING LIGHT: Kartarpur, literally the abode of God, was a settlement of those who committed themselves and their families to Guru Nanak and his teachings PHOTO: PTI

The excitement and jubilation that has been seen among the Sikhs at a chance to visit their sacred space is palpable, more so since it has been timed to coincide with the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.

The genesis

It would be instructive to take an imaginative trip to when Kartarpur, literally the abode of God, was founded. There was a settlement of those who committed themselves and their families to the Guru and his teachings. The Guru's mother, Mata Tripta, his wife Bibi Sulakhni, and sons Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das lived among them. They led lives typical of Punjabi farmers, the day shaped by the needs that come with tilling the land and attending to other worldly chores.

The Guru, his family and his followers lived life as it ought to be lived. What kind of followers were these? Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru, says "sants" — people who are and live by the Truth. Naturally, Kartarpur attracted many people. However, only the committed individuals stayed and engaged in honest labour, even as they devoted themselves to the Creator. Guru Nanak's *bani* was recited as they sought to align the material and spiritual aspects of right living.

The Guru met all who came to meet him, the curious, the seekers and the followers. The Guru's *bani* was written, recited and sung. Guru Nanak was spending time with his family, which had been separated from him during the long *udasis* that took him to what is now Sri Lanka in the south, to Tibet in the north, Bangladesh in the east and Saudi Arabia in the west.

Piety prevailed. Recognising the truth of the oneness of God and his creation, living a truthful life,

devoted to spiritual pursuits and sustainable living...this was utopia, except that it was tangible. We find the beginnings of *sangat*, *pangat* and *langar*, practices that were later institutionalised, here.

The collective spirit of the *sangat* of Kartarpur spread from the town founded by Guru Nanak to reach out to the world. The spirit transcended the physical. Guru Nanak's successors founded new towns. They all sought to approximate the environment that existed at Kartarpur first.

Guru's Kartarpur was the venue of realisation and implementation of the principle of Oneness of the Creator and the created. A place of dignity, here artificial inequalities of caste and gender, were eliminated

The Darbar Sahib

The gurdwara at Kartarpur occupies a special place in Sikh ethos. It was well-tended to until Partition. Just before Partition, the Sikh leaders forcefully presented their case for free access to important Sikh gurdwaras that would fall into Pakistan. The late Justice Teja Singh, in his submission to Boundary Commission, said: "for the Sikhs, the city of Amritsar, the city of Nankana Sahib in Sheikhupura district, the city of Kartarpur in Shahargarh tehsil, Gurdaspur district, are the Mecca and Medina and their Hardwar and Benares." The pleas, even a massive protest at Nanakana

Sahib that cost several lives, were of no avail. After Partition, the gurdwaras and the properties attached to them were considered "evacuee property."

Evolving geopolitical equations and potential religious tourism changed the scenario somewhat over the years, but the physical spaces will remain mired in Indo-Pak relations.

The recent months have been of hope for the Sikhs. The physical structure of Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur, has been transformed, Sultanpur Lodhi has been spruced up, and a new road laid to accommodate the expected large flow of pilgrims. Various protocols have been chalked out, differences brushed under the carpet and arrangements made for pilgrims. As for the ordinary Sikhs, they are just waiting for the day they can pay obeisance at this historic gurdwara.

Marking 550 years

Guru Nanak's Kartarpur was the venue of realisation and implementation of the principle of Oneness of the Creator and the created. It was the place of dignity where artificial inequalities, brought about by caste and gender discrimination, were eliminated, priestly classes and others with pretensions of worldly status were negated by the declaration and acceptance of divinity in everyone — Guru Nanak's followers were expected to extend themselves, spiritually, socially, and physically.

The 550th anniversary of his birth ought to be an occasion for all his followers to present a united front in consonance with this vision, to be exemplars of his teachings, and to produce literature that would allow others to learn about the founder of Sikhism.

The Guru's vision was of oneness. Those who seek to speak in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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► **A REVOLUTIONARY THINKER**
Nadia Singh
PAGE 2



► **SAGE WITH A SCIENTIFIC VISION**
Kuldeep Singh Dhir
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► **ENVISIONING THE BANIKARS**
Sarika Sharma
PAGE 4





Dresden, one of the most bombed cities in Germany during WW II, impresses with its architecture, art treasures, porcelain works and more

TRAVEL page 3



NBA has shown keen interest in Indian basketball by hosting two pre-season games in Mumbai. Now, it's for Indian sports administrators to build on this huge opportunity

SPORT page 5



As National-Award winning Punjabi filmmaker Gurvinder Singh takes his new film, *Khanaur*, to MAMI, he reflects on why he needed to tell this tale set in the hills

ENTERTAINMENT page 6

GURU NANAK

Teachings transcend time

ROOPINDER SINGH

"All are creatures of God and His creation." This kernal from Guru Nanak Dev's composition comes to mind again and again as we see a world divided by man-made divisions, even as we, the people of the world, fail to recognise and identify with the essential unity that is the very core of our being. By failing to acknowledge the oneness of creating, we seek to carve out distinctions that exist only in the corners of our minds dominated by avarice and ignorance.

The sub-continent, as it existed five-and-a-half centuries ago, was ridden with strife. It was divided into two distinct and mutually antagonistic religious persuasions — pan-Hinduism and Islam. These were by no means homogenous: within each



group were separate strands and various shades of persuasion.

When the fight was between "my way to my God" is better than "your way to your God," the Guru declared that there was only one God, though there were many ways to reach Him.

Yet, the world continues to build walls to keep out fellow beings. Tribalism toxically combines itself with nationalism to deny succour to those who need it the most. We forget our humanity during the times that we really need it. People continue to be discriminated against, persecuted, and even killed in the name of religion.

It is time to reiterate what the Guru said: "There is no Hindu, no Mussalman," all are creatures of God.

Spreading the Word

Guru Nanak travelled far and wide, met people and had discourses and discussions with the learned and the lay. The wide interaction that he had with them allowed him to spread the Word, to get across his point of view. The *Janamsakhis* refer to an incident in Multan. The local religious leaders came to him with a bowl full of milk, signifying that their cup of spiritual masters was full. The Guru placed a flower on it, which floated, spreading fragrance without displacing the milk.

Much of what we know about the Guru comes from the *Janamsakhis*, written long after he had left the world, but very much the oral tradition till then, and even after. It is these life-stories that illustrate the life of the Guru. We marvel at how much he travelled in over two decades — to Tibet in the north, to Sri Lanka in the south, Saudi Arabia in the west and Bangladesh in the east.

On equality

Even as we look at the chasm between the haves and have-nots that has given rise to the 2011 Occupy movements highlighting the wealth gap and advocating social and economic justice, it might be easy to believe that this is something new. Not really. Such a situa-



The local religious leaders came to him with a bowl full of milk, signifying that their cup of spiritual masters was full. The Guru placed a flower on it, which floated, spreading fragrance without displacing the milk.

Families became the building blocks of the new agricultural commune in which people prayed together and attended to their worldly duties during the day. Kartarpur became the concrete expression of the application of the Guru's teachings.

Guru Nanak was unsparing in his criticism of those who lost their bearings due to a feeling of power. Disgusted with the society around him, he described it as one in which the rulers were like lions, with their officials behaving like dogs.

On women

The Guru was at odds with what was a prevalent notion of the position of women in society at the time — he maintained that women are worthy of praise and equal to men.

His compositions highlight the role of women in families. He strongly disapproves of the practice of *sutak*, or impurity, attributed to women due to their physiological differences, as a result of which they were banned from participating in family and religious functions during such times. The Guru encouraged the active participation of women as equals in the worship of God. And in society, he created space for them within the prevalent patriarchal system.

Sangat and pangat

Families became the building blocks of the new agricultural

commune in which people prayed together and attended to their worldly duties during the day. Kartarpur became the concrete expression of the application of the Guru's teachings.

Guru Nanak came out strongly against all artificially created divisions and all discrimination, both in word and deed. "The caste of a person is what he does," he maintained and set out to dissolve differences through the institutions of *sangat* and *pangat*.

You don't have to imagine a world where everyone is welcome; it exists in the *sangat*. Equality and egalitarianism are visible as everyone sits down together in a *pangat* for the *langar*. Guru Nanak's mother, Mata Tripta, and his wife, Mata Sulakhni, were active in the *sewa* of *langar*. The role of Mata Khivi, the wife of

Guru Nanak's successor, Guru Angad Dev, who lived with him at Kartarpur, has been recorded by the bards, Rai Baiwant and Satta.

Resisting autocrats

How easy it is for those conferred with responsibility to devolve into autocrats. Guru Nanak was unsparing in his criticism of those who lost their bearings due to a feeling of power. Disgusted with the society around him, he described it as one in which the rulers were like lions, with their officials behaving like dogs. Human behaviour seldom changes markedly.

What Guru Nanak said then about the rulers and the ruled, unfortunately, applies too often in today's world as well: "Greed and sin have become the king and the minister. Falsehood is the local governor. Lust is the deputy with

whom consultations are held."

How does one protect oneself from adopting such an attitude? The antidote to hubris is *sewa*, serving strangers. This is a significant concept in the Sikh way of life. *Sewa* gives life some meaning and adds to the core moral strength of a person. We see people performing *sewa* at gurdwaras, and at various social occasions. Inculcating that attitude in one's life, however, is another matter.

Guru's compositions

In Guru Granth Sahib, we find Guru Nanak's *bani* — 974 *shabads* composed in 19 *ragas*. The most popular one is, of course, *Japji*. The first stanzas comprise what is popularly called the *Mulmantra*.

"There is one God,
Eternal Truth is His Name,
He is the Sole Creator.
He knoweth no fear;
Is at enmity with no one.
His being is timeless and
formless.
He is not incarnate.
He is self-existent. Attainable
He is through the grace,
Of the Guru, the Enlightener."

The *Mulmantra* forms the creedal or formal statement of Sikh religious thought, its essence. Other popular *banis* include *Asa di Var*, *Bara Mah*, *Sikh Goshit* and *Aarti*. Here are the opening stanzas of the *Aarti*, written at Jagannath Puri:

"The sky is the salver
And the sun and the moon the
lamps
The luminous stars on the heavens
are the pearls.
Scented air from the sandal-clad
hills is the incense
The winds make a whisk for you,
And the vast forests wreaths of
flowers.
The unstuck music is the trumpet.
Thus goes on the Aarti for you,
O you dispeller of doubt and fear."

The Guru's compositions contain truths that pertain not only to the religious aspect of our lives, but also social and family matters, things that have been ordinarily considered outside the purview of religion.

The 550 years since the birth of Guru Nanak have been eventful. Even as we look at how much the world has changed materially, the spiritual evolution of mankind still lacks the moral and ethical underpinnings of a true utopia. Thus, the need for a religious, ethical and moral compass that the Guru's *bani* provides us.

Religion for the Guru embraced the worldly aspects of human existence. More than ever, at times like this we need his teachings. The founder of Sikhism set out to give a message of universal unity. He waged a battle against ignorance by appealing to the fundamentally good nature of human beings. Guru Nanak travelled far and wide in search of interaction with like-minded people, and to spread the Word. No wonder that his followers span the world, and are getting ready to gather at Kartarpur to celebrate 550 years of his birth.

ILLUSTRATION

— GURU NANAK WITH FOLLOWERS AND OTHER HOLY MEN. OPAQUE WATER COLOUR AND GOLD ON PAPER. KASHMIR/PUNJAB, FIRST QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

COURTESY: HIMACHAL PRADESH MUSEUM, SHIMLA



'Time to apologise now'

Some wounds just do not heal. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a watershed that defined how Indians looked at the British colonial administration thereafter, says Nigel Collett

ROOPINDER SINGH

WHAT was the man who perpetrated the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh 100 years back like? Nigel Collett's *The Butcher of Amritsar* is a full-length biography of Brigadier General Reginald Dyer. This book is quite in contrast with Ian Colvin's favourable biography *The Life of General Dyer* (London: Blackwood, 1929). Collett speaks on General Dyer and how he changed the course of history. Excerpts from an interview:

As we look back a century after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, what is your opinion of General Reginald Dyer as a person?
He was a strange character. He was often someone who never fit into anything. He was estranged from most of the society he

lived in — British as well as Indian. He was a lonely, independent man who made up his mind based on bad appreciation of the situations he found himself in. On many occasions, he came to wrong conclusion, which he then stubbornly acted on, against advice from everyone. The most extreme example was the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

He was not an easy man to know, particularly for the people who he felt had crossed him. Most of us are driven by fear. He had seen what he thought was a threat to his family and his way of life in India. The Empire, in countries like Ireland before, had seen societies dissolve. I think he was frightened that this would be the way it would go in India, too. He, therefore, made up his mind that he would do his best to make sure it didn't. By killing people in the Jallianwala Bagh, he believed he



was sending a message to Punjab, and the world, and that he would manage to put a finger in the dyke. He was a wrong man at the wrong place at the wrong time.

What would prompt a career officer in the British army to order a massacre of the civilian population?

It is almost unthinkable. When I wrote the book, I tried to consider all people I've ever met in the army who would do that. Although I've met many people who would support Dyer's action, I've never met a man who would have actually ordered such an act, stood there, and done it so personally.

It was not typical, not something which was legal in the army. He knew he had transgressed — both morally as well as legally. He had mentioned to a few people he expected to be punished for it immediately afterwards.

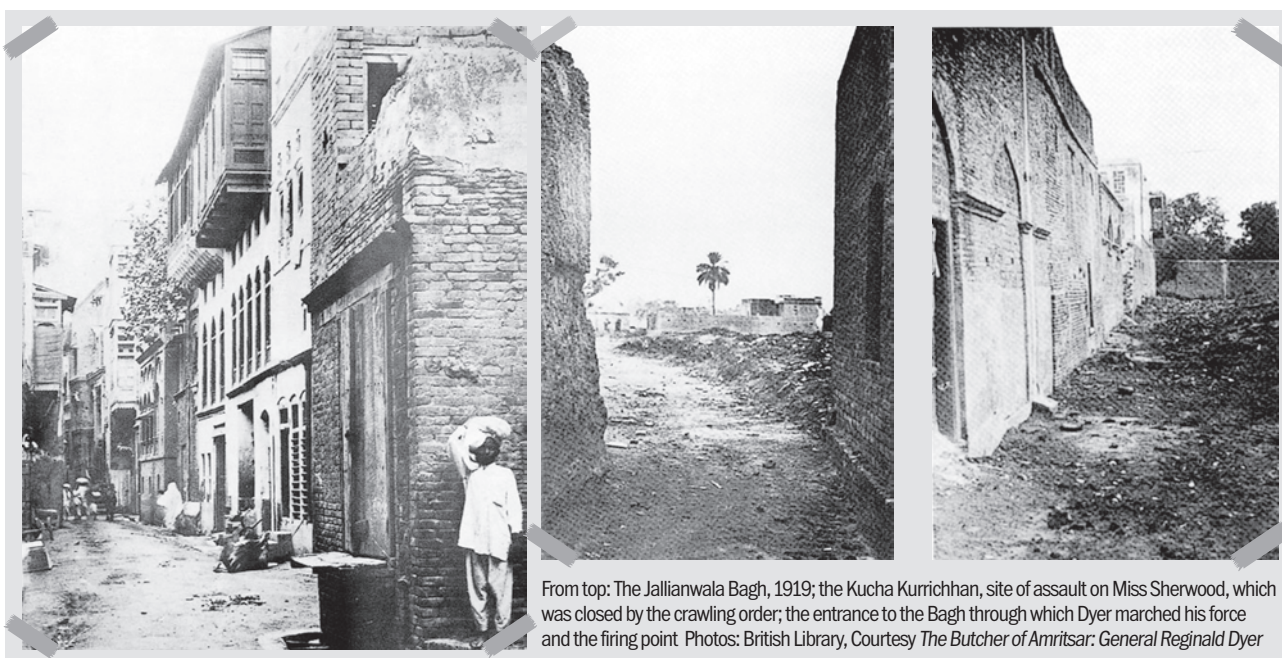
How has the response to the book been?

It has lasted well. There have been several books since then, but I don't think anybody has overturned what I found about what he did and my interpretations of Dyer. People have different interpretations of the massacre but my interpretation of him as a man has, so far, suffered little. I am glad the book has been received so well in India. I did a tour of the country. I was welcomed in most places, and had an amazingly good time talking about it.

The interest shown in India to the book was much more than in England where people didn't know the man. Of course, in India, he is an anti-hero, a figure in history. I felt I had somehow contributed and I was trying to do that.

Were any lessons learnt from the massacre?

There are overall lessons you can draw — moral lessons about what empires



From top: The Jallianwala Bagh, 1919; the Kucha Kurichan, site of assault on Miss Sherwood, which was closed by the crawling order; the entrance to the Bagh through which Dyer marched his force and the firing point. Photos: British Library, Courtesy *The Butcher of Amritsar*; General Reginald Dyer

do to people, and what happens when you put anybody in the position of authority that isn't controlled. This can allow them to misinterpret the authority in the way Dyer did.

To me, lessons from the massacre have been twofold. First of all, the military one. It taught the British army what happens when people go beyond the bounds of duty and behave in that fashion. The British army very quickly clamped down on any such further repetition. There are always abuses, but it took steps to make sure that taking such an action wasn't going to be so easy in future.

