



Saturday Extra

The Tribune

■ March 29, 2008



Raghu Rai with his work at the retrospective
Photo by the writer

Beyond a moment in time

Photography has been his abiding passion for the past 40 years. His iconic works are currently on display at a retrospective in the National Gallery of Modern Art in Delhi. Roopinder Singh takes a look at the world of Raghu Rai and his frames



MY Father and My Son, a stark, black and white 1969 image of a child grasping the hands of his father, shot by Raghu Rai in Delhi, appears to capture the world as you enter the National Gallery of Modern Art at New Delhi.

What a beautiful moment in time, captured by India's foremost photojournalist, you feel, as you proceed to explore the journey of a man whose 40 years of work as a photographer are being celebrated by the retrospective titled A Journey of a Moment in Time: Raghu Rai. It is the first that a retrospective of a photographer is being held at the gallery.

The exhibition, on till April 15, has allowed the lensman several independent spaces, depicting his journey of the moment. On display are 185 exhibits captured by the iconic photographer.

Movement marks the picture taken at Churchgate, Mumbai's famous railway station. It captures the stream of humanity on the platform. You can feel the energy and contrast it with the clarity and stillness of the commuters who are not in a rush.

How well he captures people—a glowering, cigar-smoking Bal Thackeray; Mother Teresa, the very picture of piety; the intense eyes of Satyajit Ray; the serenity of the Dalai Lama, and the power as well as loneliness that emanated from Indira Gandhi. In some images you see the sycophancy that comes with politics.

Rai, 66, captures slices of life in a unique way. You see a couple flirting on a Calcutta rooftop; the interaction of people in a Rajasthani village, or the one photograph that brings home the Bhopal gas tragedy, *Burial of an Unknown Child*. You literally hear notes of music as you go to his section on musicians of India. Music, Rai says, has been a lifelong passion. He is now working on a book on musicians.

Rai's very first photograph, of a donkey, was published in *The Times*, London, in 1966. The photograph occupies pride of place in the exhibition, and he says it was taken at the village of *The Tribune*'s Chief Photographer, the late Yog Joy, near Rohtak. The animal also comes again in another recent frame: *Donkeys on Kargil Heights*. Rai has extensively documented the Sikhs, and even brought out a book by the same title, with the text

by Khushwant Singh. He has 18 books to his credit, including *Raghu Rai's Delhi, Calcutta, Khajuraho, Taj Mahal, Tibet in Exile, India, and Mother Teresa*.

Soon after the Retrospective was inaugurated, Rai "escaped" to Anandpur Sahib to revisit the Hola Mohalla festival, which he also covered in the 1970s as well as in 2002. He has photographed the Sikhs extensively, capturing their traditions, customs, as well as the traumas faced by them.

"India is a multi-religious, multicultural society in which several centuries live together at the same time. The experience of India has to be multi-layered and so a moment in time is not enough. The vision is larger, and what is captured is much more than what a photograph shows," said Rai, explaining each frame in an un hurried, intense manner.

At a Nihang Camp, Punjab 2001 gives a feel of the centuries that co-exist in India as well as the panorama format that Rai says is very important to his work now.

"When you are young, you look for pretty things. You look for small areas, small spaces, small experiences. As you evolve as a human being, you start seeing more and you want to capture more. My panoramics are my most recent and important work because in them I capture much more than what a photograph normally can. In pictures, often there is a thing happening, sometimes a thing with atmosphere. In these, I capture many expressions. Explaining the picture of a Punjabi wedding, he points out the wistful expression on the face of the groom, and the queer way in which the bride and her sister are interacting, all captured in a single frame."

Even his landscapes have a sense of drama. Ladakh and Lakshadweep harmoniously come together when put together in adjoining frames and as you admire a picture of stormy clouds, Rai says: "We were flying in a helicopter and a storm was approaching. I took a few photographs and moments later, the helicopter was buffeted by strong winds and we barely made it."

Rai's journey, as seen through this retrospective, takes us beyond A Moment in Time. When he is shooting, Rai says, "the emergence of the unseen and the revelation of the unknown leaves me amazed." He could well be articulating the reaction of many others who experience India through Raghu Rai's photographs.

Top: Churchgate Railway Station, Mumbai, 1995

Left: Dusk Time at Mahabalipuram, 1996



I don't believe in nostalgic nonsense

RAGHU RAI was born in 1942 in a village in the Jhang area of Pakistan. He spent some part of his youth in Rohtak and became an engineer. However, he had been initiated into photography by his elder brother, S Paul, and it became his abiding passion since the 1960s. He joined *The Statesman* as its chief photographer. He was inducted into Magnum Photos in 1977 by legendary photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson, who saw Rai's photographs at an exhibition in Paris. Rai also worked for *Sunday* and *India Today*. Excerpts from an interview with the photographer:

On colour vs B&W

It's far more difficult to make a successful photograph in colour than in black and white. Each colour has its physical response, its emotional response and if all the colours put together don't gel, they make a *khichdi* of colour. To get a strong image going in colour, we have to find colours in which the place blends in with the place and enhances its emotional response. To understand and respond to colour is difficult. Basically, human mind wants convenience. We see everything in colour, so when you put a black and white filter on life, it silences the noise of colour. It's far easier to make a good black and white picture and it is far easier to appreciate the black and white picture.



My Father and My Son, Delhi, 1969

Switch to digital technology

I don't believe in nostalgic nonsense and technology is something that you are using to express yourself. Now, the technology of film was very cumbersome. When you shot using film, you were not sure about the results till it was developed and if your developer mucked it up, you had no recourse left.

Technology is your tool and new technology gives you greater freedom and greater control in doing your work. Creativity means looking at the world with a fresh eye, giving something new, not repeating the past...why would you hang on to old technology then? You have to move with time and make a difference with your expression.

The day I started taking pictures on a digital camera, about four years ago, I couldn't go back to using film. It is so much better, and then you have the ability to click a picture and see it right then.

I still use film for my panoramic cameras because there is no digital camera available for it, when I get one, I will switch.

His Rohtak connection

My father was posted in Rohtak. A kind of beginning was made then. I learnt from my brother S Paul. Yog Joy and I interacted with the proprietor of Grover Studio there.

I never wanted to be a photographer. I had great love for music, but my father wanted me to be an engineer, which I did. I took up a government job for a year, and then came to Delhi. When I was staying with my brother, I came back to photography.

Advice for youngsters

Don't take all those good pictures that you have seen before. We are human machines which get programmed each day. When we are young, our parents are doing it to us; in school, our teachers do it; our neighbours do it. You need to de-programme your mind, your thinking, your attitude, your mindset. Youngsters should look for their own kind of voice.



Tracing Rahi's journey

It has been a long journey for Chandigarh-based realistic artist Rahi Mohinder Singh. RM started by drawing on a slate. Today his works hang in Parliament, writes **Roopinder Singh**



Painting a legend: The artist paints Nek Chand, the creator of the Rock Garden, on location, in his office. — Photo by the writer

HE calls himself a *rahi* or a traveller, and his journey into the world of art took him to Andretta, where he was inspired by the legendary artist Sobha Singh. It has been a long journey for Rahi Mohinder Singh, the Chandigarh-based realistic artist, who started by drawing on a slate with chalk.