More to the point is the lesson that when such an incident is allowed to happen, is not dealt with properly, the people who suffer from it are not recompensed or acknowledged, it does a lasting damage to

relationships. The relations between Britain and India never recovered from the incident. Once this sort of thing happens, which has horribly always happened in history, you need to do something to make up for it. That wasn't done.

There have been demands that the British government should apologise for the massacre. What do you think about it?

In the past, I thought there was no point in one generation apologising for previous generations because where do you stop with that? But following the line I've just taken, I concluded several months ago that in this case, there's a real practical reason for making an apology.

Although Dyer decided to do this himself, it was his own volition, no one ordered him to do it, but he was still a

British Army officer. He was representative of the British government. And they had at least the vicarious responsibility for what he did. And so they owed, some form of recompense, an apology at the time. The effect (of the massacre) has been long lasting. The effect of an apology would be the last to make it possible to go forward and put this terrible event behind us. So this time I really do believe that an apology would be a good idea.

Controversies over what happened are still going on, and the neocons in King's College, London, are still fighting back and trying to pretend it was all exactly what Dyer said. That there was a rebellion, and all he did was his duty. This seems to me to reinforce the need to actually put a stop to it, apologise now.

The Butcher of Amritsar

WITHOUT any warning to the crowd, Dyer gave the order to fire. The order was repeated by Captain Crampton, whistles rang out, and immediately the troops opened fire.

Havoc ensued. The crowd ran in terror in all directions but found few exits by which to escape. People crammed into the entrances to the narrow passageways, frantically seeking to force their way out. The troops were directed to fire on these, killing many, and causing more to be trodden underfoot or crushed under the mounds of bodies that eventually built up ten or twelve deep. Many tried to climb the walls, and were picked off as they did so. Crowds huddled in the corners of the garden with no way out at all and were shot down where they stood. Retired soldiers in the crowd shouted out that people should lie on the ground to avoid the bullets, and many did so only to be shot as they lay. At times the crowd seemed to the troops to be gathering to rush forward at the firing line; Briggs drew Dyer's attention to this perceived threat. "The men sometimes collected in knots instead of bolting and he thought they meditated attack." These knots of men were mown down. The firing ceased occasionally, whilst the men reloaded and targets were adjusted more whistles blew, and firing started again. Dyer ordered reloading the men emptied their first magazines, then ordered 'independent rapid fire, personally directing fire at the densest parts of the crowd. By now the troops were kneeling or lying prone to get the best point of aim.

Although Briggs later denied that any soldiers hesitated or deliberately fired high to miss, many of the soldiers seem to have



Major Reginald Dyer at the Delhi Durbar, 1903 (Martin Dyer)

been severely frightened by what was happening. An officer of the 59th, R. Moray Graham, pieced together an account when his men got back to the Depot:

The small number of soldiers taken into the Bagh were [facing the mob] and they were very frightened. Who would not be? [The crowd] rushed to the gate where they saw the soldiers arrive only in the hope of being able to get out, away from the trouble. The soldiers, naturally enough, thought that they were being stormed by a riotous mob which vastly outnumbered them. And the mob were violently propelled forward by those who thought they could not run away out of the back of the Bagh.

Others with more experience were less easily frightened. Sergeant Anderson, standing alongside his brigadier, recalled:

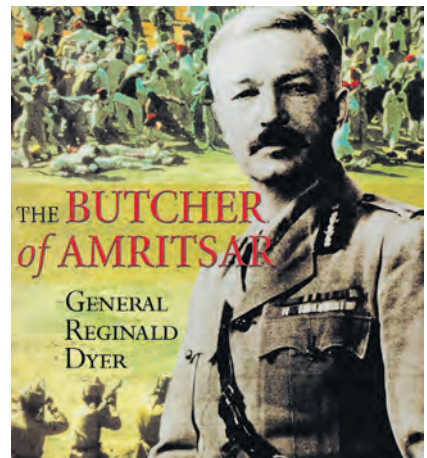
When fire was opened, the whole crowd seemed to sink to the ground, a flutter of white garments, with however a spreading out towards the main gateway, and some individuals could be seen climbing the high wall. There was little movement except for

Havoc ensued. The crowd ran in terror in all directions but found few exits by which to escape. People crammed into the entrances to the narrow passageways, frantically seeking to force their way out

the climbers. The gateway would soon be jammed. I saw no sign of a rush towards the troops ... After a bit, I noticed that Captain Briggs was drawing up his face as if in pain, and was plucking at the General's elbow ... The fire control and discipline of the native troops was first class. The officer in charge kept his eye on the General, gave his fire and cease fire orders to his men, and they obeyed him implicitly: there was no wild sporadic firing ... Dyer seemed quite calm and rational. Personally, I wasn't afraid. I saw nothing to be afraid about. I'd no fear that the crowd would come at us.

At least some of the Gurkha detachment were similarly unafraid. Two of them were later questioned by a member of the ICS they met in Darjeeling while they were on leave. Asked what they thought of the Jallianwala Bagh shooting, they said with relish, "Sahib, while it lasted it was splendid; we fired every round we had.

Under the hail of bullets in the Bagh, people tried to hide behind the well or to jump into it, many drowning and dying in the



crush inside. Many of those who had lain flat to escape the bullets were shot when they tried to take advantage of a pause in the firing to make a run for it; Dyer directed firing at what he described as the 'better targets' of those who were standing, as well as at a peepul tree behind and around which many were trying to shelter. Some people in the surrounding houses were also hit, perhaps by ricochets, though there is evidence that some of the troops fired at the onlookers. Girdhari Lal, who watched the scene with binoculars from a nearby house, saw that "There was not a corner left of the garden facing the firing line, where people did not die in large numbers. Many got trampled under the feet of the rushing crowds and thus lost their lives. Blood was pouring in profusion". Maulvi Gholam Jilani was caught in the firing:

I ran towards a wall and fell on a mass of dead and wounded persons. Many others fell on me. Many of those who fell on me were hit and died. There was a heap of the dead and wounded over me, under

and all around me. I felt suffocated. I thought I was going to die.

The firing continued for between ten and fifteen minutes. The noise in the Bagh was a cacophony of rifle crack, bullets thumping into flesh and walls, ricochets screaming off the brickwork, the screams of 25,000 people in terror and the cries of the wounded. So loud was the noise that Dyer and Briggs were later to maintain that they had some difficulty in stopping the troops firing, though this was denied by Sergeant Anderson. The sight was one of horror: The vast crowd staggered aimlessly; the air filled with dust and blood; flesh flew everywhere; men and children fell with limbs broken, eyes shot out, internal organs exposed.

When Dyer finally decided to stop the firing, which was only when the troops had only enough ammunition left, according to his calculation, to enable them to defend themselves during the march back to base, much of the crowd was still up against the opposite wall, trying to scabble its way out of the Bagh. Those Gurkhas who were armed only with *khukuris*, which they now drew, were sent by Captain Crampton down to the hansli drain that crossed the Bagh to check on those hiding there. They were then ordered back. Dyer gave orders to withdraw, walked back to his car, then led his troops back to the Ram Bagh the way they had come. He neither inspected the destruction he had caused, nor made any arrangements to tend the wounded.

— Excerpted with permission of the publisher from: *The Butcher of Amritsar: General Reginald Dyer* by Nigel Collett. Rupa. Pages 608. ₹795.



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The Sunday Tribune Spectrum



Krishna Sobti's writings introduced real women to the world. She also tried to rectify the erroneous understanding of our history

PERSONALITY PAGE 3



In London, you are never too far from a traditional pub. Brits love to drink. And what better place to get a feel of the place than a local watering hole

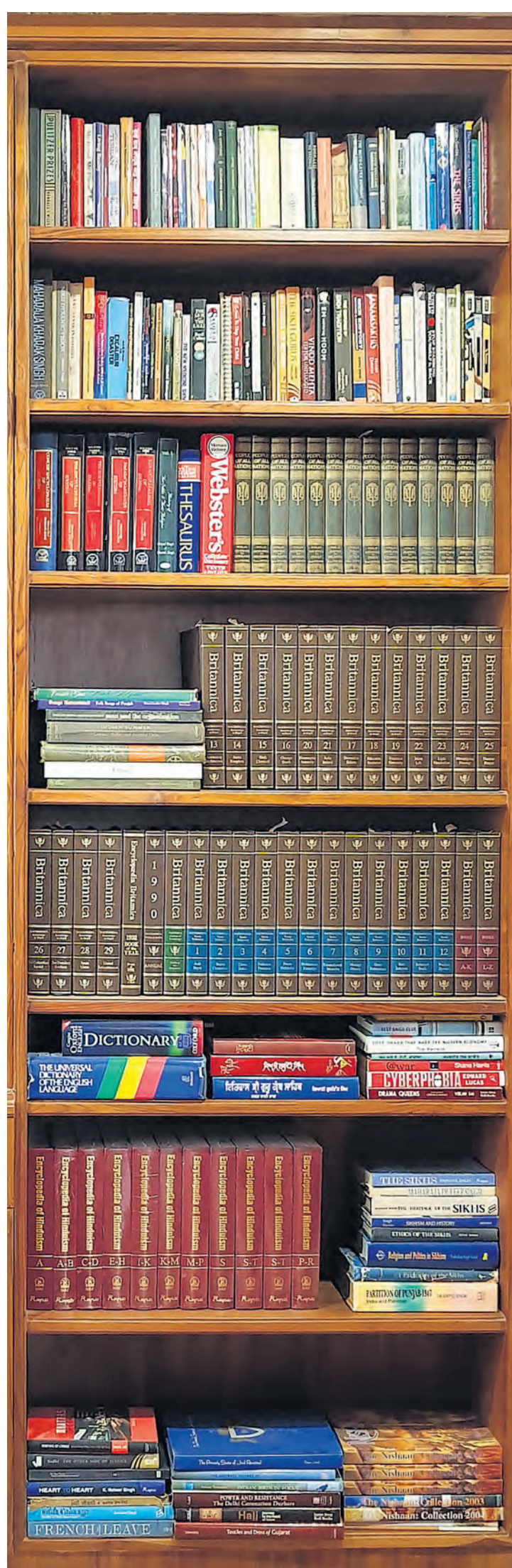
TRAVEL page 5



Biopics in Bollywood are being used to fulfil political agendas. As hagiographies, these are merely becoming tools to reinterpret history

ENTERTAINMENT page 6

What will happen to my books?



ROOPINDER SINGH

BOOKS. We cherish these faithful companions of our journey through life. We have picked them up at various junctures, sometimes casually, sometimes with due thought. Many have been gifted to us, some borrowed and not yet returned...the words encased in the cover have received significant investments of our time, and sometimes our mind space. We revisit our lives through these pages. A well-thumbed tome reflects our passion for what it offers/means to us — that lovely passage, that turn of the phrase, an inflexion point that changed the narrative...much to read and reminisce about in our minds. Each journey into those pages is a unique melange of circumstances of that particular moment. A revisit may yield more, or take us on a different path. Our library reflects our choices. As visitors, we often tend to check out a person's bookshelf.

Given this backdrop, it is easy to understand the storm unleashed by the tidying guru Marie Kondo's statement, since clarified, that you keep only 30 books that 'spark joy'. Kondo explained that the reference to the number of books was what she had kept behind after her cleaning efforts and that there was no fixed number of books that should be kept.

KONMARI METHOD

Kondo, whose 2014 title, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, has spawned a movement that is devoted to her method of tidying up, KonMari, where you essentially make a pile of your belongings and keep the things that 'spark joy'. Being an organisational guru, she categorises stuff and you make your pile accordingly.

The streaming service Netflix has her show, *Tidying up with Marie Kondo*, which has been an instant hit. In the show, she visits an American family and helps it tidy up the house. It is in one of the episodes that she tapped unused books and made the statement that got her into trouble. A Twitter storm started, followed by a massive debate, with mainstream media joining in with opinion pieces, largely by outraged bibliophiles, as well as Kondo defenders. Some of her followers saw subtle racism at play in the criticism. As always happens, the subtleties of the message were lost in the noise.

COLLECTOR'S SYNDROME

We collect, much more than we need. A truism, if ever there was one. Indeed, civilisation and amassing of things are intertwined. De-cluttering is a necessity, often imposed by shrinking space or change of circumstances, residences, etc. In other words, it is something that we are compelled to do. Any effort to impel us to tidy up our lives has enormous charm, till you get down to it.

Most houses have tidy public areas, and not-so-tidy (read messy) personal spaces, where individuals can be what they want to be. Does it come as a surprise that most of us are slothful, to varying degrees? The sheer number of self-help books and shows that promote tidiness is a good indication of how deep this behaviour pattern is, as is the desire to get out of it.

Organisational experts for homes are now a 'thing'. You can hire them, and unlike Kondo, they will do the work, but the painful decisions about what stays and what goes is still yours.

DOWNSIZING YOUR LIBRARY

We spend many decades collecting books. We read some; others represent our hope for the time and the inclination to read them. Sometime in the future of our imagination,

we will have the leisure to peruse them. Naturally, imagination can let us down when confronted with the harsh reality of our hectic lives, but then we all live on hope, don't we? The Japanese even have a word for it, *tsundoku* (acquiring books but letting them pile up in one's home without reading them).

Change of residences can trigger the move to downsize the library. No matter which method you use, KonMari or any other, it is painful. Yet, as you meet old friends, you realise that there are many acquaintances and some waiting to make an acquaintance with you.

The space squeeze forces you on the path of renunciation, and you subconsciously push out the acquaintances, even as you may still be tempted by the promise of those who you have yet to be acquainted with. You let go, make room for more, and in time whatever space you have will also be overwhelmed by more books.

PRESERVING THE PRINTED WORD

What then? In this mixed media world, where the realm of the printed word had digital and audio avatars, there is little doubt that the traditional book is still the biggest draw. What do you do when the space you can devote to collecting these runs out?

You must select the ones that need to go and find a home for them. Donate them to students, other readers, small libraries that may find them useful. They have been a part of your life for so long. You must think about where they go next.

Many scholars amass massive libraries and spend the later years of their lives asking themselves the question: "What will happen to my books?" Famous scholars are sometimes approached by universities and other institutions that seek to acquire their collections after they are no more.

Punjabi University, Patiala, has a collection of over 56 scholars, including those of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, Dr Ganda Singh, Prof Fauja Singh, Principal Teja Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh and Prof Vishwanath Tiwari. Panjab University, Chandigarh, is waiting for books from the library of its famous alumni, Dr Manmohan Singh, and Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, has collections of Nanak Singh, Bhai Vir Singh, Amrita Pritam, Shiv Kumar Batalvi and Prof Pritam Singh.

Others have taken a different route, that of digitising the collections, notably through the Panjab Digital Library, and then moving the physical books to a secure library. This allows for a wider availability of the volumes. The library has significant collections of Malwinderjit Singh Waraich and Dr Gurdev Singh Sidhu. These collections, after digitisation, have been displayed at the Virasat-e-Khalsa museum in Anandpur Sahib. "We are processing an important library of a famous Punjabi author which will be announced soon," says Davinder Pal Singh, PDLs co-founder.

For other mortals, a conscious effort in identifying the inheritors of their literary treasure troves has to be made. What better way than to start by letting go early, and then keeping it up, thereby ensuring that they reach the right hands. Otherwise, there are always second-hand book stalls that pick up estate sales (a polite way of saying *kabariwalas*) and pass on the books to those who are still willing to pay for them.

Our books are for us. Some are also for others to see in our spaces. We invest so much time and effort in collecting them, reading them and keeping them. We can only ensure their immortality by recognising our mortality. Let's focus on what we want to keep in our lives, even as we find a way to give to others that which was valuable enough to be in our homes till now.



AN ALTERNATIVE?

E-books? Indeed, they have their place, but the day is far when they replace the traditional book, the feel of the papyrus, the allure of the cover, the aroma of opening a fresh volume. Kindle books are great when you are on the move, but over time you find a clutter on your e-book reader, too! Yes, it does happen, and the psychological effect of this de-cluttering is eerily similar. Ask me. I know!



THE MEN AND THEIR TOMES

DR MANMOHAN SINGH

Panjab University, Chandigarh, has the privilege of housing the library of former Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh. The eminent economist studied and taught at the university. He earned his bachelor's degree in 1952 and master's degree in 1954, after which he studied at the University of Cambridge. He then taught at Panjab University. The selected volumes comprise his personal collection, as well as books presented to him during his long innings in public life. The original proposal was for 3,500 books to be donated to the university, which will be housed in Guru Tegh Bahadur Bhawan. The former PM

is a fast and voracious reader, and like many book lovers, he, too, struggles with the increasing number of volumes that he has to peruse. And he does not forget who has borrowed his book!



KHUSHWANT SINGH

The late Khushwant Singh's study was always overflowing with books. In the last 10 years of his life, he had the habit of telling whoever came to see him to take away whichever books he or she liked! He must have given a few hundred that way, says his son Rahul Singh. Of the thousands of books that Khushwant Singh had, perhaps more than 10,000, the collection has been distributed four ways. Most of these he had in his Sujjan Singh Park flat in Delhi. His granddaughter has inherited most of these. A second lot was in the house in Kasauli, where he spent his summers. Those are still there. The late author also gave a collection to the Kasauli Club library. He had quite a few books in his Lahore home at the time of Partition. Those, Rahul believes, his father gave to Panjab University, Lahore.