The journey from slate to canvas is an interesting one. It took him through painting the bodies of trucks on which he was a "child-specialist" who painted the likenesses of Guru Gobind Singh, and freedom fighters like Chander Shekhar and Bhagat Singh. He drew extensively and had started making pen-portraits of other older passengers in the train back home.

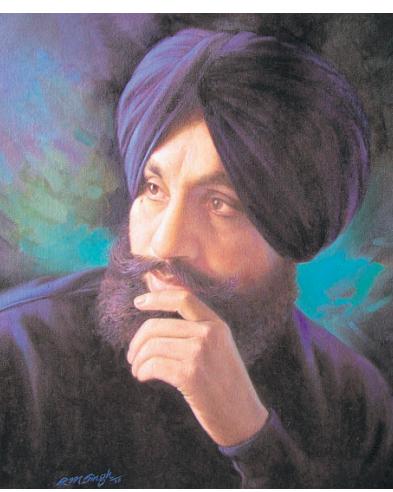
How did he get on the train? Well, his village, Bharoli Kalan, in Gurdaspur district, had only a primary school, and after Class V, he was sent off to Pathankot, about 3 km away. Like other children, he hitched a ride on a train to go and fro to school.

"I was drawing a sketch one day when a passenger asked me, 'Will you draw my portrait?' I agreed and quickly drew a pencil sketch. As my home came near, I tore off the sheet from my copy and he gave me Rs 1!" This started a wave and soon everyone, co-passengers as well as guards, TTs etc, all had

their portraits made.

Today his works hang in Parliament, and are in the collections of the Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA, and many private institutions. He has illustrated books for the Singapore Sikh Education Board with the support of Ministry of Education, Singapore, and also for state textbook boards of both Punjab and Haryana. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh unveiled his portrait of Giani Gurmuukh Singh Musafir which hangs in Parliament. His portrait of Nek Chand, the creator of the Rock Garden, Chandigarh, earned him much appreciation.

"I had adopted Sobha Singh as my guru even before I met him," says the artist, who was born in 1965. While my father, Mehar Singh, encouraged the artist in me, he was looking for a guru who could take me under his wings. I was painting and earning money, but he wanted me to be a *shagird* of an artist. One day, I saw a full-page feature in *Dharamyug*, Hindi magazine, on Sobha Singh and his works. I framed the page and told my father that I had



A self portrait

found my guru.

It was much later, in 1983, that RM was introduced to the great artist at Andretta. "Do your parents know what you are doing?" asked the artist, whose parents had discouraged him from pursuing art as a vocation.

"On the contrary, my father, and my grandfather, Pritam Singh, had both encouraged me. My grandfather was a great craftsman. He also made mirrors, and once he had fashioned a plate camera under the guidance of a British officer. They made two cameras and from him my grandfather learnt the art of photography. Both he and later, my father, had a portable studio with which they would go to fairs held in different parts of Himachal Pradesh and take photographs on glass plates. Later, they shifted to photographic

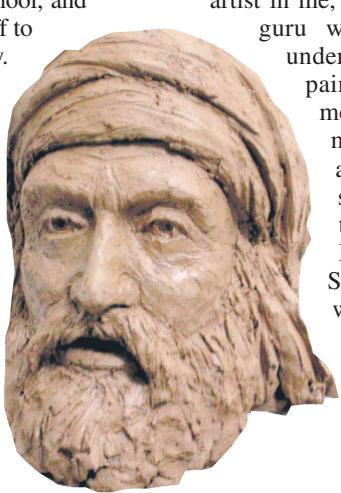
paper," recalls RM. Cheap Soviet-era books brought by vans operated by Punjab Book Centre, Chandigarh, exposed the young mind to Russian artists.

Andretta became a transit home for the young RM. He would stay with Sobha Singh for a few days, and then go back to Palampur. It was the great artist who encouraged him to join Government College of Art, Chandigarh, from where he earned his bachelor's degree in applied art in 1989. Even as a student, he was much in demand. He started working for the weekend edition of the Indian Express while still in college. Readers of The Tribune became familiar with his work after 1990, when his illustrations appeared regularly in weekend supplements and special pages of the paper.

At Art College, he was exposed to works of European artists like Ruben, Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, and US artists like John Singer Sargent and Norman Rockwell, whom he admires greatly.

"RM Singh has a great understanding of the Punjabi way of life, which is why we commissioned him to illustrate the series on teaching Punjabi. He has illustrated books and they are being used not only in schools in Singapore, but also neighbouring nations," says Bhajan Singh, a retired official of the Singapore Education Service.

The artist from Bharoli Kalan has travelled far on his artistic journey, and it is with interest that we will follow the journey of this Rahi.



Grace of Punjab, a sculpture by R M Singh

TELEPROMPT **Mannika Chopra**



Journos and indiscretions

THIS week was all about making and breaking icons. Journalistic icons like Vir Sanghvi and Barkha Dutt, private sector icons like Ratan Tata and parental icons like the Godhukars appeared in the *Big Switch-Season 2*. In case you missed the story last fortnight, stories about the taped conversations of Niira Radia (a PR person who represents the Tata and Mukesh Ambani group) with leading journalists began to be aired. Till the point last week's column was written, though Radia's name was being bandied about freely in various discussions and reports on TV, no channel thought it newsworthy to identify the names of the journos who had been at the receiving end of Radia's sweet, sweet talk.

Media outrage was generally missing and it was almost as if the story had been blacked out. That was last week. This week, TV journalism, as we mostly know it, was turned upside down. The ongoing Radia story was full of heroes and villains, actually mostly villains. Anchors began asking pointed questions, threatening the reputations of the identified journalists. Some names, basically two, were labelled as go-betweens of the powerful, and as, unwitting or unwitting, brokers between the lobbyists and law makers. The remaining journalists, some of whom had really super-

creepy conversations with Radia, somehow disappeared into some kind of a black TV hole.

CNN-IBN's Karan Thapar, the prince of bait and beguile, in his media programme, *Last Word*, and then later in *Devil's Advocate*, in an interview with Arun Shourie, referred continuously to Vir Sanghvi's and Barkha Dutt's conversations with Radia. He questioned their willingness to act as

the-belt quality about the coverage and analysis. While there has been a belated charge of the media brigade, I wonder whether, an injustice of another kind is being carried out now. Just as society drives myths, so does the media. By the end of the week, Sanghvi and Dutt, both journalists who the media gods had embraced, were definitely persona non grata.

In today's bottom-up media cul-

Arnab Goswami in *NewsHour* asked sharp questions on the appropriateness of the members of the media having cozy conversations with Radia, a whiz corporate communication expert. By the end of the week, Vir Sanghvi and Barkha Dutt were definitely persona non grata

go-betweens, the damage to their journalistic credentials and to that of the news organisations they represent. Arnab Goswami in *NewsHour* (Times Now) also asked sharp questions on the appropriateness of the members of the media having cozy conversations with Radia, an acknowledged whiz corporate communication expert, who apparently has patented the concept of Access Journalism.