RUSKIN BOND

Not everyone has plans for their libraries. "It's hard enough to do something for the people you leave behind, let alone the books," says Ruskin Bond, who plans to leave his books for his heirs, Rakesh and Bina. The famous writer reads for pleasure and has a considerable number of books. "It is for them to do what they decide, maybe they will start a lending library!"



The Sunday Tribune

Spectrum



Women racers made heads turn at a recent championship in Delhi, but they still have a long way to go before they smash the gendered spaces **SOCIETY page 4**



'Green' travel is no longer a mere buzzword, it is a reality with both industry and tourists taking the right steps. Environmental conservation takes the centrestage **ECOLOGY page 5**



Mrinal Sen, along with Ritwik Ghatak and Satyajit Ray, makes the triumvirate credited with ushering in modern cinema into India **ENTERTAINMENT page 6**

BEST INVESTMENTS FOR A



Now that New Year resolutions are a week old, let's look at the deals that can reap you rich dividends in 2019

ROOPINDER SINGH

OUT with the old, in with the new. If only it were so simple. Every New Year starts with a firm commitment to wipe the slate clean and start afresh, to make improvements that would make life wonderful, to enrich ourselves with whatever we need ... and then sloth and time take over.

Even as we struggle to fulfil the promises we have made to ourselves, we find excuses not to do what we had planned, to fall back on the familiar. Yet, we all have the overpowering urge to improve ourselves and our lot. So, without much further ado, here are some of the investments that you need to make so that 2019 becomes a happy new year for you.

Hail your health: Everyone wants to be healthy, even those who don't take care of their health. Naturally, you stand a much better chance of being healthy if you do take care of your diet, and exercise. Let's recognise that health is the most critical investment we can make about ourselves. Whether we admit it or not, the fact remains that most of us eat more than we should. And this leads to all kinds of problems. Moderation is the key, diets, especially crash diets, are detrimental to good health.

Invest in education: People who study abroad learn what may sound strange to us — concept of students actively seeking knowledge from teachers and not sitting passively, taking down notes and ingesting them and finally purging in exams. Education is a life-long process, and YouTube and online courses ensure that you can improve your knowledge at any time you want. Learn more and learn wisely; you will be rewarded, again and again.

Stretch yourself: Now that there is the World Yoga Day, the ancient Indian practice has, indeed, gone international. Yet, we forget it. There are enough yoga centres, join the nearest one. The ancient yogis knew more about our body and mind than we give them credit for. You will see a difference in a few months, and once you get in the habit, it becomes a part of your life.

Raise the bar: Other than chronic illnesses over which we have no control, much can be achieved with regular exercise. The key word is regular. Start small and build up slowly. You are preparing for a marathon, not a sprint. Walk, run, use dumbbells, treadmills or what have you. The benefits of exercise are well known, as are excuses to avoid it. Can you afford to squander away your God-given wealth by succumbing to sloth? You know you are better than that.

Word power for you: Information is the key to self-development. Most of the readers of this newspaper are people who have risen in life because of being educated and informed. You must keep yourself continuously informed to stay current with the world. The caveman who developed heliographic knew that, do you? Video clips have their place, as do social media, but for real knowledge, seek trusted sources and keep yourself updated.

Strangers no more: Much of our lives revolve around the people we know. We often admire people who are altruistic, who do something for others. You don't have to be rich — you just have to be generous with your thoughts and time to do some volunteering work. The younger generations are getting more involved in CSR activities, adult education, helping children, patients, there are so many ways of helping others, and it is such a rewarding experience.

Love thy neighbour: Strange is the world in which what happens thousands of miles away grips our attention which we don't even know what is happening in our neighbourhood! Urbanisation has brought out a strange phenomenon: we no longer know our neighbours. This is so contrary to our traditions, and common sense. Know your neighbour, be there for them, be social and interactive.

Family first: You know for all the lip service that we pay about our family, we spend less time with our family members, and we certainly make less effort to appreciate what they do for us. When was the last time you said: "Thank You" to a family member? Remember, how grateful you were when a friend or a colleague did something for you? What about the family that continues to be there for us when we need it the most?

Friends for keeps: "You can judge a man by his friends," goes the adage. So true. While we can take our friends for granted, we should not do so. Make sure that you spend time with them and celebrate your friendship. Beware of toxic friends who put you down. Remember, unlike your family members, you can choose your friends. Construct relationships that nurture, bring out the best in you and challenge you to be a better person.

A calmer you: Our mind is always abuzz. We are bombarded by information, social media, demands of work and family. Everyone needs a respite. A calm mind holds the key to a calm personality, and the ability to take on challenges that life inevitably throws on us. We are from the land that taught the world how to meditate—we don't really require lessons, just the time and the will to invest in this calming process.

Stay thrifty: Do you really need that? This simple question could be the foundation of your financial independence. Opting out of the rat race is not just a thrifty dream, it is a well-recognised tactic to take control of your life by spending less and saving more. Just postponing immediate gratification gives superior long-time results.

Savings save the day: Once you downsize, you find yourself with excess money. A great feeling made much better with regular savings. Get advice from professionals. Consider going beyond the FD route, dip your toes into systematic investment plans (SIPs) for mutual funds, debt instruments, etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS: SANDEEP JOSHI





Theatre actor Mahnaz Damania on playing Shikhandi, a transgender character from the *Mahabharata*, and its relevance in our times **SOCIETY page 4**



Single-screen theatres are becoming a thing of the past across the country. However, like all good things, they gave us memories. Time to recollect some **NOSTALGIA page 5**



A collage of short stories offers the choice of watching several movies at the price of a single ticket, taking experimentation to another level **ENTERTAINMENT page 8**

Baisakhi in the City of Bliss

Guru Gobind Singh chose Anandpur Sahib to be the venue of a transformative movement in Punjab. Today, we see teaming masses march up to Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib on the Baisakhi day

ROOPINDER SINGH

What is it that is raising so much dust? Is it an invading force of raiders? No, that's just a poet blessed with wealth by Guru Gobind Singh going home after attending the darbar.

THE couplet attributed to one of the court poets of Guru Gobind Singh speaks of the dignity with which they were treated and also the magnificence of his gifts to the gifted. A flourishing cultural milieu came up wherever Sikh gurus set up camp. Guru Gobind Singh inherited many of the poets in his darbar from his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and we find compositions in Braj *bhasha*, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Punjabi from the period in different manuscripts. The village of Makhawal became Chakk Nanki when Guru Tegh Bahadur christened it after his mother. He had bought the village and surrounding areas in 1665 and it became his headquarters. He was to live here for 10 years before undertaking the fateful journey to Delhi and facing martyrdom while defending religious freedom for the adherents of other religions, not just his own.

It was this ethos that Guru Gobind Singh evoked in his fight against the repression of the day, personified by the Mughal ruler of Emperor Aurangzeb. *"I will make sparrows fight the hawks,"* said Guru Gobind Singh, after he formed the Khalsa at Anandpur Sahib on Baisakhi in 1699. Lakhs of Sikhs go to the birthplace of the Khalsa to celebrate Baisakhi, even as it is celebrated on a grand scale at other places too, notably at Talwandi Sabo.

The collected hymns of his predecessors and his own compositions were the guiding force for all. The annual gathering at Anandpur Sahib became the focal point of a renaissance that had as

much to do with the transformation of religious beliefs, a push towards an egalitarian society and a firm belief in the oneness of the Almighty, as it had with military preparation. The Baisakhi of 1699 threw up a vision of a new and regenerated humanity. Today, all those who visit Anandpur Sahib go to Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib, and rightly so. Rich in history, the present gurdwara, however, is relatively recent. It was built in the mid-1930s. It houses a collection of relics associated with the Gurus, especially Guru Gobind Singh.

These relics draw us to the magnificent heritage of the City of Bliss, as Anandpur literally translates into. It is here that the Gurus and their families lived. A thriving trade was provided for the inhabitants and visitors and the Guru's darbar attracted the hordes, especially during festivals like Hola Mohalla and Baisakhi.

Guru Gobind Singh spent some years of his childhood and later raised his family at Anandpur Sahib. It was here that he created the Khalsa. It was from here that he lost his family and his home, but never relented in his fight against tyranny. It was he who re-named Chakk Nanki as Anandpur. His Sikhs suffixed the honorific Sahib.

"Redemption comes through knowledge," said the Guru and the sheer volume and quality of literature that was created in the city became the stuff of legends. Going by what Bhai Santokh Singh says in *Suraj Parkash* — the manuscripts weighed around 350 kg! All except the small volumes that had been taken out earlier were lost when the Khalsa forces

evacuated Anandpur Sahib in December 1705. They had to go through the Sirsa stream that was in spate. The eldest two sons of Guru Gobind Singh were killed in the battle with the Mughal forces at Chamkaur Sahib. His two younger sons and his mother were separated from him, and much of the treasures, including the literature, were lost in the melee.

Anandpur would later be taken over by the Raja of Bilaspur and bought by the cousins of Guru Gobind Singh whose families ran the local gurdwaras. The family's writ ran over various institutions. One of the descendants, and it was under Sodhi Kishan Singh, a descendant, that the town became a municipal committee in the last decade of the 19th century. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) took over the gurdwaras in 1923 and has managed these since.

Over the years, Hola Mohalla became a festival associated with the city and its people. On this day, Nihangs, resplendent in cobalt blue tunics and turbans, horses and other accoutrements of warriors — perform death-defying feats.

Crowds gathered for Baisakhi, too, but not in such great numbers. Anandpur, the sleepy town at the foothills of the Shivalik Hills, remained out of public eye and missed much of the boom that other cities in Punjab benefited from.

Having, in Giani Zail Singh, a Chief Minister who was an MLA from Anandpur Sahib, helped. The Guru Gobind Singh Marg celebration in 1973 brought focus back to the city. This route traced the 47-day journey of Guru Gobind Singh from Anandpur Sahib to Talwandi Sabo, and the joint effort of the SGPC and the Punjab Government resulted in a major up gradation of infrastructure around the area.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution, adopted by the Shiromani Akali Dal that year,

lit a political fire that would soon ignite passions far beyond the town.

The Singh Sabha Shatabdi Committee, led by Hukam Singh and Giani Gurdit Singh, made a concerted effort to revive the spirit of Baisakhi at Anandpur Sahib. Scholars read out research papers to massive audiences. Some of them were honoured publicly for their contribution to history and understanding of religion. Like in much of Punjab, the decade between the mid-1980s and 1990s was largely lost.

Celebrations to mark the tercentenary of the Khalsa in 1999 saw the city being painted white. Lakhs of people, hundreds of *langars* and massive functions marked the occasion on which the establishment of the Virasat-e-Khalsa museum was announced by the then Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal.

Giani Tarlochan Singh's appointment as Jathedar of Keshgarh Sahib in 2003 was another milestone. He had spent much of this life at Anandpur Sahib, and served as a catalyst to growth till his death, in harness, in 2013.

The Virasat-e-Khalsa museum, which opened in 2011, is now a major tourist attraction. Today, the celebrations have evolved too. People on horseback could well be polo players, not just Nihangs. The SGPC and the city administration play a major role in directing the festivities, with *kirtan darbars* and *katha* sessions dominating the discourse. Relative newcomers like the Anandpur Sahib Foundation and Sikh Chamber of Commerce have planned a half-marathon, a movie festival and knowledge sessions, activities reflecting an evolving spirit of Baisakhi. Baisakhi at Anandpur Sahib reflects the egalitarian ethos of the Gurus, who re-kindled the spirit of the downtrodden and the battered and made them stand up for the rights of others, as well as their own.

52 COURT POETS

Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha's authoritative *Mahan Kosh* lists the following 'Bavanja Kavi' in who received the patronage of Guru Gobind Singh:

1	Uday Rai	27	Dharam Singh
2	Ani Rai	28	Dhanna Singh
3	Amrit Rai	29	Dhayan Singh
4	Allu	30	Nannoo
5	Asa Singh	31	Nishchal Dass
6	Alim	32	Nihal Chand
7	Ishavar Dass	33	Nand Singh
8	Sukh Dev	34	Nand Lal
9	Sukha Singh	35	Pindi Dass
10	Sukhia	36	Ballabh
11	Sudama	37	Balloo
12	Sainapat	38	Bidhi Chand
13	Shyam	39	Bulland
14	Heer	40	Brikh
15	Hussain Ali	41	Brij Lal
16	Hans Ram	42	Mathura
17	Kallu	43	Madan Singh
18	Kuveresh	44	Madan Giri
19	Khan Chand	45	Malloo
20	Gunia	46	Maan Dass
21	Gurdas	47	Mala Singh
22	Gopal	48	Mangal
23	Chandan	49	Ram
24	Chanda	50	Rawal
25	Jamaal	51	Roshan Singh
26	Tehkin	52	Lakha

GURDWARAS OF ANANDPUR

Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib
Gurdwara Qila Anandgarh Sahib
Gurdwara Qila Fatehgarh Sahib
Gurdwara Qila Lohgarh Sahib
Gurdwara Holgarh Sahib
Gurdwara Mata Jito Ji
Gurdwara Manji Sahib
Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib
Gurdwara Damdama Sahib
Thara Sahib
Gurdwara Bhora Sahib

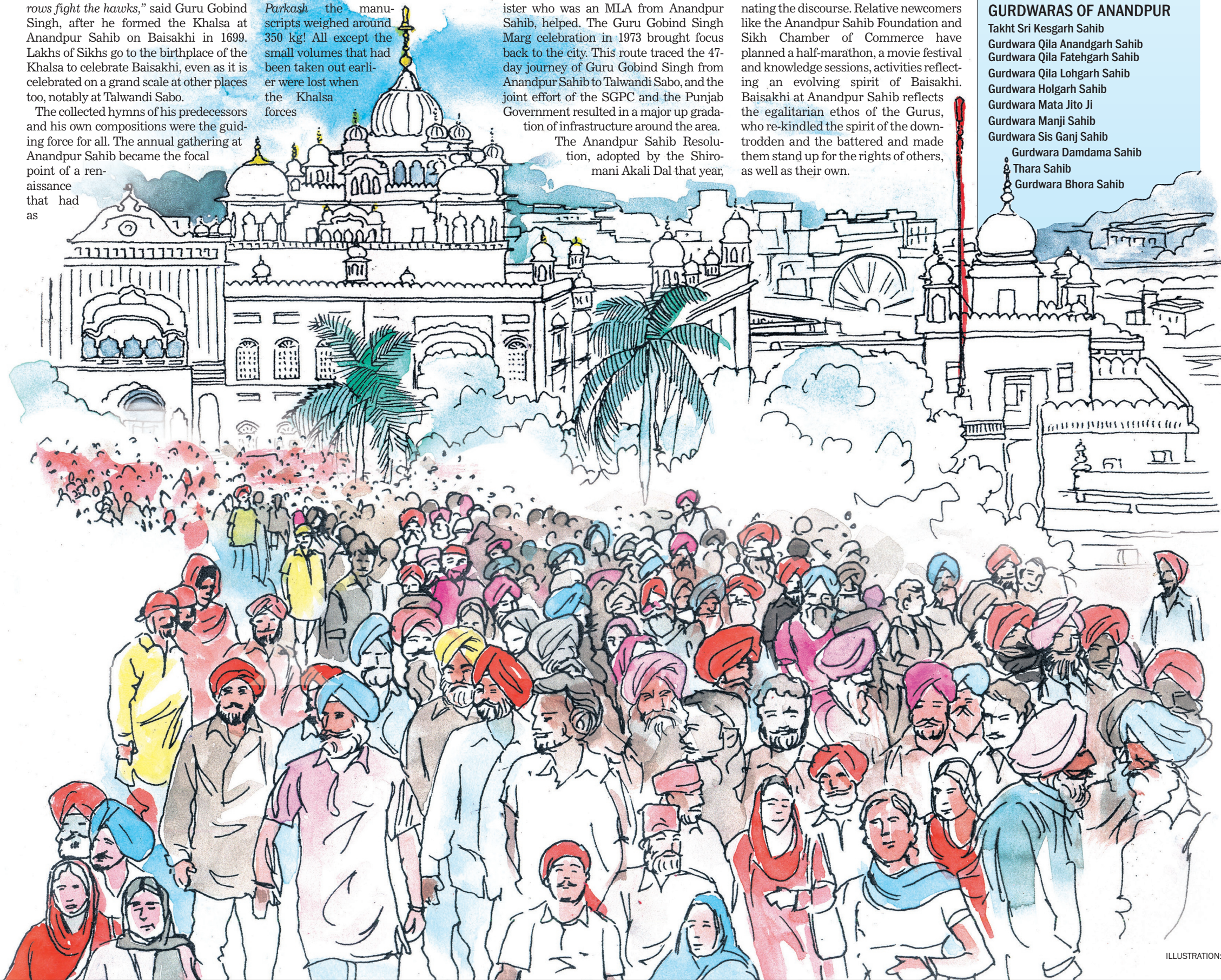


ILLUSTRATION: SANDEEP JOSHI



'Same, same but different'

A shared culture lends familiarity to Bali's unique multiculturalism

ROOPINDER SINGH

THE absence of honking is striking. More so, when you are stuck in an infrequent traffic jam on way to Ubud from the Denpasar International Airport. Cars are similar to the ones in India — mainly Suzuki, Hyundai and Toyota vehicles. Swarms of scooters can be seen on no-lane roads. People drive on the same side of the road as in India, but they stop at intersections, wait courteously for other vehicles to turn before they move, even as traffic policemen are seldom seen.