Though I applaud the fact that at least some TV news shows ended up calling a spade a spade, there has, I feel, been a certain below-

ture, thanks to tools like Twitter and Facebook, both used by news channels in order to enhance interactivity, it's easy to become a target for a technologically-savvy mob. To clear the air, NDTV 24x7 aired a special programme in which Dutt gave her side of the story, perhaps to air some hidden truth or an inner rationalisation, to four senior journalists — Dileep Padgaonkar; Sanjaya Baru, Manu Joseph and Swapna Dasgupta. This was not friendly fire. It was rapid fire. They all quizzed her on blurring lines between journalism and power

brokering. With admirable sangfroid, Dutt pleaded guilty to an "error in judgement" but not to charges of corruption.

Corporate giant Ratan Tata was also at the receiving end of Radia's indiscretions. He was given a chance to explain his position through a one-hour exclusive *Walk The Talk* with Shekhar Gupta on NDTV 24x7. Only it was not really a *WTW*; it was more like a very respectful, sedentary conversation among two friends about placing private conversations in the public domain.

And now on to more innocuous icons, like the Godhukars who appeared in *Big Switch-2*. It's all about a widening generation gap. The not-so-traditional Godhukars are parents to a pair of wilful, frankly badly brought up sisters, Puja and Junaki. The siblings want to wear skimpy clothes, chat with boys all the time and generally want to do everything without any parental control. Not allowed, say mom and pop, and so the sisters are paired up with another set of parents who are worse than the originals. In the meantime, the shell-shocked Godhukars are dumped with a punkish, guitar-strumming, foul-mouthed DJ as a replacement daughter. But all is well when in the end both parents and children realise that they are better off with what they have.



GOOD MOTORING
H. Kishie Singh

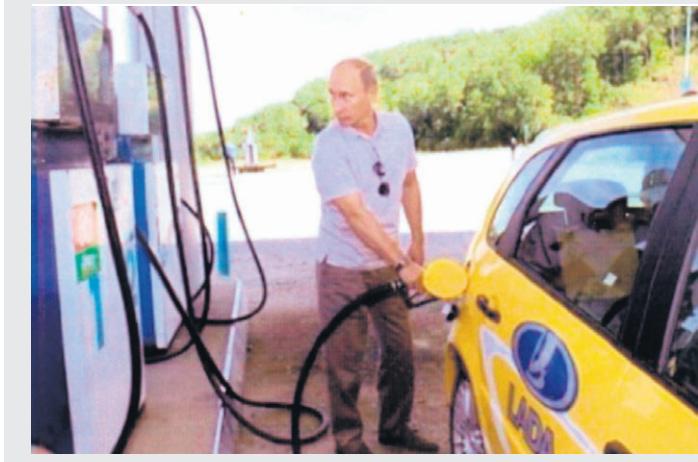
VIP brats are worst offenders

At the recently concluded Police Week celebrations, everybody agreed on one point. VIP brats were the worst offenders on the road, as were their drivers. Take a look at any VIP car. Black film on the windows. What for? So that Mr Brat can have a drink party in the market parking lot. A red beacon on the roof. What for? So that toll booth attendants or parking lot attendants can be intimidated. Fancy curtains on the rear door windows and rear windscreen in complete violation of the motor vehicles rules. Everything about the car is illegal; it should not be on the road. If it is, it should be challaned. But who is going to challan a VIP's son, or even his driver?

It is an accepted fact in life that the offspring emulates his father. If a man smokes while driving, or uses a cell-phone, or overtakes from the left, or jumps the red light, that is what the youngster is going to learn and do. If the dad drinks and drives, that is what the brat is going to do. So who is responsible for the condition of the traffic chaos?

As you drive on roads built and maintained by the Border Roads Organisation, they post slogans along the way which are to promote safety. One of the most meaningful slogans reads: "Your behaviour on the road is the identity of your character!"

The accompanying photograph speaks volumes. It shows Vladimir Putin, one of the most important and powerful men in the world. He drives a Lada Hatchback, about the same as an Alto; he is refuelling the car himself and is behaving like an ordinary and responsible citizen. Conspicuous by their absence are hordes of Kalashnikov-totting guards, a convoy



Russian President Vladimir Putin drives a small hatchback, refuels the car himself and behaves like an ordinary citizen

Black film on the car windows. What for? So that Mr Brat can have a drink. A red beacon on the roof. What for? So that parking lot attendants can be intimidated. Fancy curtains on the rear door windows and windscreen — all in complete violation of the rules. Everything about the car is illegal; it should not be on the road

of vehicles to carry the guards, ambulances and more.

Compare that with one of our VIPs on the move. A dozen or more vehicles moving at high speed; the lead police car waving the *aam admi* to move out of the way. Nothing disrupts traffic like a VIP on the move. Where is the need for this show of strength and importance? Where is the danger? Terrorism is long gone. It may not be a bad idea for the VIP to move in a single car, incognito. Or do what Sadaam used to do. He had a couple of look-alikes who would leave his palace or office and go off in different directions to fool the baddies. It worked. None of the attempts on his life were successful. Maybe our VIPs should try this ploy.

There is another reason for chaos on our streets. Ignorance of traffic rules, or if the driver knows these rules, they are ignored. Two of the most ignored rules are stop signs. Cars coming out of secondary roads, join the main road without as much as slowing down; never mind coming to a complete halt. They endanger the lives of a dozen people other than their own.

In countries where traffic rules are observed, failing to come to a complete halt could mean losing your licence.

Another road sign that is ignored is the solid unbroken yellow line painted on the road. An unbroken yellow line is the equivalent of a concrete road divider. Do not cross. Yet it is common to see a car with all four wheels across the solid yellow line. This means that the car is in the wrong lane and driving head-on into the incoming traffic.

This scenario is the order of the day on Uttar Marg on the stretch from the lake to the Rock Garden entrance. Cars coming from the lake and wanting to enter the Rock Garden or go to the High Court, do a right turn and cut across the solid yellow line. This is an illegal move and consequently dangerous.

To make matters worse, this area has become a bus stop, again illegal. CTU buses, huge tourist buses and an assortment of other vehicles are parked on Uttar Marg illegally. Tourists visiting the Rock Garden wander willy-nilly on the road. Confusion is complete, with road-side hawkers selling drinks, *gol-gappas* and other goodies. All illegal. Police and administration officials pass them every day. No action has been taken.

It is an oft-heard refrain in Chandigarh — cars are causing confusion on the roads. Cars are not the problem. The confusion is caused by drivers and by the utter lack of concern on the part of the authorities.

Happy motoring



Saturday Extra

The Tribune

■ August 12, 2006

As a one-year-old in 1982, it was declared the 'Person of the Year' by *Time* magazine. Today, as it completes 25 years, the Personal Computer can boast of turning the world around and impacting lives as none before. **Roopinder Singh** scrolls down the eventful years of the smart machine, which refuses to slacken its drive

People's Choice

REVOLUTIONS come in all shapes and sizes and it is hard to pin their origin to a particular event. The personal computer (PC) came to the fore, it is generally agreed, when IBM introduced its 5150 line in the early 1980s, beige boxes that sat on tables and crunched numbers.

These were the unlikely precursors of the PC as we know it today. They were expensive, with a starting price of US \$1,565 and all that this money provided was 16 kilobits of memory and audio tapes to store data, unless you wanted to pay extra for a floppy drive. The case in which this hardware was fitted was an uninspiring beige box.

However, what it gave was the experience of computing—up close and personal, as opposed to the formidable room-sized mainframe computers, which were tended by as many as 60 technicians, and refrigerator-sized "mini" computers.

Today, there are over a billion PCs. From beige it went to black, the text-only green screen was replaced by a graphic-rich colour desktop, computing power increased dramatically and people found newer applications for the computer, besides its primary role as a productivity tool. It revolutionised the publishing industry, has become a gaming platform, music and entertainment centre, and thanks to the Internet, a communications device as well as a window into the rich diversity of the World Wide Web. Starting with a peripheral role in the lives of its users, it has become ubiquitous, spawning a new culture, re-defining relationships and even economies, thanks to the information technology boom.

Not the first

The IBM 5150 was released on August 12, 1981. For the record, the 5150 was not the first personal computer, there had been others before it, including many from IBM itself, but these were not so successful. The team that built the 5150 did so because Apple II had taken the lead in the market for small computers, as PCs were called then. In a few years, however, all others were the also-rans in the PC race.

Computer enthusiasts trace back the first personal computer to Edmund Berkeley who described his computer Simon in his 1949 book: *Giant Brains, or Machines That Think* and went on to publish plans in a series of *Radio Electronics* issues in 1950 and 1951. It was a hobby machine and he sold over 400 plans in 10 years.



Xerox introduced Alto in 1973, but they never commercially produced it. A pity, since it was innovative and many of its features were to be used by computers built 10-20 years later. Alto had a mouse, a graphical user interface (GUI), an object-oriented operating system (OS). Altair 8800 did well. As we have seen, so did Apple's I and II and Commodore International's PET.

Industry standard

What the 5150 did was to establish an industry standard. It was also important that this computer did not use only IBM products. The hardware was built around a central processing unit, or "brain", sourced from an Intel chip and the software had been contracted to a company called MicroSoft, as it was written then. The word is an abbreviated combination of "microcomputer software".

It took computing from the realm of techno-savvy to that of the desktop of the business world and, later, creative people. It now seems strange that before the PC came, computers typically cost as much as \$9 million! At \$1,565, the 5150 was a bargain. Its predecessors from IBM were priced at above \$10,000.

Thankfully, computer hardware followed Moore's Law, or the prediction made by Gordon Moore (co-founder of Intel) in 1965 that the transistor density of semiconductor chips would double roughly every 18 months. This observation also held true for other components like hard drives that store data and RAM, and generally as the capacity doubled, the price of the new product did not increase, the old products became more inexpensive.

There are over a billion personal computers in the world; in the developed world, most

kids know how to use a computer and computer skills are a major parameter of gauging the level of development in any society.

PC's evolution

The PC evolved, and unlike calculators and other dedicated devices

The PC has allowed a billion plus people all over the world to use the power of the computer. There are tens of thousands of applications for computer users, practically everything that you need is available, and if it is not, someone somewhere is prepared to make it.

before it, people found different and newer uses for their PC. They needed newer software for it, and as they became more demanding, the hardware also had to be improved.

IBM has taken a long-term view of allowing its PC to be non-proprietary. After seeing the success of this product, other manufacturers too started making computers based on the IBM platform, often under licence from IBM. These were called IBM clones, and notable were those made by Columbia Data Products and Compaq Computer Corp.

Who would have known that, in time, IBM would sell its personal computer business to a Chinese company, Lenovo? It did, in April 2005.

Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Acer, Lenovo, and Toshiba are the main players in the PC business, a significant part of which are laptops, something that would have been the stuff of fantasy in the 1980s.

The software that ran the computer has evolved as well. What started as text-based interface of the Disk

Operating System (DOS) by Microsoft got the bells and whistles of a GUI which made using the computer easier and fun. Only those who have used a DOS computer will realise how great this change was, and how it helped IBM-compatible machines stand up to the

application. VisiCalc failed to evolve, and eventually disappeared.

The other important application for the PC was word processing, a computer program used for the production (including composition, editing, formatting, and printing) of a text-based material. With these programs, the original hardware called word processors, which were basically electronic typewriters with a screen, would now be replaced with software.

Word Star was a popular program, though after Microsoft Word was introduced for the Apple Macintosh in 1985, it became the industry leader.

Incidentally, this program was popularised on the Mac, and then widely adopted for PCs.

The history of computers tells us that only what is useful stays, the other may become a fad only for a while.

What you see

The personal computer had now come a long way from what an IBM's press release described as the screen's "green phosphor characters for reading comfort" and "easily-understood operation manuals" that made it "possible to begin using the computer within hours."

With the introduction of graphical user interfaces, What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) became possible. Till then, computer screens only showed the text, and you did not have a good idea of how the printed version of your work would look.

This was the foundation of desktop publishing that began in 1985. The key components were the PageMaker software from Aldus and the LaserWriter printer from Apple for the Apple Macintosh computer.

The Mac was used to see page layouts on screen. It was married with the LaserWriter's capability of printing it out at 300 dpi. This was the first major step towards putting the power of publishing in the hands



Illustration: Gaurav Sood

linked) documents and Web pages that are a part of millions of websites.

As of June 30 this year, over 1.04 billion people use the Internet according to Internet World Stats, a website that gives date on worldwide internet usage. Today if a PC is not connected to the Net, it is considered an anomaly, in fact, PC themselves have evolved into laptops.

Impact on society

The PC has allowed a billion plus people all over the world to use the power of the computer. There are tens of thousands of applications for computer users, practically everything that you need is available, and if it is not, someone somewhere is prepared to make it.

When this writer first started using the PC in 1984, it was a chore, but even then a vast improvement over the electronic typewriters. The Macintosh SE, introduced in 1986, was fun. The tiny 9" black and white screen seemed so crisp, the 1 MB RAM was blazingly fast, and the dot-matrix printer gave printouts in which fonts came out well and no matter what you did, you could save it all on a 40MB hard drive.

This article has been typed on a computer that has a 40 GB hard drive, 512 MB RAM, which one would like to upgrade to 1 GB and it is still used for typing and processing graphics.

For users, ultimately, the technological details did

not matter. Computers were to be used for carrying out various tasks, and they performed, well most of the time, and crashed at other times. Software have added functions to it and hardware the means to deliver what the human masters want. Within a year of its introduction, the PC had been declared by *Time* magazine as its "Person of the Year" for 1982.

Who could have imagined online dating even a decade ago? How exactly do you classify cyber relationships? How do you tackle cyber crime? Is there any way of preventing children from pornography available on the Internet?

Linguists expressed anguish at the way language and grammar has been mauled because of e-mail communication and "lower-case anarchy". What do they say when they have been confronted with the abbreviated English used for SMS.

Today the PC is ubiquitous, but it faces a threat from powerful hand-held devices like mobile phones that combine communication, portability and applications generally associated with the PC. Still, it has shown a surprising ability to reinvent itself and become useful in new situations.

It is ironic that the PC, which liberated the users from networked computers, has not gained strength from the super networking of the Internet. Today's user has the best of both worlds, the power of a stand-alone, and the strength of networking.

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prologue

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conditions apply

By Roopinder Singh

WHAT is it that would make a comfortably ensconced person take to a road less travelled by? What makes hundreds of people push themselves and their machines to the very limit and a bit beyond? What is it that makes a father leave his little daughter

rally there are many limitations whereas in a Raid there are few. A Raid is more gruelling and tests the man and machine much more, she is told.