Who wants to see a traffic policeman when there is so much else to capture your attention — the verdant greens, sculpted flowerpots on roads, intricate statues on roundabouts, tiled red rooftops that stand out against the azure sky and the temples that dot the landscape. Clear warm beaches that are full of tourists, often Australians, who fly a short distance to this sun-soaked land just eight degrees south of the Equator.

Statues are everywhere. You observe that their lower part is covered with *saput poleng*, the black and white chequered cloth that weaves in the two eternal opposites — the good and the evil — into a harmonious whole. Some representing deities are covered in golden cloth. Also visible are the offerings, on tiny coconut-leaf trays, often small, placed in front of statues of deities, at higher and lower level, with flowers, eatables, and cigarettes sharing the space with incense sticks!

With a relaxed pace of life and well-developed tourist infrastructure, Bali is host to backpackers and well-heeled travellers alike, with much to offer. "Same, same but different," is a phrase you hear often, and you can relate to it because there is familiarity and difference, a shared culture that has its unique flavour.

Buildings often have a large free space between the roof and the walls, allowing for good ventilation, and public places just have roller blinds (like chiks), instead of walls, which can be pulled down when it rains, or when there is too much sun.

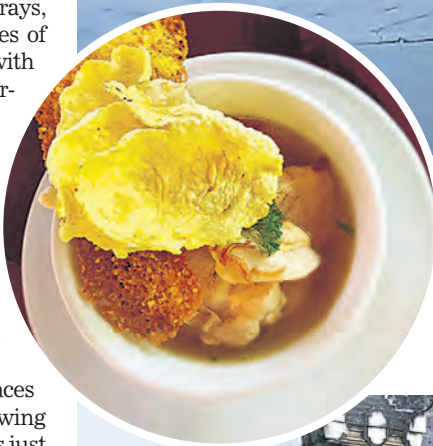
The province that largely depends on tourist-related income, besides traditional agriculture, has many attractions, most of these natural. The beach is what attracted people to Kuta in the first place. And this is where the action is. Nice surf, lounge chair, drinks galore, with the ever-present beers, the local Bintang comfortably rubbing shoulders with its international counterparts. *Es Kelapa Muda* is iced coconut water with a dash of lime and ice in the fruit.

Young revellers dance away the night at the many nightclubs that attract the party crowd to Kuta and Seminyak. The scene is vibrant, and at times, wild. During the day, as you negotiate your way around to the beach through a narrow streets lined by shacks, you are reminded of such shops near Delhi's Indian Oil Building. Horse carriage riders may greet you with "Namaste," and the beach boy spout an impromptu rendering of a Bollywood song. Modern shopping malls and hotels line up the beach front, and even though crowded, it is full of friendly locals, all trying to sell something or the other to visitors.

Sunset is arriving, the beach is crowded, and you can well spend time either surfing, or watching the surfers, sipping your drink, thinking about *Bebek Goreng*, the deep-fried duck that you are planning for dinner. Topped off with *Bubuh Injin*, the black-rice pudding with coconut milk, a *kheer*, but different.

Host to the world

Ubud is the cultural centre. Fine performances from the *Mahabharata*, Balinese style, naturally, echo the "Same, same but different" style as then, the eternal fight between the forces of good (the Barong) and the bad (the Ragada) is fought on stage. Artists come from far and wide with their paintings, and the area has



a good number of workshops that produce intricate carvings in various types of wood and traditional silversmith families whose workshops demonstrate the way in which their creations take shape. Naturally, they try to steer you towards their sales areas. The Batik workshops are interesting, but wares simply too touristy. On the other hand, local lace adorns fabrics that make for attractive garments.

Balinese sculpture was once entirely religion-oriented till tourists descended. Now,

the beautiful statues carved out of soft volcanic rock, are to be seen everywhere, even restaurants, and they could depict musicians, dancers or even some bizarre creations for specific tourist interests.

The food in Bali restaurants is a fascinating mix of Indian, Chinese and local cuisines. Much of what you get is pan-Asian, rather than strictly local, and emphasis is on the lunch. Rice is the staple, and you can't go wrong with *Nasi Goreng* or fried rice.

As expected, there are plenty of options

for staying; much depends on your budget and inclination. Many go to Bali to escape the humdrum of everyday life, and for them, there are beautiful resorts away from the town, where you can be one with nature, cut off from the world, yet have all creature comforts available at short notice. For those who love to surf, there are beaches. Culture vultures can explore the myriad forms of expression that the people of Bali use while interacting with the world around them and beyond.

ON THE PLATTER:

Eating places abound in Kuta. (From left, circled close-ups) *Gerang Asem*: Chicken stew with vegetables & local spices; steamed rice is a staple with most dishes; fish and chips with a wooden presentation; and flowers are widely used for adornment

TOURIST'S DELIGHT:

Horse-drawn carriages are a big draw near the beach, and contemporary restaurants cater to tourists and locals alike who flock to Kuta for its famed beaches and gorgeous sunsets

FLAVOURS FROM BACK HOME

The Indian cultural connection of the people of the only Hindu-majority province in Indonesia is multi-dimensional. You see it in architecture, religious rituals, various forms of dance-drama and their themes from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*.

Hinduism came to the shores of neighbouring Java and Bali through traders from South India and Balinese people are said to have embraced the religion by the seventh century. The Majapahit Empire (1293-1500 CE) represented the pinnacle of Hindu power in the region. At its zenith, its writ ran over a vast area that would include Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, southern Thailand, the Sulu archipelago, the Philippines and East Timor. The empire's collapse led to an exodus of royal families and elite from Java to the neighbouring Bali and enriched the island enormously, especially culturally, by preserving the traditions and artefacts of Balinese Hinduism. Nirartha, a priest, established Rambut Siwi, Tanah Lot and Ulu Watumn temples, among others.

Balinese Hinduism has a distinct identity. The influence of Buddhism and animism, or the belief that everything has a spirit, which comes from Jawa, can be seen in customs and practises. Every dwelling has a temple, not one in the corner of a room, but one that occupies a special place in the home, in the holiest North-East corner. The joint-family system is well and alive. A home is not a single unit, but a compound of separate pavilions. Garuda, Lord Vishnu's vahan, is the official symbol of Indonesia, and it reflects the syncretism of the region, as powerfully as anything else.

THE INDIAN

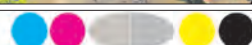
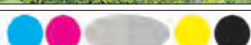
CONNECT: Many dance-drama forms here fuse themes from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*



CULTURAL CAPITAL:

Balinese architecture finds ample expression in Ubud. (From left) A flower-bedecked statue at the entrance near a main street; traditional style huts at a modern resort near the town, and the Tegengan waterfall, a popular tourist destination

PHOTOS BY THE WRITER & JASPREET WARAICH



The Sunday Tribune

Spectrum



Oscillating between happiness and sorrow, love and its offshoot emotions still remain the same. Only the interpretations change **LOVE, ETC. page 5**



A new book on Maqbool Fida Husain navigates between the man and the artist, sometimes fusing both, sometimes holding them apart **BOOKS page 6**



Small and sensible films are likely to hold sway in 2018. Here's a peep at some offbeat movies that will strike a chord with the audience **ENTERTAINMENT page 8**

Explore the many ways to introduce change in your life to make the New Year more meaningful and enriching

YES! YOU CAN



ILLUSTRATIONS: SANDEEP JOSHI

ROOPINDER SINGH

NEW Year is usually the time when we all take stock of what we have achieved in the year gone by, and what we wish to be in the next 12 months. Indeed, resolutions are made and uttered with conviction. We want to be happier, more productive, to have a more fulfilling life. Yet, often these remain just that, resolutions. We often fail to take what we have decided to its logical end.

We must all remember that all this is possible, and in fact, the fact that you are reading this means that you have already taken the first step towards a better you in 2018—awareness is the beginning of self-improvement.

There are any number of experts, life coaches who give advice on what you can do, or what you must do. We have all read what they say. They all feel that they have a unique message, yet the more you read such advice, the more you realise that what they say has many similarities. This makes our task easier. We can, thus, have an easy compendium of advice, gleaned from various sources over a long period, coupled with a healthy dose of common sense.

Let's go through some important measures that you can take to improve your life, and yes, you can make a difference, naturally, after taking small steps towards your destination. All these activities will help you, some more and some less, but what you get out of these totally depends on how you use these tools.

SLEEP ON TIME: As a generation, most of us are sleep-deprived today. There are too many attention-grabbing devices and temptations. Getting into the bed on time is a great way to start the year, provided you do not succumb to the TV-in-bed lure. Try reading, instead, or better still, talking to your partner.

MEDITATE: Yogis and gurus of yore showed us how important it is to look within by meditating. It is spiritually enhancing and cleanses the mind. Meditation techniques are many, the experience is unique to each individual, but there is no doubt about its ability to enrich. Meditation is a great stress-buster, too.

INTROSPECT: Devote some time each day to look inwards. The humdrum of day-to-day routine is such that it prevents people from



thinking, contemplating, introspecting. This robs them of the most critical faculty—of self-evaluation. As we introspect, we are not posing; we can open ourselves to great scrutiny without any fear of social censure. What a wonderful opportunity to learn about ourselves!



EXERCISE: Just a bit helps, more helps much more. Walk, mornings or evenings, any time you can grab. Cycle if you can, join a gym if you are younger. Physical activity has a remarkable influence on one's mental state and contributes mightily to a person's wellbeing.



EAT HEALTHY: Yes, home food is the best, and within that, there are minor modifications that can have a major impact. Curb sugar

intake, eat your greens and try to eat less of the fried stuff. You have all heard it before, but it works, only if you practice. Moderation is the mantra, however, crash dieting does not work in the long run.

READ: Even for the YouTube generation, the written word is still the largest source of knowledge. What we read shapes our mind, and fiction is a wonderful way to escape the world and go on a journey into the unknown. Yes, if you want to get ahead in life, you must read.



TACKLE STRESS: Long seen as an inevitability of modern life, stress takes its toll, unless you use it as a tool to tackle problems that are causing it. A change in how you look at situations drastically alters your reaction to them, stress becomes an assistant to channelise your thoughts and energies positively.



SHOW GRATITUDE: A stranger helps us and we feel gratitude. Take the next step, express it, let the person know, and while you are at it, don't forget your loved ones and your family; they do the most for you and their efforts often go unrecognised.



GIVE BACK: India has a long tradition of people giving back to society, but the super-rich of India have not been able to match the philanthropic efforts of their western counterparts. Yet, the Millennials have many options. There are, literally, thousands of streams of effort currently underway in the country, and you can help in various ways, by donating time, skill or money—your choice.



STOP PROCRASTINATING: The time to do all this is NOW. The biggest problem that we face is one of procrastination, putting off what you can do today until tomorrow, and that tomorrow never comes. One way to deal with it is to divide the jobs into smaller chunks, and then getting down to tackling them, one at a time.

SAVE AND INVEST: We have always been told to save, but then there is the allure of all these new things that are now available in the market. The only way of securing your future is to save. Savings do need to be invested, and for this look beyond the traditional fixed deposits, into the realm of mutual funds, but shy of 'miraculous' opportunities that crop up. Investments should



always seek to strike the right balance between safety and returns.

NOURISH POSITIVITY: The negative tends to have a greater impact on our minds than the positive, but it is a poison that corrodes our being. Once you recognise the problem, once you identify your negativity, fight it by changing it. Your thoughts may be bleak, but your prospects may well turn out to be better than you imagine. There is always a more positive way of looking at things, and that helps in improving how we perceive life.



SOCIAL MEDIA SABBATICAL: How much of our self-worth is determined by the social media like Facebook? Too much is the short answer. Take a break. Let your life return to the time when face time was spent face-to-face with family and friends. Seriously, knowing who is taking a vacation where is not helping you, neither is reading about how wonderful their lives are.

Now you have all these suggestions/imperatives/commands, take these as you want. Naturally, not all will work for everyone. Just as each of us is unique, we will have to find out the special combination that works for us. Yes, we can make a change, and even if we achieve a bit, we have moved from where we were. Now, that's a happy thought. Isn't it.

Yes! You can! As you get on the path of self-improvement, an important tip to remember is to that you need to work out a system so that you can measure your achievements. The improvements will be incremental, and the expectation is often too great. Please be forgiving towards yourself. If you are not able to achieve what you thought was possible, perhaps your goal was too ambitious. You can cheat everyone but yourself, so be honest, be realistic. Be the agent of your change.



Reporting turbulent times

ROOPINDER SINGH

THE *Tribune*, ever the chronicler of the people and events of Punjab, found itself in an unusual situation of becoming the subject of news reports. In the days leading to Partition, two employees were killed in Lahore, one was stabbed. *The Tribune* ceased publication in Lahore on August 16, 1947. A truck and a car evacuated 94 staff and some of their family members. The printing press it left behind, newsprint, typewriters and a van were given to *Pakistan Times* by the West Punjab Government. Just 40 days later, on September 25, 1947, the newspaper resumed publication — from Simla. Yes, the printing press was small, staff inadequate, and finances badly crunched, but the paper gave a voice to the people and made them aware of events that

The Tribune, which continued to print except for a brief break, stood tall in the tough times, mirroring the events that were reshaping the lives of millions

were shaping their lives.

A perusal of the files shows that it was on Wednesday, April 9, 1947, that *The Tribune* had a banner headline “Proposed Partition of Punjab and Bengal”;

another one, “Maharaja of Patiala Urges the Princes to Join Constituent Assembly.” Even then, there was hope. On April 21, the banner headline read: “No Partition of Indian Now”.

However, reality soon sunk in, and on June 21 and 23, the headline declared: “Bengal votes for Partition”, and “Punjab to be Partitioned,” with another item highlighting the worsening situation in Amritsar where “100 bombs [were] exchanged by rival mobs.” Details about how various institutions and assets were to be divided are fascinating — instant records have a compelling intensity, even as the fluid situation makes for patchy, chaotic historical narrative.

The August 15 issue declared: “India Wakes to Life and Freedom.” It reported on the historic session of the Constituent Assembly for New Delhi. From Karachi came another report: “Birth of

Pakistan an event in History” and another one titled “Goodwill and Friendship with Britain and Hindustan Qwaide-i-Azam Jinnah’s Aim.” Thereafter, the staff was forced to flee from Lahore.

By October, when *The Tribune* resumed publication in Simla, the horrific deaths and displacement of millions dominated the reporting. There is the story of how Hindus and Sikhs were wiped out in Miani, a village in Pakhtunkhwa. Another day, another story. This about the “Ill-fated train from Pindi to Dadan Khan; Witnesses’ Account of Loot, Murder and Abduction,” even as an adjoining item says “Retaliation Denounced: UP Communists Appeal for Peace”. On October 5, the banner headline is: “4 Columns of 1,15,000 Marching to India: 30,000 Hindu and Sikh Refugees Cross Border. Muslims attack Convoy Near Janarwala.”

A separate story on this page details the efforts of *The Tribune*’s Refugees Forum, wherein displaced people made efforts to contact their loved ones. By the end of the year, On December 5, 1947, *The Tribune* was able to announce: “Hindus and Sikhs Evacuated from W. Punjab. Colossal Task Completed Within Allotted Time. Small Pockets Yet to be Cleared. Over 8 Million people cross border.”

One aspect of the task may have been completed, but there was so much more. A new country was being run. This region and its people had borne the brunt of Partition. Millions of lives had been lost, many more millions displaced, rendered homeless, and many families torn apart in the days that led to the Independence of India. *The Tribune* was, once again, the chronicler of Punjab, serving the people of the state.

BORE SIMLA MUSSOORIE
I.O. 315 Hornby Road, Bombay)

VOL. LXVII. NO. 172

LAHORE, TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 1947

PRICE:-TWO ANNAS

PUNJAB TO BE PARTITIONED

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

INDIA!

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

NEW DELHI, June 20. — It is understood that Mr. Jinnah is greatly upset at the fact that his so-called Muslim state may be known as Pakistan and the rest of the country would continue to be called India, both in international world and inside the country.

His and the League High Command’s efforts to get India named as Hindusthan against Pakistan seem to have failed. That is why questionnaire to Government servants

says: “Will you like to serve Pakistan or the rest of India?”

Miani Hindus And Sikhs Wiped Out

Liaison Officers Relate Tale of Atrocities

Tragic Fate of Chiniot People; Mass Forcible Conversions

(FROM OUR STAFF REPRESENTATIVE)

JULLUNDUR, Sept. 30. — Most of the liaison officers (supported by L. Mohan Lal and Seth Rattan Chand, who are here) say that there is no planned evacuation. They asserted: “If the Chief Liaison Officer is given, at least, 15 trains daily, 300 trucks and 5,000 military troops, as escort, except certain small pockets in villages all other refugee camps can be cleared within two weeks.

Rai Bahadur Nathu Ram, Chief Liaison Officer, said: “But the Government won’t do it. I don’t understand why?”

All were of the opinion that lorry convoys and convoys on foot, even trains, were partially protected and were without adequate military escort. Many trains and convoys had been attacked on the way, resulting in huge losses. Protection must be afforded by the Hindu and Sikh military.

Immediate evacuation they said was needed from the far-west area of Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Multan and Mianwali, which are very much disturbed districts.

“For the last one week, trouble has started there. The



rural areas have been engulfed. So far, no District Liaison Officer has visited these places for want of escort. Forcible conversions and abductions are the order of the day. Extreme difficulty will be felt to evacuate small pockets in a village of a family or families of 30 or 40 members. Strong military alone can stop abduction of young girls. People are offering themselves for conversions, but their daughters’ hands are demanded for marriages.”

Hindus & Sikhs evacuated from W. Punjab

Colossal Task Completed Within Allotted Time
Small Pockets Yet To Be Cleared
OVER 8 MILLION PEOPLE CROSS BORDER

New Delhi, Dec. 4. — Mass evacuation of Hindus and Sikhs from West Punjab has been completed within the allotted time. There remain about 5,000 people scattered in small pockets whose evacuation is expected to be completed in about a week’s time.

Over 8 million refugees have crossed the Indo-Pakistan border in both directions upto November 21, according to the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation. Of this a little over 4 million consisted of Hindus and Sikhs who were brought over to India from West Punjab, the NWFP, Sind and Baluchistan. The evacuation of the remaining Hindus and Sikhs from West Punjab and the NWFP is expected to be completed by the middle of December.

INDIA WAKES TO LIFE & FREEDOM

Nation takes pledge of dedication to service of motherland
Historic Session Of Consenbly

NEW DELHI, Aug. 14. — Great enthusiasm and scenes which could hardly be forgotten were witnessed tonight when the Constituent Assembly held its midnight session for the assumption of power.

Members attended in full strength. The hall was brilliantly flood-lit and the empty panels of the portraits on

the walls were covered with bright national flags. Few of the members wore European costume and all were in Dhoti and Kurta or Ackans. While the members exchanged cordial compliments, ... crowds streamed to the vicinity of the Council Hall where arrangement had been made for them to hear the speeches

of the leaders....

There were traffic jam in Parliament Street and other main roads leading to the Council long before the House met at 11 P.M. At 11 the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, dressed in white Khadi, took the chair. There was hushed silence and members took their seats.



IF MURDERS CONTINUE, RIOTERS WILL FORCE GOVT. HANDS

“Is it wrong to draw public attention to logical steps?” — Gandhiji

SIMLA, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1947

NEW DELHI, Sept. 30. — Addressing the prayer meeting yesterday, Mahatma Gandhi said: “My reference to the possibility of war between the two sister Dominions seems, I am told, to have produced a scare in the west. I hold that not a single mention of war in my speeches can be interpreted to mean that there was any incitement to or approval of war between Pakistan and India, unless the mere mention of

it is taboo. I claim that I rendered service to both sister States by examining the present situation and definitely stating when the cause of war could arise between the two States. This was done not to promote war but to avoid it as far as possible. I endeavoured too to show that if insensate murders, loot and arson by the people continued, they would force the hands of their Governments. Was it wrong to draw public attention to logical steps that inevitably followed one after another?”

Separated by Partition, united by *The Tribune*

Amid riots and massacres, the newspaper’s Refugee Forum was helping people find their loved ones

VISHAV BHARTI

THE largest mass migration in human history was taking place and relatives of Congress leader Sardar Atma Singh, who lost a large number of relatives in the Sheikhpura riots, were anxious about his whereabouts. They were inquiring about him in newspapers. Almost two months later on October 6, 1947, Page Two of *The Tribune* “gladly” announced that he was “at Jullundur” and can be contacted through the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Dr Gopi Chand Bhargava. Atma Singh later served as cabinet minister in Punjab.

It was *The Tribune*’s Refugee Forum, where from a policeman to a postman, from a *Tribune* employee to a government doctor, from a cloth merchant to a bank manager could reach out to find lost relatives. Just after resuming its publication from Shimla after 40 days break, *The Tribune* started a column called Refugee Forum, where amid riots, massacres, *The Tribune* was offering space to whereabouts of lost and found people. Those days from Multan to Kangra, from Rawalpindi to Rohtak, *The Tribune* was “almost the only source of authentic and detailed news about refugees, most of whom

were regular readers of the newspaper and eagerly awaited each day’s issue,” notes Prakash Nanda in *A History of The Tribune* published on newspaper’s centenary celebrations in 1981.

Looking at those broadsheets printed on lino in *The Tribune*’s archive, one sees that these notices commonly came from Shimla and around. People for whom these pleas were made were mostly commoners, but also included prominent people who were lost and later found through the columns of the paper. Like story of Pandit Thakur Datt Multani about

whom one fine morning *The Tribune* announced: “...*The Tribune* is glad to be able [sic] to say that Pandit Thakur Datt Multani the renowned Vaid of Lahore, with his sons and daughter is in Delhi...” Multani was founder of the famous modern-day Multani Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

The column continued for several weeks and was later renamed as Refugees’ Whereabouts. The column finds a special place in the works of historiography on Partition. “This feature facilitated countless reunions of cruelly separated families,” notes Nanda. True. Atma Singh’s story holds testimony to that.

Refugees Forum

SIMLA, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1947

Mr Ram Narain, Stenographer, Punjab Registered (I. & S.) Stockholders Association Ltd., Sadder Bazar, Ambala Cantt. wants to know from any refugee from Lyallpur the whereabouts of Ch. Kanishi Ram Sub-Inspector of Police, lately incharge Traffic and Special Branch, Lyallpur and family.

Mr D.R. Varma, S.D.O., Central P.W.D., 486, Madan Mahal Road, Wright Road, Jubbulpur (C.P.) wants information about L. Wazir Chand, Hamandas, and L.Jagdish Ram Marwaha previously working in the office of the Chief Engineer, Northern Command, Rawalpindi. He will also like to hear from or about L. Panna Lal Gaind, B.A., LL.B., originally of Pasrur, employed in the Municipal Committee, Gujrat.

NOTE: L.Tara Chand of the *Tribune* is working in the office at Simla.

V.N. Dogra Esq. P.W.D. B. & R. Sectt. Simla East

would like to get the whereabouts of his brother Sardarilal Dogra Karachi Police, and brother-in-law Mr Shiv Kumar Parcel Clerk, Quetta.

Mr. Dina Nath of the *Tribune*, wants to know the whereabouts of his wife, Sh. Maya Wanti with two children and his uncle Munshi Diwan Chand, Village Wasu in Gujrat.

Mr Jagdish Mitra, M.A., P.W.D. Secretariat, (B. & R.), Simla, E. wants to know the whereabouts of Sardar Kirpal Singh Nagi and his family who were living at 197, Archer Road, Quetta.

Mr Hans Raj Sahnan of *Tribune*, Lahore informs all his relatives and friends that he has reached Simla safely and is staying at Bantony, The Mall, Simla. He wants information about L. Daulat Ram, Proprietor American Watch Co., Lahore and Mr Daulat Ram Sabharwal, Assistant Manager, American Watch Co., Lahore.

Principal H. C. Batra informs that he’s safe and so are his wife and son.



For more text, please visit www.tribuneindia.com



c m y b +





World's oldest first-time mother from Amritsar has her fears and insecurities, just like anybody else

SOCIETY page 3



Scale down your garden's dimensions without cutting down on the thrill of gardening or the joy of creating an artistic landscape

GARDENING page 7



Randeep Hooda, who has the knack of getting into the skin of his character with unerring accuracy, takes each role seriously

ENTERTAINMENT page 8

So that they can engineer their dreams

Students from rural backgrounds with the potential to excel in engineering are getting the much-needed boost

ROOPINDER SINGH

PETITE, all of 17 years old, yet a poise that belies her age, Gagandeepa walks into the room with an intriguing combination of diffidence and confidence. She has come a long way, but there is much to do yet.

Her journey is one of transformation. The fourth and youngest child of Jamal Khan and Parveen from Achal, a village 12 km from Nabha in Patiala district, she represents hope for a family that almost dropped out of the educational mainstream. Her eldest sister passed out of Class XII and then took vocational education at an industrial training institute (ITI), and other siblings, too, did not get past school — they trained for work... they had no option, economic necessity undermined their educational dreams.

Driven they are

Gagandeepa, however, was driven. She left the comfort of her home and the local school in Achal to improve her academic prospects. She, along with three students, two girls and a boy from her village, took an exam and got admission in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in Fatehpur Rajputan village, near Patiala. JNVs are government-funded residential and co-educational schools for gifted rural students. "We wanted to study, but were new to an English-medium school. There were many difficulties for us in the first year, but our teachers were very helpful," says Gagandeepa, as she recollects how the teachers used Punjabi extensively to help bridge the gap. She particularly remembers her teacher, "Rachna ma'am", for her encouragement. Gagandeepa's face scrunches up as she also narrates the inevitable lonely nights of crying in the quilt while missing home.

Gagandeepa had a role model in her sister, Yasmin, who topped Class VIII. "I too topped in Class X with 9.8 GPA," she says proudly. Financial constraints hobbled the growth of the family of a person who earned his living by working with his hands. While her siblings could not grow, Gagandeepa was fortunate.

Bhai Jaita scholarship

Along with the other students at JNV, she applied for a scholarship offered by the Bhai Jaita Foundation (BJF), which seeks to help socially and economically disadvantaged individuals through its rigorous academic programme,



Driven by their desire to achieve, Gagandeepa, Manish Rawat (front left) and their batchmates get the help they need from organisations like the Bhai Jaita Foundation

modelled on Bihar's Anand Kumar's successful 'Super 30'. Bhai Jaita was the Sikh who brought the severed head of Guru Tegh Bahadur to Guru Gobind Singh from Delhi to Anandpur Sahib for cremation. Bhai Jaita was part of ninth Guru's entourage.

The BJF is headed by a former Director of the PGI, Dr BNS Walia. It came about when Chicago-based Kulmeet Singh sold his software company in 2006. He took out *dasvand* (tithe) for philanthropic activities. Largely a family supported endeavour, all board members donate to charity, says Kulmeet's father Harpal Singh, managing trustee of the foundation. Harpal was an engineer in PWD Punjab before a scholarship helped him earn an MBA at Harvard Business School. He worked as a management consultant before devoting himself to charitable causes in 1985.

Students, who are selected after examination and interviews, are given free board and lodging for two years. They enrol in a regular school and study for the IIT-JEE examinations. This year 23 students of the foundation appeared for the examination, 18 of them (77 per cent) qualified for the IIT Advanced Test — seven of them girls (39 per cent), including Gagandeepa.

Remarkable success

The success rate is remarkable, as Harpal gladly points out, when compared to the overall percentage of 16.4 per cent for successful candidates and 20.2 per cent for girls. While, for overall candidates, the result is skewed heavily in the favour of urban areas, the foundation's wards reverse the trend. The students are also from various religious denominations.

The Punjab Government's 'Super 50' project too attempted to replicate the 'Super 30' project. It was run from 2000 to 2015, when funding ran out. Only six out of the 200 students reportedly made it to the JEE Advanced Test. The contrast between the two endeavours highlights the sub-par performance of the government. Punjab also launched a "meritorious school" programme, which expanded the concept. Such schools were opened in various districts but they too have not performed well. For example, only 10 of the 210 students of the Mohali school have qualified for the JEE Advanced this year.

Enabling environment

"Even though Bhai Jaita was born in a family stigmatised as untouchable, the enabling environment created by the Gurus made it possible to transcend all barriers to

reach heights not only as a hero but a scholar and poet as well," says Harpal Singh. "Passion propels BJF volunteers and office-bearers. "Several persons from many walks of life are working with dedication for the foundation and as local parents for students. Many have contributed in other ways, including financial. A notable contributor is the well-known math teacher Prof Rajinder Arora, who is revered by the students, and his team that provides free coaching," he acknowledges.

Passionate and hard working

Professor Arora earned his MPhil in Mathematics from IIT Kanpur and runs the RN Classes coaching institute in Chandigarh. "I have been in touch with this organisation for the past four years, when they ran camps for NV students," he says. "These children are a bit more sincere than typical Chandigarh students, but they don't have the same exposure. They are, however, passionate about doing something and are ready to work longer, as many as seven to eight hours a day. Their lack of language skills is an issue at first, but they work hard to get better."

The BJF started small and are now scaling up. "We ran short courses earlier, but this is the first batch of our students who are passing out after two years," says executive director for Academic Work, Baldev Raj Dhand. Lack of resources is a major milestone for those who want to study further.

The transformation in the life of such students is tremendously satisfying, Dhand says, as he recounts an incident when a boy walked for an hour and a half to save on rickshaw fare.... He came in with his books and belongings crammed into an empty, clean cement bag. The place of pride among the alumni of the foundation goes to Amandeep Singh who, along with Gobinder Singh and Minakshi, is now at the IISER, Mohali.

Naturally, there are those who are better off economically than others, and among them is Manish Rawat, whose father Laxman Singh teaches mathematics. Manish, who has the swagger and the stocky build of a footballer, studied at Morinda till Class VIII when he joined JNV Ropar to study in Class IX and X. He did well, and through teachers and students, learnt about the foundation and what it had done with its short-term courses.

"We knew that this was the first batch, so it was a risk, but they had a good reputation, and so I applied. I got admission.

The hostel is like any other boarding house, but we have AC classrooms, good teachers and good support from the school," says Manish.

The students attend classes at Saint Soldier International School, located a convenient

walking distance from the Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha office in Sector 28, where the foundation is located. The school has taken in most of the students. The students go there for their morning PT at the crack of dawn and also

attend classes. They are expected to attend extra classes in the foundation every evening and then devote time to study on their own.

Did they have any problems adjusting with the regular students at the school? Individual equations seem to be at work. Gagandeepa says she mainly sticks with her friends whereas the more outgoing Manish has a rapport with a wider group. What is the difference between the two sets of students? "We have our goal fixed, while they don't seem to be motivated towards any goal," Manish perceptively notes. "We have come so far from our parents — we have to do something. We see each other and that motivates us to study," says Gagandeepa.

Even as these students are preparing for the JEE Advanced test for 2016, knowing that not everyone will realise their dream of going to the IITs, there is no doubt about the grit and determination of these bright young individuals who have overcome various disadvantages, and with some crucial assistance provided at right times, already expanded their horizon from ITIs to IITs.



Gagandeepa

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50 years of 1965 War

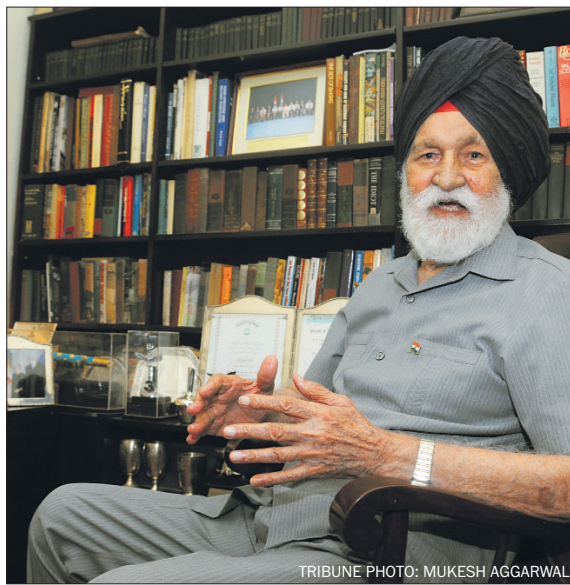
Grand Old Man of the IAF remembers

Marshal of the Indian Air Force Arjan Singh DFC flies down memory lane to recount the hits and misses

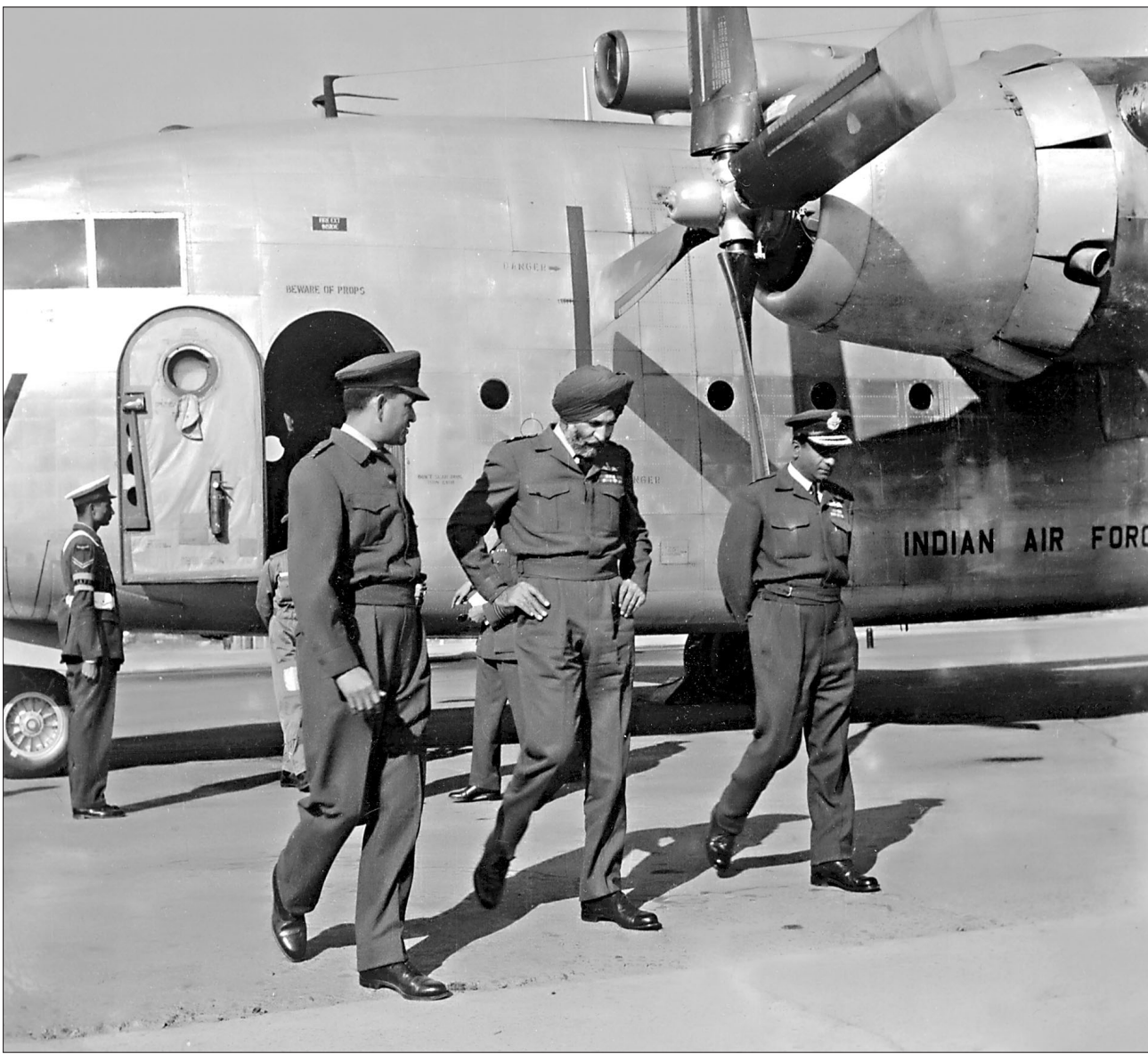
ROOPINDER SINGH

THE mettle of Chief of the Air Staff Arjan Singh, DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross), was to be tested in the 1965 War against Pakistan. He had led the numerically stronger Indian Air Force (IAF) for over a year, and now it was pitted against what was regarded as the technologically superior Pakistan air force. The IAF was chaffing because it had been allowed only limited operations during the 1962 skirmish with China. Now it was unleashed, to devastating effect.