After a quick bite media teams are split up into various groups and assigned different vehicles. I head out in a Sumo for Shuja so as to be in position at the Time Control (TC) point at the end of the first competi-

Diary of a Raid

ter at home while he careers across steep curves? What is it that makes two mothers trade their home and hearth for the pleasure of negotiating up mountain tracks? Why, it's the spirit of adventure, of course, and in order to share it with our readers, we share with you a rally diary of the recently held Raid de Himalayas.

Wednesday

Up bright and early for the drive from Chandigarh to Shimla. Reach Himachal Holiday Home at Shimla by 10 a.m. and find out that other scribes have come in from Delhi. Poor chaps, they had to spend two hours before the Capital would let them out of

tive stage. It is a beautiful drive on NH 22 through Kufri, Fagu, Theog, and Narkanda. We meet up with others at Narkanda and Kingle where we leave the national highway and head towards Luhri, Ani and Khanag. Shuja has a guest-house, which we reach by about 10 p.m. There is no food available and the only thing on our mind is to get some sleep. We crash out, after a bit of a snack organised by Sunny Jind, scion of the Jind family.

Thursday

Early to rise, we get to see a beautiful sunrise. A short drive takes us to Ghayagi, where Leg 2 of Day 1 will end. The TC is at a point just before a



Lure of the mountains: Raid de Himalayas covered 1,300 km of mountainous roads.

its grip! They were caught in a traffic jam just on the outskirts of Delhi when they started from there on October 5 evening.

This is the day for the scrutiny. Dozens of cars and bikes are lined up at the venue awaiting inspection by rally officials. Is the roll cage up to the specifications? Show the 4-point seat belts, helmets, fire extinguisher etc. Where is the first-aid kit? The persons scrutinising the vehicles, both cars and bikes have been rallyists themselves and know various tricks of the trade.

There are the yellow Esteems from JK that have top-seeded Satkirian Hara and P.S. Pruthi as drivers, looking cool and composed. There is the black and red Gypsy of Sanjay Sikand. Another two-toned vehicle, sporting similar colours is of the ladies team comprising Mona Desai and Rajni Nagu.

Bikes attract a lot of feminine attention. The bikers are resplendent in their chest, knee and elbow guards that are fixed atop their riding suits. They will have a tough time facing the elements.

There are two teams from Chandigarh also. Atul Mandhar in a Gypsy and Viney Kumar in a Zen. Will the latter be able to take the rough terrain?

This is a Himalayan event in ways more than one. It will take the competitors 1,300 km along a tough hill terrain, from the verdant deodar greens to barren rocks, across mighty passes, past icy mountaintops. Rallying is returning to the Himalayas with a vengeance. They were the original host of the Himalayan Rally, and the Great Desert-Himalaya.

One car stands out amongst the rest, a red Volkswagen Beetle. It belongs to Vijay Parmar, president of the Himalayan Motorsport Association, who, along with two other rallyists, Atul Handa and Manjeet Bhalla, is credited with putting the Raid de Himalaya together. What has also attracted much attention from the motoring community is the combination of the highest cash prizes and low entrance fees.

How is a Raid different from a rally, one scribe asks. In a

rally, one scribe asks. In a

tyre. The first car in is of Satkirian Hara, followed by Sanjay Sikand.

As evening approaches, it is time to worry about filling the day's despatch. A rushed ride to Kulu, where a cyber café is to be found. The sole computer is being monopolised by a tourist who is an excruciatingly slow typist. Once he leaves, it takes a short while to punch in the despatch and e-mail it to

lead of almost half-an-hour! This leaves us with enough time to contemplate on the might of Nature that has carved

'B' pillar damaged, though the rest of the car is untouched. It is one of the trophy for the Raid de Himalayas. Surhud Sharma is declared the champion biker. Bitto Sondhi is second, though



Champions: Sanjay Sikand and Ajay Jaggi were first at the last TC (left). They got the overall winner's trophy — photos by the writer

Chandigarh and get a confirmation.

We go on to the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute at Manali to meet the rallyists. After dinner, we decide to go on towards Rohtang in order to be able to catch the rally the first thing in the morning. We get reservations slips for the Rest House to Marhi, 12 km from the Rohtang Pass. On reaching the PWD guesthouse at Marhi we find no trace of the chowkidar. Spend the night in the Gypsy, not so gently rocked to sleep by icy-cold winds. Thank God for sleeping bags.

Friday
An early morning start towards Rohtang at 14,000 ft.

out such mountains and gorges. The Chandra flows just past us, green and icy.

The rally streams through the area. There have been no significant mishaps so far, though a couple of vehicles have dropped out due to mechanical problems. Darshan Kaila, SDM, Kaza is travelling in the wrong direction. Just as the event is headed to his territory, he has to rush to Manali to personally hand over the election-related documents!

By the evening it is time for us to head back. We cross the Rohtang Pass at twilight and head back towards Manali, past cannibalised trucks and tourist-oriented eateries with blaring music, quite in contrast to the homely dhabas that we have been frequenting lately.

On to the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, the rally headquarters in Manali, and then to the Himalayan Tourism log huts. A roof over our heads, a hot bath, a good Tibetan dinner with Momos, after last night at Marhi, we have learnt how to appreciate the good things in life!

Saturday

The rally is headed back here from Kaza. Time to get a film

freak accidents that happen. Kultar is an old rallyist who is now an official of the Raid. He knew what he was doing when he brought his car to the Raid. Jagwant Gill, a Himalayan Rally veteran, has also brought his Ford Escort to the Raid and both these cars took the punishing drive well.

This has been a day of problems for the Raid. Manoj Khan's car turned on its side shortly after he started from Kaza in the morning.

The competitors following him stopped to help set the car back on its wheels, only to see it roll off the cliff. Bitto Sondhi also took a toss on an icy patch, but he is back on the job again.

The Zen has dropped out from the rally, though the other Chandigarh team is doing quite well. Atul Mandhar does not have much rally experience, but he is taking on the veterans.

Sunday

An early morning start. We leave Manali at 4 a.m. After crossing Kulu we head towards Mandi at break-neck speed. We want to beat the competitors to Basantpur, the final TC of the Raid. We race along the national highway and then branch on to the state highway. We are making good time when we have a puncture. A bamboo shoot has driven through a brand new tyre! A quick change, an intense prayer, since we can't get the puncture fixed anywhere nearby and we carry on.

We manage to reach the TC by 1 p.m. barely 20 minutes before the first vehicle races in. We have done eight hours of continuous driving, and we are the only three media persons at the final TC.

The bikers are the first to stream in, followed by Sanjay Sikand in his Gypsy. Intense competition is followed by hugs of relief as soon as the TC is crossed. It has been a hard, gruelling Raid. The ladies team has done well, making steady progress.

The competitors regroup at Naldera, where there is a crowd of college girls from Shimla milling around. The regrouping takes place here and on to the Shilon Resorts, where the Raid de Himalaya officially ends. Rally Steward Tutu Dhawan is gung-ho about the rally. He should know, he has seen many, many of them, both as a participant and as an official. Dinner is the time for bonhomie, and exchanging stories. Did you hear about fishermen's stories? You haven't heard bikers yet! "Sir, I was down to three spokes on my rear wheel."

Monday

The day of the results. The provisional results are posted, and of course there are objections! Final results are announced by noon.

Sanjay Sikand gets the overall



Coup de Dames: Grit and determination got Mona Desai and Rajni Nagu a trophy

which the rallyists drove

across the Ridge on to the 99.38-km competitive of Leg 1 from Guma to Nogli. This is a beautiful, though taxing, drive that we had covered the day earlier. The second competitive leg started at Ani after which the competitors had to cross the Jalori Jot at 10,280 feet above sea level. The route to the Jalori Pass is a tough one, with a steep slope and a broken-down road. Once you cross the pass, the passage is even steeper, downhill.

The first bikes reach Ghayagi in the afternoon. Bitto Sondhi is the first vehicle in at the TC. He has recently been blessed with a baby girl, but that hasn't kept him from biking.

He has had a good ride. It was only yesterday that this rider was recalling that his parents and his wife had asked him to take it easy. "Of course when you go back after winning, they all tend to forgive you," says this veteran of many a rally. Following him are other bikes, including a rider who did the last bit on a flat

ply beautiful. We proceed cautiously along the Chandra river towards Chhatru. The road is badly broken at places, and the landscape provides a rich contrast to the verdant greens of the deodar-lined forests yesterday.

A Sumo carrying the other media party breaks down and we take in two fellow journalists towards Chhatru. We all regroup near Chhatru and attack the dhaba, an interesting place that offers you Maggi noodles along with traditional fare. Illumination is provided by a solar lantern, cooking fuel by dung cakes.

We know we can't go further because of the breakdown of the Sumo. The organisers are facing a shortage of accommodation at Kaza because two rest houses on the way have been dismantled, and the first priority is given to drivers and officials.

This is a long competitive stage of 134 km of tough terrain from Gramphoo to Kaza via the Kunzam Pass (15,800-ft). As usual, the first vehicles in are other bikes, including a rider who did the last bit on a flat

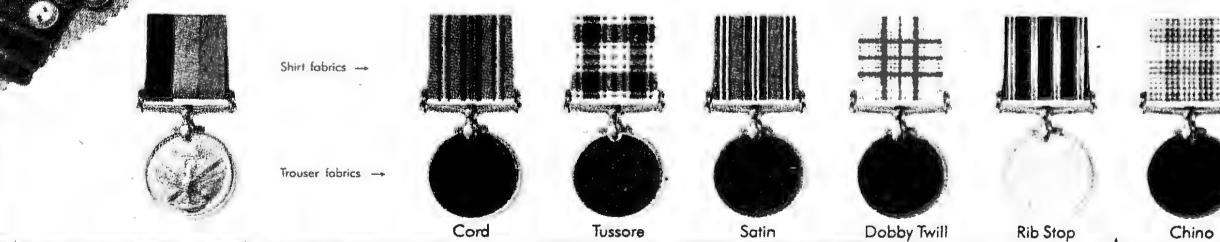
developed. We have photographs but no scanner to send them to Chandigarh. A scanner is found after hours of searching, but the person who can do the job is not there! He is with the Raid!

We get back to the rally headquarters to find that an Army truck near Rohtang Pass rolled back and banged Kultar Nutt's Opel Astra. Both the side windows have been broken and the

day of the results. The provisional results are posted, and of course there are objections! Final results are announced by noon.

Sanjay Sikand gets the overall

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Dream analysis

In the last two-three months, I have often dreamt of getting murdered by one of my classmates. We are in college together. He is also a good friend of mine.

Sonali, Palampur

It seems that you either harbour hostile feelings for him or you do not have faith in his friendship. Be frank with your friends. It will stand you in good stead. If you feel uncomfortable in a relationship, break it rather than carrying on with it hypocritically.

I am 21 years old. I dreamt I was walking alone. Suddenly some people joined me and walked along with me for some distance. Then they disappeared and I was alone again.

A. Chauhan, Shimla

Relationships have their own life. You must have recently experienced the beginning or end of a relationship.

I am 13 years old. I am studying in Class VIII and at present my exams are going on. I am fully prepared for them but twice I dreamt that I was sitting in an examination hall and could not answer any of the questions.

Sunita Behl, Sunder Nagar

Commonplace apprehensions, Sunita. So long as you have confidence in yourself, it's okay.

I am 21 years old. I dreamt of driving a two-wheeler. Just as I passed a petrol station, I ran out of petrol and couldn't come back. Then I start flying in air. The more I tried to touch the ground, the higher I went.

Sakshi, Jammu

"Think before you leap". Have you got yourself into a problem and now find no way out. This is portrayed by your inability to turn back. Your going higher when you want to descend shows that you are getting deeper into the problem. Try taking the advice of your elders.

I am 24 years old. I dreamt that I undertook a journey but something went wrong. I don't remember what exactly went wrong.

Abhinav Mathur, Kurukshetra

A disastrous journey denotes incompetency and false show of affections. Be sure of whatever you undertake and beware of hypocrisy in relationships.

— Vinaya Katoch

Note: If you want your dreams analysed, please write to Dream Analysis, C/o Saturday Plus, The Tribune, Sector 29 C, Chandigarh-160020.



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Cars with character

By Roopinder Singh

THE French built a car with a front engine and front wheel drive; the Germans built one with a rear engine and a rear wheel drive; and the Americans, characteristically, built one with a front engine and a four wheel drive. And they all did well—they had all built vehicles that became classics.

Along with the latest cars exhibited at the recent auto show in Chandigarh, were some of these classics—as the auto-expert H. Kishore Singh puts it, cars with a lot of individual character and impeccable pedigree, be it British, American or German—each standing out even as they were all lined together. Also on display were motorcycles, including one dating as far back as 1917.

"There are a lot of car lovers

Chandigarh Heartbeat

fully and be comfortable. The body does not have to be contorted to fit into the car; those days the paradigms were different—cars were built for people, you did not have to squeeze yourself into a car.

In the first half of the 20th century, car manufacturers went about ensuring a comfortable and smooth ride for their customers in various ways.

The French car company Citroen was a pioneer in Traction Avant (literally front drive); the front engine, front wheel drive design. It was a revolutionary step for its time and along with other features, Citroen Seven became a hot favourite in Europe. Baljit Singh Manci has one such car. He bought his 1938 Citroen in 1983. He restored

single nut, bolt has been added to the car. The upholstery, the roof, the running boards, instruments, gadgets etc. are all original and functioning," he asserts. As someone pointed out tongue-in-cheek, the car also made a name for itself as a "Gangsters Car" in old Hollywood movies.

In direct contrast to the massive Fleetmaster is the diminutive 1951 Fiat. As Kishore Singh says, this car put Italy back on the road to recovery because it was slightly more expensive than a scooter but you could put your mother-in-law, your wife and children—seven people which is the ideal format for an Italian to go on holiday. It is only 500 cc.

"I bought it in 1970 for Rs



1970 WW Beetle

Photos by Gautam Singh

ing at the tyre treads, you could not make out which direction the vehicle had gone in.