A measure of success of the Indian Air Force is that at the end of the war, the rank of the Chief of the Air Staff was raised to that of Air Chief Marshal. Arjan Singh thus served as the IAF Chief for a record five years. In 2002, he was made Marshal of the Indian Air Force—a five-star appointment he holds for life. The 96-year-old MIAF spoke on a number of issues regarding the 1965 War.



The 1965 War was too short for us. I was disappointed when the ceasefire was announced because the war was going on well for us. We were able to attack every place in Pakistan



STAR PERFORMER: Marshal of the Indian Air Force Arjan Singh DFC is the only officer of the Indian Air Force to be promoted to the five-star rank

How the air war started

“I was in Vayu Bhavan when General J. N. Chaudhuri said the Army needed air support. He had come from Srinagar and wanted to blunt the Pakistani attack on Chhamb Jaurian, which could have cut off vital installations and given the enemy an upper hand.

“We went to Defence Minister Y. B. Chavan to seek permission for an air attack, because once the air force comes in, the engagement becomes a war.

“Now Chavan was a man of decision, a Maratha leader, who had served as the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra. He asked me “Can you do it?”

“We just can. If you give orders now, we may be able to attack before night.” (The IAF then lacked night combat equipment).

“Chavan promptly gave the orders without even consulting the Prime Minister and we launched three sorties from Pathankot that day. Vampires of World

War II vintage were used. The first wave of four Vampires took off at 1719 hrs, as soon as they got orders. They inflicted considerable damage on the enemy tanks, unfortunately also hitting some Indian troops. We lost one Vampire to ground fire in this attack.

“The second sortie of four Vampires was attacked by Sabre (F-86) jets of Pakistan Air Force which were vastly superior in performance and armament. We lost three Vampires in this air battle,

Air Force's fiery foray into aerial combat

Initially lagging behind the technically superior Pakistan air force, the Indian Air Force broke the back of enemy supply lines

AJAY BANERJEE

PIC tank battles crowd discourses, mind space and continue to hog media attention while the Indian Air Force (IAF), its pilots and ground staff have failed to get the attention it deserved.

The IAF was lagging behind the Pakistan air force (PAF) in terms of technology of that era. It had greater number of planes than the PAF but its lack of air-to-air missiles and night-flying abilities, hampered our force. The vintage IAF fleet meant nine squadrons (18 planes in each) had to be withdrawn from the front. The F-104 ‘Starfighter’ of the PAF was among the first planes in the world to fly at Mach-2. It had heat-seeking missiles, a radar for interception and fire control. The Indian fleet of a 12-strong MiG 21s was not fully operational or integrated in the IAF.

The PAF relied on superior early warning radars installed at Peshawar, Multan, Sargodha and Badin while the IAF was dependant on single radar unit at Amritsar for its western operations.

It was an on-the-spot decision to use the IAF. On September 1, the Army Chief, General JN Chaudhuri, the IAF Chief, Air Marshal Arjan Singh, and Defence Secretary PVR Rao walked into the office of Defence Minister YB Chavan in New Delhi to decide on the IAF's role.

Just before sunset the same day, 26 fighter-bombers, including 12 Vampires of the early 1940s British vintage and 14 Mystere-IV procured from France, had taken off from Pathankot for the Chhamb-Jaurian sector.

“The IAF destroyed 10 tanks, two automatic guns and 30 to 40 vehicles of the invading column”, recounts SN Prasad in his book *The India Pakistan War of 1965*, an authorised account from the Ministry of Defence archives.

Though the IAF had drawn first blood, the PAF retaliated within minutes. Its F-86 Sabre jets brought down four IAF Vampire aircraft. Three pilots were killed in action and one bailed out. The Pathankot base turned grim after the initial euphoria.

Pilots set the momentum

After realising that Vampires and the Ouragan's, another vintage plane, were



PLANE TALK: The Indian fleet of a 12-strong MiG 21s was not fully operational or integrated into the IAF

easy targets, the Air Headquarters directed Ambala-based 23 Squadron ‘the panthers’ flying the Gnat fighters to move to Pathankot.

A pre-dawn briefing at Pathankot on September 3 was tense, the tactical plan was bold. Four Gnats, led by Sqn Ldr Trevor Keelor, were tasked to fly barely 100 feet above ground and at high speed. When the radar at Amritsar warned of approaching PAF planes, the Gnats zoomed up to reach 30,000 feet in less than 90 seconds. A F-86 Sabre carrying missiles showed up, Keelor opened fire from his onboard 30-mm cannon from a distance of about 450 yards and downed the PAF jet to etch his name in history and IAF folklore as the first Indian pilot to have a ‘shot down an enemy plane in mid-air’. “Shooting down of an F-86 Sabre by the small Gnat had a stimulating effect on the morale of the Indian pilots,”

writes SN Prasad in his book. Within hours, Flt Lt VS Pathania had claimed a PAF jet. The 23 Squadron got the maximum kills during the three-week conflict. Elsewhere ‘The Tigers’, 1 Squadron based at Adampur and the ‘Battle Axes’, 7 Squadron based at Halwara were tasked to hit at military targets at Rahwali and the Lahore-Kasur area.

On September 6, the PAF chief, Air Marshal Malik Nur Khan, decided to launch pre-emptive strikes on Adampur, Halwara, Pathankot, Srinagar and Jamnagar air bases. A total of 60 F-86 Sabres and B-57s bombers were earmarked for the strikes. In addition, the F-104 Starfighters backed up. Ambala, Halwara, Adampur and Pathankot, all in Punjab, housed nine IAF fighter squadrons among these, amounting to 160-odd planes.

At Pathankot, the IAF lost six Mystere

IV-A, two MiG-21s, 10 Gnats and one Packet transport aircraft—all caused by PAF's 19 Squadron. Raids on Halwara and Amritsar were a disaster for the PAF. Flying Officer Adi Gandhi with Flying Officer PN Pingale were hit by the Sabres and both ejected. But Gandhi had also hit a Sabre. Two other Sabres were intercepted and brought down by Flt Lt DN Rathore and Flying Officer VK Neb, the latter was still under training. At Amritsar, anti-aircraft guns brought down a PAF bomber and the raid was aborted. A MiG-21 was lost and another one got damaged at Adampur while Jamnagar was raided six times by the PAF destroying four IAF Vampires. IAF shot down one bomber.

Separately, an unusual attempt by Pakistan to destroy IAF aircraft and airfield installations failed. Paratroopers of the Special Services Group were air-dropped at night near Pathankot, Halwara and Adampur. Of the 180 Pakistani commandos, 136 were taken prisoners, 22 killed and the rest managed to escape back.

Counter-strike

At the PAF's Sargodha base, which had 64 Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns and was best defended, IAF pilots carried five raids.

The first strike on Sargodha was mounted by a team led by Wg Cdr OP Taneja. Flying the Mysteres of 1 Squadron at Adampur, the team made the audacious low-altitude run on Sargodha in broad daylight and strafed 7 PAF Sabre's.

Apart from Sargodha, IAF attacked Chaklala and did an impressive raid on Peshawar. The Raiwind railway yard and a train was destroyed, Pakistani armoured columns at Kasur, Sailkot and Chhamb were attacked.

Flt Lt Vinod ‘Jimmy’ Bhatia (who later retired as Air Marshal), based at Adampur then, recollects, “We were ready to take on the PAF anytime. Just a year before this, I had flown the Sabre in the US.” Bhatia was among the pilots, who attacked enemy tanks and gun positions in the Kasur-Lahore sector. Looking back, the IAF attack on Peshawar air-base, where the PAF had moved a bulk of its forces, tested nerves. IAF planes had a limited range. However, an audacious plan was put together, six Canberras fly-

ing with one managing to escape. The fourth sortie did not encounter any aircraft and attacked enemy men and materials.

Vaulting over Pir Panjal

“The air attack was meticulously planned. Our aircraft from Agra used to go to Chandigarh to refuel. From Chandigarh, we used to take off at such a time that the aircraft would fly over Kashmir Valley on the right side of Pir Panjal, a high mountain that provided cover against radar detection in Pakistan.

“We used to go over the Pir Panjal near Peshawar catching the enemy unawares. We penetrated deep into Pakistan territory and attacked Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi, Sargodha and other Pakistan cities. The IAF disrupted Pakistan army's supply lines and attacked more than 70 trains. After the Tashkent agreement, we were asked to visit each other's countries, and I went to Peshawar. Malik Nur Khan, Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Air Force, and I knew each other and he was quite frank in his discussions. He also showed me the place, a few hundred yards from his house, which had been destroyed by our bombing. He showed me the trenches in his house and said: “That is where we spent our time.”

Interaction with Shastri

“Our instructions from Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri were simple, “avoid hitting civilian targets”, and we never targeted civilians. Shastri as Prime Minister and I as air chief used to live a few hundred yards from each other. Our son, who is now settled in America, often used to have dinner with the Shastri family. The Prime Minister's wife would cook the dinner and the family ate together in the traditional fashion.

A short war

“The 1965 War was too short for us. I was disappointed when the ceasefire was announced because in my opinion the war was going on well for us. We were able to attack every place in Pakistan, while they could not send planes beyond Ambala! They could not even reach Delhi, let alone Mumbai or Ahmedabad. We had minimal casualties in the Air Force.”

ing at an altitude of 1000 feet, ripped across Pakistan in the dead of the night. The team led by Sqn Ldr JC Verma bombed the runway and all six returned despite the PAF firing away.

Pak pilot's tale gets MVC for IAF pilot

The raid on Sargodha holds a story. PAF's Flt Lt Amjad Hussain and the IAF's Sqd Ldr AB Devayya were locked in an intense dog fight. Devayya and Hussain hit each other's planes. Hussain bailed out, Devayya could not and went down with his Mystere-IV, taking his act of gallantry to his grave. The mystery unravelled in December 1971 India-Pakistan War when Amjad Hussain was again shot, this time over Amritsar. Now a Prisoner of War (PoW), Hussain recounted the mid-air episode that had occurred September 7, 1965, and lavished praise on the IAF pilot. After Hussain's account Sqn Ldr Devayya was awarded a Maha Vir Chakra posthumously January 26, 1988, 23 years after his effort.

The IAF was lagging behind the Pakistan air force (PAF) in terms of technology. It had greater number of planes than the PAF but its lack of air-to-air missiles and night-flying abilities hampered our force

IAF's role in Khem Karan

Even during the epic tank battle at Khem Karan, or the Battle of Asal Uttar, the IAF played an important role. The Pakistani tank reinforcements were cut off as Wg Cdr William Goodman's formation destroyed 26 tanks on a train and Flt Lt Tirlochan Singh ‘Tango’ claimed another eight. The Mystere IV-A fighters, based at Pathankot, had a potent anti-armour rocket pods with 38x68 mm hollow-charge rockets that pierced through the armour plating and exploded inside the tank.

Despite the fact that this was the first-ever war where an unprepared and technologically inferior IAF had been involved in aerial combat, its men fought heroically. The IAF had a haul of four Maha Vir Chakras (MVC), one Bar to MVC and 44 Vir Chakras (VC).



Elabuga in Tatarstan, Russia, has 195 monuments and the museum reserve staff enthusiastically welcomes visitors to this historic town

Museums and keepers of heritage



ROOPINDER SINGH

AN enthusiastic, well-informed band of women transformed a visit to a small town in Tatarstan into a memorable one. The place they are deeply involved with is Elabuga. While it is small, 41 sq km, and has a population of 70,000, it is rich in museums — poets, artists, sculptors...all are celebrated in this city, says Tanzilya Agishina, deputy director-general for development, whose pride in her heritage is quite evident.

The confluence of the rivers Toima and Kama marks the location of this 1000-year-old city, 215 km east of Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan. Founded in 1990, the Elabuga State Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve takes care of 195 monuments of history and culture, besides objects of cultural heritage. The central part of the city is dedicated to preserving the culture of the place, and thus, most of the museums are concentrated around this area.

Elabuga, sometimes spelt Yelabuga, celebrated its millennium in 2007. It is only natural that one walks to the Elabuga local history complex, where one is greeted by thunder and lightning, part of the special effects that trace back the origins of the city. The museum also features fascinating artefacts, including various original documents of the merchants who made the city prosperous, as well as especially arranged show windows.

Under the guidance of Svetlana Andarzyanova, an enthusiastic local guide, one saw the evidence of urban settlements at the turn of 10th and 11th centuries. The city's location made it a part of an important trade route. A mosque that is a white-stone fortress indicated the faith of the inhabitants. Commerce made the city prosperous, and among the leading traders was the Staheev clan that had investments in gold and oil, besides shipping and manufacturing.

The museum has a restaurant that serves period food. The tradition of warm hospitality became clear when Tanzilya Agishina, who also holds the title of 'Honoured



Left: How a rich merchant's family lived. Above: Family portraits and the camera that recorded them

Worker of Culture of the Republic of Tatarstan' announced that, in the honour of Indian guests, a special meal with Indian touch had been prepared. A sumptuous repast of Tatar and Indian fusion followed.

Walking to the house of the famous landscape painter Ivan Ivanovich Shishkin, one saw an old stone wall. Such walls came up after the fire of 1850 which burnt down thousands of wooden houses in the city. Thereafter, protective stone walls became the norm.

Shishkin's family house is now a museum. It features a well-appointed studio, which the artist seldom used, since he painted largely outdoors. He even slept in a corner room so as to cause the least disturbance to the household. Shishkin's father was a rich merchant, who initially resisted his son's calling, but later supported him. His veranda gives a wonderful view of the area around the house, most of it forested and unblemished by modern construction.

Nadezhda Durova stormed the male bastion that was the Russian army by disguising herself as a man. This daughter of a Major army was a tomboy who was raised in army barracks. She left her husband and son to join the army. She fought bravely during the Napoleonic wars and was awarded the Cross of St. George by the Tsar. After retirement, she lived in Elabuga and wrote a memoir, The Cavalry Maiden, which was published in 1836. Her house, which was opened as a museum in 1993, is a tribute that keeps alive the memory of this remarkably unconventional woman.

Marina Ivanovna Tsvetaeva, a poet who is considered one of the greatest literary



Left: Rich repast of Tatar food with an Indian touch. Right: A statue of V M Bekhterev, neurologist and pioneer of objective psychology



figures of 20th century Russian literature, also had an Elabuga connection. She spent her last days in the town. Her house was dedicated as a museum 110 years after her birth. Her poem, recited and translated by Svetlana, showed how she continues to live through her verses. Her chiselled looks make for a magnificent bust that gazes into the sky, wistfully looking at the world that treated her so badly but celebrated her work posthumously — a fate unfortunately not unfamiliar for many artists.

As one visited various places, one felt a sense of urgency to reconnect with the history and culture of the area, after a long hibernation during the Soviet era, especially among those who are involved in the museum. No wonder, they keep

drawing in visitors and winning international awards, including one by Unesco.