Brig Jiti Phulka (retd) and his wife Sukhjiwan Phulka have a 1935 a Ford Tourer, a popular car of British origin manufactured as Y model. It was initially marketed in the UK at £100 apiece. It has a four-cylinder engine of eight-horse power. The couple got it two years ago.

"She wasn't in a fully running condition at that time, she came back partially loaded and partially running and thereafter I have been at it and have got it to its present state where you can confidently take her out for a drive. I have been taking her to the golf course, and going for joyrides to the lake and so on. Yesterday, I had an interesting experience; I was talking to Mr Kim of Daewoo motors.

"He saw my exhibitor's tag and inquired about my car. I told him that it would start before you

could say the word Kim. He came over; I pressed the ignition and the engine fired magnificently, Izat reh gai."

A car that drew many appreciative glances was the 1970 VW Beetle, lovingly maintained by Amarbir Singh. The endearing curves and its unique four cylinder, air-cooled, rear axle mounted engine made this car an enduring icon of German automobile industry. This Ferdinand Porsche-designed, Adolf Hitler-inspired Volkswagen (people's car) became the best-selling car of all times.

"Most of the motorcycles on display were from the stable of Kaka Singh, who has over a dozen such two wheelers. The ones he had on display included the 1917 motorcycle, which looks more like a motorised cycle. It had a carbide lamp, and six hand-operated gears, and front exhaust.

Then there is the 1949 S-8 Sunbeam, nicknamed the "Rolls Royce" of motorcycles. It is a shaft driven motorcycle

I am 37. I dreamt of a dirty pond with fish in it. Then I saw a few dead fish beside the pond. **Dhanlal, Kharar**

A muddy pond denotes illness. The dead fish foretell distress shall come in the form of happiness. So, do not go by appearances.

I am a 50-year-old central government employee. I dreamt that a court of law had awarded me a death sentence.

P.L. Kochappan, Amritsar

Do you feel guilty about some wrong done? For your own peace of mind try and correct the wrong you could have purposefully or unknowingly have committed.

In a dream, I saw a bitch and her pups at my doorstep. I told my daughter to give her a chappati. The next day a bitch actually came at my doorstep and I fed her a chappati.

S.K. Bansal, Yamunanager

It mustn't have been the first time the bitch came to you for food. Your dream portrays a feeling of guilt. Did you refuse her food that day? It is a good omen to see yourself feed animals. There will be good times ahead.

I am 41 years old. I saw my feet in my dream I do not remember anything else. **Roop Kumar, Nayanangal**

Seeing your feet in your dream is ominous of despair. It means others will dominate over you. Try to be more assertive if you feel your point of view is correct.

I am 11 years old and in Class VII. I dreamt that a classmate, who has left the school, was coming to my house. I told my mother to decorate the house and bring a garland to welcome her. When the bell rang, and before I could meet my friend, my mother woke me up.

Shubhdeh, Nangal

It seems that you really miss your friend. But that is life, Shubhdeh. Do not despair, you shall meet many more good people who will become your friends.

Vinaya Katoch

Note: If you want your dreams analysed, please write to Dream analysis, c/o Saturday Plus, The Tribune, Sector 29, Chandigarh-160020.



(Right to left) 1938 Citroen, Austin A-40, Fiat 500, WW Beetle

it, though, as he says: "It still needs some work."

Of course there were many sceptics because the trend had already been set by front engine, rear wheel drive vehicles. This concept caught on so much that now, about 85 per cent of the cars manufactured world-wide today are of this configuration, says Kishore Singh.

"I am attached to it because it is the first car I owned and since we were newly married, we travelled a lot in it. It still gives a mileage of 20 km per litre.

The British-made Austin cars were very popular in India too. There were two Austin Seven cars, a 1927 convertible that is the proud possession of Ravi Mann, and a 1934 Sedan that belongs to Raghav Khaitan. As Kishore Singh says: "Seven means 700 cc. It was the ideal sized

engine capacity for the size of the car, basically a four-seater. A 700 cc would be sufficient even today; you need more for the accessories, the air-conditioning and all that.

Another British car that was a legend was the MG. At the show was a 1949 MG TC, a proud possession of Jaspal Anand. It is low slung, has exceptional road holding and very fast acceleration. "Every millionaire had one, as did every sports lover," says Sashi Garcha.

Tejinder Singh brought in his Willys Jeep in immaculate condition, with its side valve engines, which became famous for its tractability, which of course also depended on the distinctive non-directional tyres. These tyres had various advantages, not in the least being that by look-

available in splashes of aqua, metallics, pinks and burnt orange.

If you not have the body to carry these off, a safe bet would be standard wrap-dresses, wide-legged cotton trousers, conventional jeans, flattering shorts and a sporty shirt or blouse line in wool or cotton knits, depending on whether it's hot or cold where you are going.

For those in love, this season's most romantic look includes dresses in frothy cotton and gathered cheese cloth in double layers with kit. Try them out in pastels or naturals with shades of summer greys, maroons and blues. There are also chiffon coat dresses with an underslip for that sensuous look and feel. Ruffle fronts are particularly popular in such dresses, as well as blouses with boat necks and three-quarter sleeves in lace.

Raw-edged cotton organdie dresses with cap sleeves and silk underslips are also recommended this season. And for the beach, go in for the bikinis in candy stripes, florals and checks. They come with matching slippers in the same print.

A new entrant in the range of holiday wear is the halter-necked, crochet common bikini.

ni, which presents a very interesting look. It is best suited for the young and adventurous and needs to be complimented with stylish footwear and straw hats.

Shoes, this, season, take a turn towards flirty kitten heels and flats—a perfect accessory to flippy skirts and cut-off trousers. Wooden or jute mules with raffia flowers also look cool on those out to project a sporty look.

Significantly, a lot of Indian prints, ranging from the classical tie 'n' dye bandhanis to sober batik works have staged a comeback in holiday wear this year. Besides the prints, there is a good deal of Lakhnvi chikanwork shirts and skirts on show.

Paisley embroidered silk sarongs and the Madras plaid are also making it to holiday wear. But then, keep it all simple and understated. Refrain from garish nail colours and lip gloss of the last season. Instead, opt for soft colours, preferably shell-pink or naturals.

The idea is to project a clean, scrubbed look with comfortable, easy clothes and shoes. Remember, on a holiday, the way you feel will reflect on what you wear. The time you take to plan your wardrobe is a worthy investment. (MF)

in the city," says, Kishore Singh, who was responsible for having collected these machines. "The CII wanted to show contrast and I thought that this would be a great time to see the evolution and development of the automobile."

Though the city has many car lovers who own cars, there was only one vehicle that had been with the owner throughout. This is a 1934 Ford Sedan which Daljit Singh Chahal's father bought for him. The young Chahal learnt to drive in this very car, he drove from Lahore in it across the "line of Partition" in 1947. He brought his wife home in this very car, and still puts around in it. Once you sit in the rear seat of this car, you can stretch out

Doing up your holiday wardrobe

By Nikhil Bhagat

Many of us, the onset of the festival season means travel time—taking a break from work, going back home, catching up with friends and relations... in other words, letting your hair down. Or it could just mean a conscious move to be away from it all, as they say.

Either way, thoughts turn towards a holiday wardrobe—to be able to travel light and yet, project a fun loving image of being with the times with an assortment of classic cuts, a melange of colour and references that are culture-based.