The statue of a man with a book in his hand seated on a bench was intriguing. This is a tribute to V. M. Bekhterev. Near it is a museum of medicine, named after the Russian neurologist and pioneer of objective psychology. The museum staff wears medical uniforms and one can even get one's blood pressure checked. Yes, one should certainly not miss the herbal tea that they offer, with honey produced locally. A great and refreshing way to end a treat, which shows how we can appreciate the past in a manner that is both enlightening as well as engaging.



Nadezhda Durova: A soldier and a writer



Headdress that is no less than a crown



Landscape painter I.I. Shishkin's seldom-used studio



Reflecting period heritage and lifestyle

PHOTOS BY THE WRITER



Celebrating a postal worker and a telephone linesman



The road to Elabuga

Rich legacy to cherish

Author of *Mahan Kosh*, the encyclopaedia in Punjabi, Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha was a Renaissance man, who has left a lasting impact on Punjab and Punjabi scholarship. A Sikh with strong convictions, he practised what he preached, writes **Roopinder Singh**

150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY ON AUGUST 30

ADMINISTRATOR, diplomat, encyclopaedist, historian, hunter, interpreter of Sikh scriptures, tennis player, tutor to an heir apparent and scholar, Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha was, indeed, a Renaissance man, who has left a lasting impact on Punjab and Punjabi scholarship.

Widely known as the author of *Mahan Kosh*, the encyclopaedia in Punjabi that was published in 1930, Bhai Kahan Singh was born on August 30, 1861. His father, Mahant Narain Singh, was steeped in the Sikh tradition and was well known for his ability to recite Guru Granth Sahib.

Like many others of that time, Bhai Kahan Singh received no formal education, but was taught by tutors at home. He became well versed in Hindi, Braj Bhasha, Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian, English and, of course, Punjabi.

Bhai Kahan Singh was taught music by the famous musician, Mahant Gajja Singh. He learnt martial arts from Nihangs and

was also a good shot and fond of hunting. He played the sitar and the dilruba with distinction, and was known as a soft-spoken, considerate man, who was always immaculately attired.

As an administrator, he began his innings in 1880, when he started working for Nabha state. He held administrative positions that included City Magistrate, Nazim, Mir/Munshi, Nehar Nazam. The term *nazim* was used for an administrator and would roughly be equivalent of Collector or Deputy Commissioner.

Bhai Kahan Singh had met British administrator Max Arthur Macauliffe in Rawalpindi in 1885.

Macauliffe was engaged in research on the Sikh religion and Guru Granth Sahib. Naturally, he relied on a number of Sikhs to help him. Bhai Kahan's first book *Raj Dharam* had been published a year ago, and, thus, it came as no surprise that Macauliffe asked Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha to spare Bhai Kahan Singh for

three months, so that they could work together.

Years of research went into what became a six-volume work and Macauliffe often visited Nabha and other places to work with Bhai Kahan Singh who, in the meantime, had published

Nanak Bhavarth Dipika (1888), *Ham Hindu Nahin* (1898), *Gurmat Prabhakar* (1898), *Gurmat Sudhakar* (1899), *Gur Gira Kasauti* (1899) and *Sharab Nikhedh* (1907). He had also come out with two *tikas* or exegeses, *Jaimant Assamedh* (1896) and *Visnu Purana* (1903).

The *Sikh Religion* was published by Clarendon Press, an imprint of Oxford Press, in the UK in 1907. Bhai Kahan Singh accompanied Macauliffe to London to assist him in the publication of the book. Macauliffe even transferred the copyright of the book to Bhai Kahan Singh.

According to Major A. P. Singh, grandson of Bhai Kahan Singh, Macauliffe also offered his house, 10 Sinclair Road, London, to him. Bhai Kahan Singh, however, declined the offer.

Along with his literary pursuits, Bhai Kahan Singh continued to serve Nabha state and with increasing experience, and because of his ability to sort out problems, he was also given other responsibilities that included being a foreign minister, a Judge of the High Court and member of the Judicial Council, etc. He played a significant role in the framing of the Anand Marriage Act, which was proposed by Maharaja Ripudaman Singh, and as a result of which marriages

were given a legal status. Like other people with means, he would spend summers in Solan and Shimla.

Nabha and Patiala states did not always enjoy a positive relationship even though the rulers of both states, Maharaja Bhupindra Singh and Maharaja Ripudaman Singh, were related. However, Bhai Kahan Singh, Bhai Arjan Singh Bagrian and Raja Gurdit Singh of Retgarh played a significant role in effecting reconciliation between the two rulers.

He compiled *Gurushabad Ratanakar Mahan Kosh* from 1912-1930. During the years 1915-1917, he was the legal adviser to the political agency of Patiala state. *Mahan Kosh*, as it is commonly called, has 64,263 entries and is well known for pithiness and accu-

racy. Maharaja Bhupindra Singh of Patiala sponsored its publication, and now Punjabi University, Patiala, is translating it into English and Hindi.

A Sikh with strong convictions, Bhai Kahan Singh practised what he preached. His son, Bhagwant Singh, popularly known as Hari ji, wrote *Dasam Granth Tuk Taikara*, and index of Dasam Granth, thus continuing his father's legacy.

Bhai Kahan Singh passed away on November 23, 1938. The sequential celebrations of Bhai Kahan Singh's birth anniversary are being held at various venues in Punjab. As people reflect on his rich legacy, it is only natural that they should also salute this Renaissance man, Punjab's pioneering encyclopaedist.



Bhai Kahan Singh



Bhai Arjan Singh Bagrian, Maharaja Bhupindra Singh of Patiala and Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha are seated in this 1917 picture, often said to be the only one in which the two maharajas are together. Standing on the left is Raja Gurdit Singh and on the right is Bhai Kahan Singh. Photo: Courtesy Maj A P Singh

DANGER FROM THE SKIES

AN expert has warned that billions of extra-terrestrial rays and particles could shower the earth, threatening the safety of planes and passengers. Mike Lockwood, professor of space environment physics, has claimed that dramatic changes in solar activity could raise the risk of cancerous damage to the cells of those on board planes flying over the Poles.

The Reading University professor says that people who regularly take long-haul flights could be at particular risk from solar radiation. In the future, those flying to Canada or the West Coast of the US at least two or three times a year should consider undergoing screening for potentially cancerous damage, he has said.

His warning centres on changes in activity in the sun's turbulent magnetic field. "The signs are that we are coming out of a decade-long period of high activity, during which the sun was covered in dozens of dark spots and spat vast flares and balls of superheated gas the size of planets," he says. In between this and the coming quiet period is a danger zone, during which more hazardous rays created by exploding stars and dangerous particles — made by clouds of gas spewed out by the sun — will hurtle towards the earth.

— ANI

Eat healthy, keep fit

Apart from exercising, a little focus on what you are eating can give perfect shape to your body, says **Shilpa Raina**

MEENAKSHI DHAR (25) is heading for a beach. Excited as she is, the thought of wearing a bikini is giving her nightmares. But experts say with the right diet, exercise and a little camouflaging, she can have a happy sun and sand holiday. There are many who choose shorts and T-shirts over swim wear because they lack the confidence, mostly because of extra flab.

Fret not, says Althea Shah, vice-president and fitness expert at Gold's Gym, Mumbai. "One must work out harder on stubborn parts like inner thighs, love handles, back and triceps. These are the most prominent places for fat accumulation and visibility," Shah feels.

"Start with at least three days a week to do any form of a cardiovascular activity — walking, jogging, stair climbing, etc, and follow a simple exercise for every body part, alternating between upper and lower body workouts," she adds.

Nothing much is required, just dig out green leafy vegetables from your fridge, to satiate your hunger, says nutritionist consultant Geetu Amarnani, adding one can also have salads and soups. "Avoid oily foods because that can make you feel bloated," she says, and that "it will help in getting rid of those extra inches on the waistline." Amarnani has more useful tips to help you in getting into shape.

"Women basically dread bulgy thighs and sagging fat on the abs. But fat on abs is just like fat everywhere. So get the desired results by balancing diet and exercise. Drink eight-10 glasses of water a day; it detoxifies you and helps in getting rid of accumulated salts, leading to water retention," she adds.



Avoid oily foods. Go for green, leafy vegetables

If you want to get rid of the flab quickly, technology comes as a saviour but at a cost. Rajesh Khurana, president of Timpac Healthcare, says there is a non-surgical treatment called VIP complex and there is a surgical treatment called vibration amplification of sound energy at resonance (VASER) that can help one get into shape. For VIP complex, one has to shell out Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,500 per session, whereas for VASER it may cost anywhere from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,50,000, depending on the area to be covered. One month's advance planning is a must for this treatment.

"Use lotions all over your body, not just on your face. Re-apply it after three-four

hours' gap for extra protection. For hair, use a cap or any kind of headgear before you enter the sea," said Shobha Sehgal, head, beauty, VLCC Health Care Ltd.

Take bath and moisture your body once you are out of the sea. Do not let the salty water dry on your body or hair. Go for a deep conditioning treatment for hair, after your beach holiday.

One should not ignore the age-old sun protection tools — umbrella or cap. "It is always a good idea to carry them," according to Sehgal. Also, carry an aloe vera gel as it helps in healing the skin after sun exposure. Follow these tips and take the plunge! — IANS



Consumers

BEWARE

PUSHPA GIRIMAJI

Be aware of the time limit clause

THE Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs spends huge amounts on advertisements aimed at educating people about their rights. It seems that the campaigns either do not send out the right messages, or they do not reach those who need them the most. I refer here particularly to the time limit of two years provided under the Consumer Protection Act for consumers to file complaints. Lack of awareness about this limitation period has resulted in many a person being denied the right to redress under the Act.

There is another important aspect as far as the law of limitation is concerned, and it pertains to what is known as the cause of action, that gives rise to the complaint. Since the limitation period of two years is to be calculated from the date on which the cause of action arises, there is a lot of debate over what constitutes the cause of action.

In the case of Manipal Soubhagaya Nidhi Ltd vs Prabhu (RP No 3425 of 2006), pertaining to non-refund of maturity amounts deposited with a non-banking financial company, the apex court dis-

posed of five years and was meant to provide financial assistance to dependents of insured members in case of natural disaster, accidental death, permanent or partial disability. In all such eventualities, the insurance company designated for the district was required to pay Rs.50,000. The claims were to be considered in consultation with the nodal officer of the district.

On the ground that their claims were unjustly repudiated by the insurance companies despite the nodal officer forwarding them, three class action petitions pertaining to a total of 140 complainants were filed before the courts.

When the district forum dismissed them, all of them filed appeals before the state consumer disputes redressal commission. Some of the appellants even sought condonation of delay on grounds of poverty and ignorance. They said they were unaware of their rights under the CP Act and also about the limitation provision under the Act. The state commission, however, dismissed them, forcing them to file revision petitions before the national commission.

Consumers need to be aware of the time limit of two years provided under the CPA to file complaints. Lack of awareness about this clause has resulted in many people being denied the right to redress under the Act. If they are aware of this provision, they will not end up wasting time and money in long legal battles. They will file cases much earlier

missed 51 complaints on the ground that they were time-barred. To arrive at this conclusion, it took the date of maturity of the deposits as the cause of action, and calculated two years from then on.

The lower courts' interpretation of the cause of action was, however, far more favourable. They had opined that so long as the person who receives the deposit has not denied his liability to pay it back, it is a recurring cause of action for the depositor. The apex court, unfortunately, disagreed and said since the deposits had matured in 2002 and the complaints were filed in 2006, they were time-barred.

Now, in another case pertaining to rejection of insurance claims by the insurer, the lower courts dismissed the complaints of 140 claimants — mostly widows — on the ground that they were time-barred. To arrive at that conclusion, the courts had taken the date of death as the date from which the cause of action had arisen. The national commission, fortunately, disagreed.

The complaints here pertained to insurance claims in respect of a scheme for BPL (below poverty line) families launched by the Madhya Pradesh Government. Called Vivekananda Group Insurance, the scheme was introduced in January 2006 for a peri-

After considering the scheme in detail and two orders of the Supreme Court on the subject, the national commission held:

(a) Where the claim was lodged either with the nodal officer or the insurance company after two years of death, such cases would be barred by limitation; (b) but where the claim had been made to the nodal officer, or the nodal officer had forwarded the claim to the insurance company, or had been directly filed with the insurance company within two years of death, and the case had remained undecided, the cause of action in such cases would continue till the claim was paid or rejected; (c) where the claim had been rejected, the cause of action should be calculated from the date of such rejection. In short, the calculation of limitation starts from the time the claim is rejected by the insurance company, the commission held (Laxmi Bai and Others vs ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company and Others, RP NO 3118 of 2010).

If only consumers were aware of the limitation clause, they would not have ended up wasting so much time and money in long legal battles on the limitation period. They would have filed the cases much earlier. Now their complaints will have to be heard by the district forum on merit.

LOOK for the ridiculous in a tragic situation and you will laugh.

We were returning from Antarctica. The atmosphere on the ship was thick with gloom. Partly it was due to the heavy weather and partly due to the belying of hopes and expectations which our minds had nursed during the onward journey to Antarctica.

The wind was howling, the clouds hung low and the water was rising and falling so sharply that the waves acquired dragon-like postures. Our ship strained laboriously against these impediments.

Under such darkened conditions, the birthday of the head approached. This called for exclusive celebrations for the tall, dark, erect, bespectacled and bearded figure of our leader; and all

were determined to wear luminous looks at the party.

All of us accumulated in the central hall. The drinks were consumed. Not all drank the hard stuff, but those who did, their pretensions at good humour were swept away with the first drink. The situation in the party turned damp again. Birthday feasts usually culminate in showering of eminence by the leader on the person whose birthday is celebrated.

But today, the leader himself was to be showered with the superlatives. But who was to bell the cat? This honour fell to my lot since I was the seniormost in age among the members of the expedition.

I began with the stock of ready-made phrases. I apologised for having not discovered the greatness of our leader as I was not aware

When man realised his folly

Surjit Singh Dhillon, who has retired as Professor of Zoology, Punjabi University, Patiala, narrates an incident that he says "took place during my visit to Antarctica in 1987 as a member of the Indian expedition."

of left-over time-period.

God with His usual engaging charm took the truly social decision brimming with amiable equity. All the four, which besides man included a donkey, a dog

and an owl, were allotted 40 years each. Man was obviously dismayed by the shortness of his allocated life-span. But the others were also not happy with the decision, though their reasons were different. They objected to the relentless length of the life-period allotted to them. The donkey was too restless who abruptly began pleading: "My Lord, I am meant for carrying load and doing so for 40 years will be too much for me. Half of this time should be sufficient. Have mercy and reduce my life to 20 years duration".

God readily accepted the donkey's plea, but hesitated a bit before appending these deducted 20 years to man's life. Man did not raise the expected objection; rather, he discarded his sullen

looks.

The dog, emboldened by the change in the decision, also submitted: "Your grace, why not show as much benevolence for me as well? My only function in life is to bark and to howl. Why expose me to 40 years of ridicule? Twenty years will suffice to make me desire for another life."

God agreed to this plea while raising man's age to 80 years since no objection had come from his side. After the second adjustment, the owl too felt the need to speak out. In a droll fashion, the requisition was put in by him: "Your Lordship, why single me out in condemning me to 40 years of rigour of just sitting and staring vacantly in the air. Give me that which you gave to oth-

ers. Twenty years of inactive life would suffice for me".

With a weary flowing gesture of hands, God agreed to make yet another amendment awarding 20 years of life to the owl and stretching further the human life-span to full 100 years. God left His seat immediately toward off further supplications.

Man felt startlingly contented then, though it is another matter that later on he realised his folly when he discovered that the only dignified part of his life was its first forty years. The next 20 years of his life he spends like a donkey toiling for others and without getting any credit for it. After 60 years of age, his function remains confined to howling and growling like a dog, and no one paying the least attention to his utterings. If he survives beyond eighty years then he thrives on the

cot or in an arm-chair, and stares vacantly at nothing.

It was a longish narration alluding to no one in particular, yet to all in general. The mood of the audience changed perceptibly. The leader, who was sitting by my side and at the head of the table, acquired a distinguished air and with an obtrusive charm put a question to me: "Professor Dhillon to which category do I belong?"

My reply to this enquiry was a delayed one and I answered: "Doctor sahib, no rule is universal till exceptions prove it. The generalisation I made out is also no without exceptions. Both of us should have been donkeys, but we are like dogs. You as a leader of the party and I as a university teacher, both shout and bark continuously but no one listens to us".

We don't need no education

Roopinder Singh bumps into a man who educates him on the pre-Vedic origins of recycling in India

IT was one of those long-dreary conferences in the nation's Capital where speakers drone on, and on and on....

"We can recycle everything," said the expert who had especially been flown in from the west and which generates mountains of waste, the US of A, to help the heathens the learn art of recycling.

As I looked at the other participants, I realised that I was not the only one who was bored to death... many others were in the same boat, all waiting for the whole darned exercise to come to an end. But "a man's got to do what a man's got to do."

I bunk out of the conference hall and nipped to the nearest soft drink stand. I could hear it all without being there, and thus at least half the torture was over, I thought. But fate had something more in store for me — there was someone who gave me valuable insights into the whole game.

"Kya recycling...they have learnt it all from the ancient Indian texts and now they come to tell us about it. We can teach them a thing or two any day," said Anil, the man who had beaten me to the counter, even as the speaker was talking of how the Americans were getting into recycling with a vengeance.

"How?" I asked. "Kya akhbar wale ho, itna bhi bata nahi," retorted the worthy before educating me further. "Once upon a time," he began.

"Cut it out! I haven't got all day," I butted in.

"OK, then you will forever be condemned to remain ignorant of the pre-Vedic origins of recycling. I will just tell you about the contemporary Indian recycling situation," he said.

"Paper is the most commonly recycled substance in America, and there is a lot of money to be made in it," said the man.

"And more so in India," added Anil, "we make money from it in ways they haven't even thought of."

"Look at Harshad Mehta, do they have anyone who can make such huge sums of money by recycling just a little bit of paper? Do they have anyone like him?"

"Not really, though Ivan Bosky also did a sort of Harshad to the Wall Street in the eighties. Anyway, this is an entirely new dimension to recycling paper," I replied, a bit bemused.

"In 1989, more than five billion glass bottles and jars were collected and, crushed into small pellets called cullet, cleaned and remelted for remoulding into new containers," said the man on the pulpit.

"That's the whole problem.

Five billion glass bottles and jars! They just don't know what they are doing. Unlike the Americans who throw everything out of the window once they are done with it, we reuse it a lot before we recycle it. We would have probably reused all those containers, rather than recycle them. There are people whose livelihood depends on it.

By the way, do you want any re-bottled Scotch? This man I know in Paharganj is very reasonable. He also has nice perfumes, cosmetics etc at one-fourth the price of the real ones. And you just can't make out the difference.

"We reuse everything! Take clothes. The younger child wears his elder's clothes, and then they are passed on for the servants' children, after which they become rags — then we recycle them into rag dures which we sell to the foreigners as authentic hand-made recycled ethnic artifacts."

"No such luck," replied the all-knowing Anil. "They help the environment by wearing less clothes. Haven't you seen Baywatch?"

"Almost as recyclable as glass is steel, which is the main com-

"Could you tell me where he is staying?" said a man who had just joined us. "Is it true that they throw out their clothes after they have worn them once?"

"Where's that," I asked him. "Mayapuri," said he. "We recycle anything... cars, jeeps, trucks scrap, the lot, and most of the time the only energy we use is muscle power which is easily renewed by a good meal of *makki di roti te sarso da saag*. And a good swig of *daru* at the end of the day, of course."

"In fact, we not only recycle, we also rejuvenate everything and make it function again... just look at all those reconditioned cars and jeeps," he continued.

"What are you doing here? What do you have up your sleeve? What are you really up to?" I asked Anil. "I know that you are here on some kind of a mission. Do you want to be educated about the environment and importance of recycling in saving degradation of the ecological system?"

"What do you mean? We don't need education. I am the Founder-President of the Mayapuri-Maryland Greenpeace Society."

What? How is Maryland

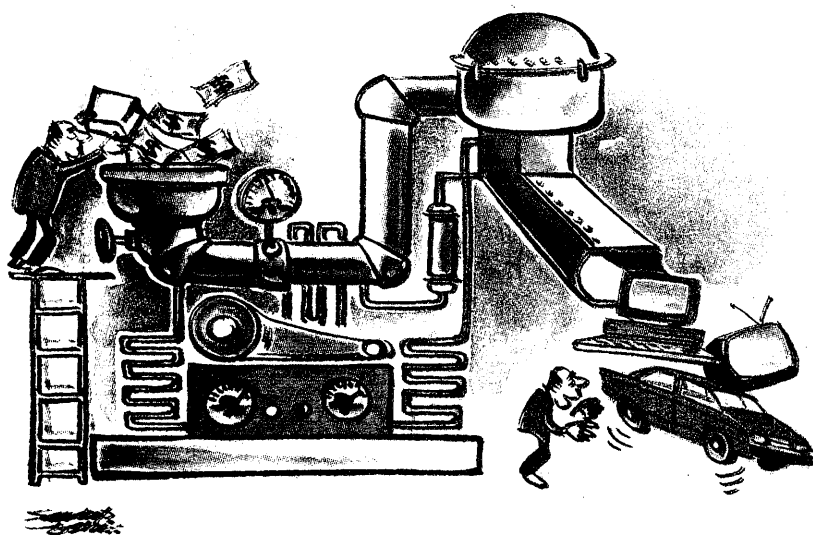
connected with Mayapuri, I asked.

"They rhyme, don't they? Don't you know Columbus was looking for Mayapuri when he landed off the coast of Maryland. I am going to talk to him about forging a link between the two. You see, the Mayapuri-Moscow link failed to take off because the Russians are broke. But Americans are rich! They may even sponsor a fact-finding trip to Maryland for the executive committee which comprises, besides me, my uncle and his son."

"If that doesn't cut ice, I will educate him about the pre-Vedic origins of recycling, of course. I want to write a paper on that, and help him recycle some of the funds he is disbursing here. With luck, I should be able to wrangle a scholarship to an American university after I do the paper, and then get myself a good job with a multinational company! It's all a matter of recycling the wisdom of the sages into a marketable commodity!"

"And what better market than America," I said, admiringly. "They are the ones with all the dollars."

— Tribune Features



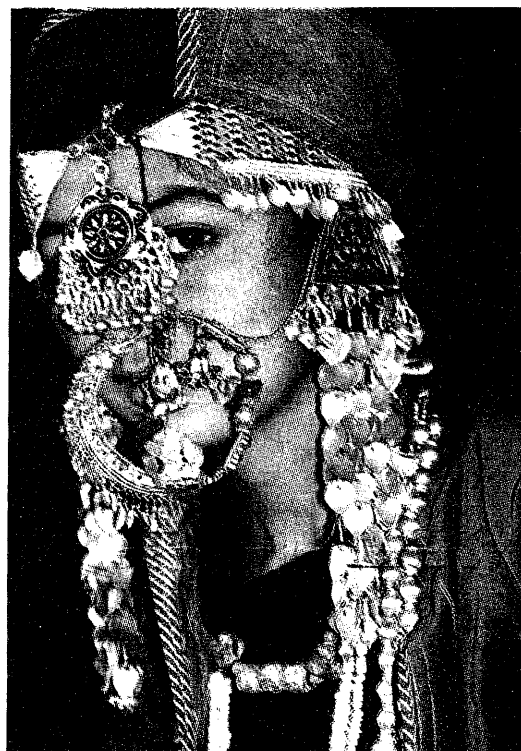
Drastic action

WHILE visiting a small village school as school inspector, I became annoyed by the amount of noise being made by one particular class. Barging into the classroom, I grabbed the tallest person there, who was shouting louder than the rest, and pulled him out of the room with the order, "Stay there until you learn how to behave!"

After I had given the rest of the class a lecture on their bad behaviour, a small boy came up to me.

"Please, sir," he said. "May we have our teacher back?"

— Andrew Smith



Photos by the writer

Daughters of Sutlej

The golden statue of Buddha sits in a shabby temple of Dhunney village overlooking the beautiful Kalpa valley (250 km north of Shimla) divided by the muddy and icy cold Sutlej at about 8000 ft above sea level.

One has to park the car in Kalpa village almost 1500 ft above the town of Rekonig Peo

and walk 1 km up and down to Dhunney. Luckily my guide was a businessman who deals in export quality apples and cauliflower seeds. He has a rented room for his stay. This rented room brings one closer to local life than staying in a hotel or a guest house.

The very first day my cam-

era and free roamings attracted the attention of folks living around. This ice was broken when a local farmer's wife wanted to be photographed. This desire brought out all the jewellery local women had and were happily photographed. The rich cultural feeling and meaning of the warm clothings were told to us. To offer us they

had bitter almonds, dried apricots and salt tea (nimki) along with sattu. The poor but affectionate people are very fond of "nioja" and make bracelets and necklaces of it, besides eating it and offering whatever they can spare to the statue of Buddha.

— Janmeja S. Jhul

India 'least correct'

IHAD great good fortune to have maintained daily and meticulous diaries during my Indian travels.

In these notes I recorded which plants thrived where, how everything smelled and much more of such description. Without these details, I could never have written the Indian section in the novel.

If my situation does not change dramatically, I can not visit India even once a year.

In the books I have written so far about India I have passionately involved myself in the day-to-day situation that obtained at the time.

Midnight's Children, *Shame*, *Satanic Verses* and *Moor's Last Sigh* constitute a quartet even though they were never intended as such.

I think if one reads these four books together, one gets the impression that there is a car-

Salman Rushdie, who will release his latest novel, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, later this year, speaks on his new venture. It is replete with Indian smells and colours.

ried-on concept leading towards a determined ending.

When Indians read my books they become aware of much detail that may be contained in between the lines but it is conceivable that they miss a great deal of other nuances.

The Hindu majority is trying to define Indian culture as exclusively Hinduistic. I refuse to accept this majority's monopolisation of Indian culture.

Just the mere thought taking up an axe and chopping off a country into two is very revolting.

For me this whole rigmarole is personal yet strange I am sprung from an Indian Muslim family but I consider India to be an extremely pleasant country

and Pakistan an extremely unpleasant one. India is a rich and open society while Pakistan is culturally destitute.

The Hindu majority is trying to define Indian culture as exclusively Hinduistic. I refuse to accept this majority's monopolisation of Indian culture.

The other India is the one that is the least correct. The representation of the spiritual India always seemed to me truly comic.

The levity with which the white middle class children (SIC) flocked to India and squatted themselves at the feet of the guru and handed over to him their Rolex watches — that was plain pitiful to countenance. A sort of embarrassing naivete."

My mother would feel sorry for them when she saw these hippies trudging along the streets. She would invite them into the house and feed them.

But she became angry when she learnt that their fathers were well employed and that, in their knapsacks they carried a first-class return ticket to Los Angeles.

Without Mahatma Gandhi the Indian nationalist movement would never have become a mass movement. But however, the most important reality was his political stance, his shrewdness and his sagacity. So to just plain consider him a holy man is to under value him.

As told to Alfred De Tavares of UNI.

Sunday Reading

A peep into the future

Synthetic fragrance & parantha pills

By Roopinder Singh

I GOT up from a sound sleep to the tune of the latest biorhythmic music, relayed into the headboard of the bed by the audio system. The air smelt so pleasant — the synthetic "morning fresh pine" deodorant was good, it was sweet and invigorating fragrance, I made a mental note to order some more.

As I stretched out in my small sealed dwelling unit, the sensors connected to the computer kept track of my mood and the scene in the "window" changed from the "Pines swaying in the mountain breeze" to a brisk one of "Joggers in Central Park," all wearing the turn-of-century "Spandex" outfits.

What I still, out of force of habit, called the computer was, in fact, an IT (information technology) home mainframe that was simultaneously a computer, television, telephone, fax, video camera and an audio-cum-video compact disc

pull on the outdoors' outfit, snap on the Velcro straps and quickly swallow the breakfast pill with family members clamouring for attention. Mustn't get late.

It had taken me a while to get used to not having a bath every morning, but that kind of squandering was simply out of the question since water was such a rare resource and therefore expensive. Instead of gallons or litres, now the measure for water was cups.

Swallowing a pill instead of getting down to a parantha and butter for breakfast had taken quite some getting used to, but reality was stark, the ground had been poisoned so much by insecticides and pesticides that what it produced was poisonous and thus scientists had to synthesise high protein pills for general consumption. All one could hope for was some greenhouse fresh vegetables. Paranthas, cereals, etc.,

plastics, disposable diapers and other so-called disposable things that could simply not be disposed of. Now all garbage had to be carefully segregated and then given out to garbage companies that charged according to the kind of garbage you gave them and how easy it would be to dispose of. Anything that could not be recycled was discouraged by charging exorbitant amounts for its disposal.

The more things change, the more they remain the same — the kids were already pestering their mother for some sweets. And I was, as usual, trying to rush to get to the office on time.

Children trooped out on their way to school. They still had to go to school as we did when we were young. The electronic revolution's experiment of computer based multi-media teaching machines had failed when it was eventually realised that while children found

ings), the outdoors' outfit, my protective airconditioned suit kept the polluted air out. It was the latest model that allowed a great deal of freedom of movement.

After a short wait at a stop for mass transit vehicles, an electrically operated magnetically levitated vehicle hissed to a halt. It moved on tracks which were made of super-conducting materials.

On the way to office we passed a massive junk yard of old-

How could we forget all that we had seen? The beautiful sunrises and sunsets; early morning dew on the leaves of plants shining like pearls on blades of grass; birds chirping in the morning and waking you up as you slept in the verandah ... all these together made a heaven on earth for us earthlings.

fashioned cars that had polluted the atmosphere to such an extent that breathing unscrubbed air was now a health hazard. These vehicles had been banned and could now only be seen in museums, junk yards and in children's books which discussed the selfish and self-indulgent nature of man's ancestors who polluted the pristine planet they had been fortunate enough to inhabit.

What havoc the last few decades had brought about! How profoundly life had changed! When my wife and I spoke of the days when we jogged in the Central Park to escape New York's polluted environs, our children's faces had an incredulous look.

We told them that we had left all that pollution to move to Chandigarh, the pristine City Beautiful. How could we forget all that we had seen? The beautiful sunrises and sunsets; early morning dew on the leaves of plants shining like pearls on blades of grass; birds chirping in the morning and waking you up as you slept in the verandah; butterflies flitting from one flower to another, the fresh evening Shivalik breeze as it wafted across the Sukhna lake; fireflies lighting up the night... all these together made a heaven on earth for us earthlings.

But then came the greed and selfishness. Man exploited nature as if there was no tomorrow, till the time came when tomorrow was no longer there, not even in places which had been immune from pollution for decades. Where could you run? It was from the same atmosphere that we all breathed — just as man-made demarcations did not matter when nature decided to be bountiful, it ignored them when it decided to be devastating....

The mag-train stops at my destination. I disembark and through an airlock, enter into the office complex, thankful that I would now be able to shed the cumbersome outdoors' outfit for some time.

Life in office is the good old grind, the very same old boring, mind-sapping routine. Instead of typing copy, now you can read it into the computer that can spell-check and even run a grammar check on it. It can also, if you are



tion and its bedfellow, the much-heralded IT revolution. We were so enamoured of industrial advances that we forgot to calculate what they were costing us, what we and our future generations would have to pay for them.

of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and even the air we were breathing by automobile exhausts.... But did we listen to them? A look through one of the portholes outside the air-tight office com-

ture bonsai trees in the protected environs of offices and homes. The cumulative effect of the massive abuse of nature which mankind had indulged in for hundreds of years, and the rape that had taken place in the last century.

The sun, the light of our universe for a million years, had receded under the smog caused by unrelenting pollution, so much so that now everyone had to expose himself to the UV lamp to get the required dose of ultraviolet rays. No water to bathe, synthetic fragrance and canned air — "If this is the future, God please send me back to the past," I muttered....

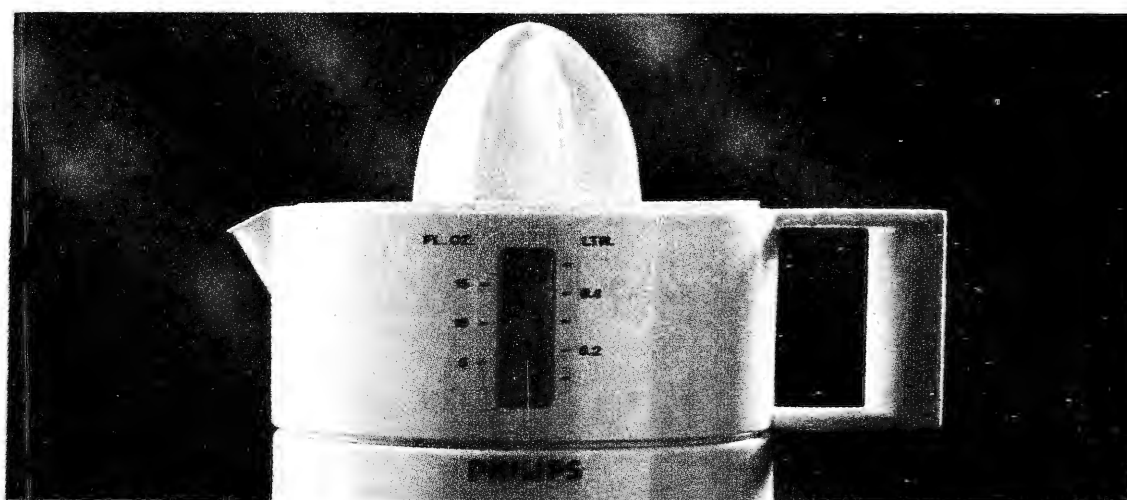
Just then a familiar feminine hand shook me and said, "Get up, or you will get late for office." I reluctantly rubbed my eyes and opened them.... I shot out of the bed. Sunlight was streaming through the window. I could smell the fresh breeze as it wafted through the pine trees in the garden; could hear the birds chirp. The flowers were blooming — as yet.

— Tribune Features

But then came the greed and selfishness. Man exploited nature as if there was no tomorrow, till the time came when tomorrow was no longer there, not even in places which had been immune to pollution for decades. Where could you run?

Scientists kept on warning us of the dangers of global warming, of the depletion of the ozone layer, of how we were polluting the ground water with industrial effluents and how we were poisoning the land we were cultivating our food by excessive use

plex answered the question graphically — it was the dull glow of what passed off as daylight. The landscape was like moonscape, barren and rocky. Trees were far and few, only the most hardy varieties like neem had survived. It was now common to see minia-



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