This season, wraparounds have become a hit in holiday wear, particularly in striped buff, white and brown knits. Jersey is a hot favourite, though in warmer climates, there are a lot of organzas in ocean blues and crisp linens in pure white floating about.

Fashion pundits suggest that the spotlight is currently on gentle tailoring with a good deal of soft-flowing shapes and silhouettes, that spell ease and comfort. Neither sharp cuts nor grunge has any takers this



The spotlight is on soft-flowing shapes and silhouettes

available in splashes of aqua, metallics, pinks and burnt orange.

If you not have the body to carry these off, a safe bet would be standard wrap-dresses, wide-legged cotton trousers, conventional jeans, flattering shorts and a sporty shirt or blouse line in wool or cotton knits, depending on whether it's hot or cold where you are going.

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A new entrant in the range of holiday wear is the halter-necked, crochet common bikini.

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Saturday Plus

February 28, 1998

50-year-old institution with a century-old heritage

By Roopinder Singh

ITS genesis lay in the painful Partition, in which people and institutions were separated more by circumstance than the will of the individuals concerned. The pain of parting soon led to a desire to do something about it and thus was born Yadavindra Public School, Patiala.

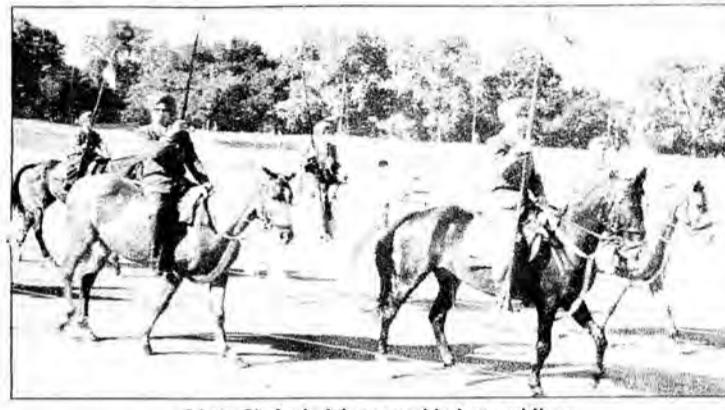
Aitchison College, Lahore, was the premier education institute for young boys in the

ment and society, and with YPS and Aitchison College sharing a bond, we are bound to form a bridge of understanding between our two peoples. The RIMC, Dehra Dun, has also facilitated such understanding since it invited Pakistani old boys for its centenary celebrations."

Lt Gen K. S. Randhawa, an old Aitchisonian who has been instrumental in bringing together former schoolmates from India and Pakistan together, spoke about how H. N.

who is at present the Chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, is an old Yadavindrian, as are bureaucrats Trilochan Singh and Rajan Kashyap, says Dr M. P. Singh.

As is common on such occasions, there was much stock-taking about



Many Yadavindrians excel in horse riding

united Punjab. It was the place where sons of chiefs and princes were sent for their basic education and training. It was in this way that among others, both Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and Maharaja Yadavindra Singh were students of this institute. They were also to be later the Chairmen of the same Aitchison College.

"I was the last person among the Hindu and Sikh boys to leave Aitchison College after the Partition," says Col Harinder Singh Attari. He was not alone. Among the members of the teaching faculty who had to leave Lahore were Rai Bahadur Dhani Ram Kapila and Hetwa Nand Kashyap.

Maharaja Yadavindra Singh had great respect for his teacher Dhani Ram Kapila. The Maharaja invited him to be Principal of the new public school, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Yadavindra Public School started functioning on February 2, 1948, with a strength of 21 students and nine teachers.

Harinder Singh Attari became the first student of YPS. "I distinctly remember those days, since it was a clean break from Aitchison College, but we soon gained roots in YPS, since most of the teaching staff, as well as some cooks, waiters and orderlies were from among those who served us at Aitchison College, Lahore."

Reminiscing at the golden jubilee function of the school held recently, Colonel Attari said he remembered how Maharaja Yadavindra Singh would touch the feet of his guru in public.

Dhani Ram Kapila was succeeded by Lt Col Franklyn Goldstein in 1950, and four years later the school was made co-educational. The school continued to flourish, and in 1969, H. N. Kashyap became Principal. An old Aitchisonian, he was familiar with the ethos YPS was modelling itself on. When he retired in 1986, Dr. H. S. Dhillon, an old Sanawarian, took over until Sanawar claimed him back. Now, Dr M. P. Singh, is the Principal of the school.

Maharaja Yadavindra Singh's son, Capt Amarinder Singh, is the patron of the school, with Rajmata Mohinder Kaur as the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

In spite of it being a descendant of a school which only admitted princes et al., YPS has emerged as an institution which caters for the usual mixture of students, both boys and girls, from the region.

One of the highlights of the function was the presence of a large contingent from Aitchison College, led by Raja Kuli Khan, member of Board of Governors, and Shamim Siafullah Khan, Principal of Aitchison College, along with the hockey team, which played a friendly match with the YPS team.

As Capt Amarinder Singh puts it: "Aitchisonians are well represented in the higher echelons of Pakistani army, govern-



YPS has a tradition of illuminating young minds

Kashyap, during his visit to Aitchison College, Lahore, would meet old students and ask how they were doing on life. "Sir, I am a Chief Minister" one would say. Another would reply that he was the Chief Minister of another state, or a Judge etc.

Well, another Aitchisonian, Harcharan Singh Brar, is a former Chief Minister of Punjab. Old Yadavindrians are well represented in the Indian judiciary and administrative services too. Former Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court Justice Savinder Singh Sodhi,

past and present achievements as well as the course for the future. Yadavindrians have been known for their prowess in sports, though the impression is that they don't do that well in academics. Mallika Gupta, a student highlighted the academic achievements of individual students who have excelled at the national level and 837 students out of 1125 secured first

divisions in ICSE from '87-'97. Nakul Gupta, another student, spoke of how old Yadavindrians like the shooter Renu Singh, who is also the

Secretary, Indian Olympic Association, and cricketer Navjot Sidhu, along with a host of others, have done well in sports.

Like most public schools, YPS also provides a wide range of hobbies to give an opportunity for all-round development of students. Students cut a fine figure astride their steeds. They also learn various kinds of crafts, including photography, leather work, game workers,

boarding school only. Otherwise we are keeping up with the developing scientific world."

At present, most of the students in the school are boarders and there are hostels for both boys and girls.

Co-education is now an integrated facet of life in YPS. Girls who have passed out of YPS have made a place for themselves in the subcontinent, and as a student mentioned, they can hardly be called "tom-boys," not with Parmeshwar Godrej being

all praise for the Yadavindri hospitality, conversations with the students and the Principal revealed that not only was the institute at Lahore better equipped, its efforts to find foreign scholarships for its students were rather successful.

This is not so for YPS, though they do have an ongoing cultural exchange programme with Shropshire County, U.K. This has resulted in a positive exposure to a new world for the children of both nations, says Anahat Khaira, one of the stu-



Aitchison College delegation poses with Capt Amarinder Singh at the function

one of the most prominent old-Yadavindrian girls!

The hockey match between Aitchison College and YPS was played in school grounds. YPS does boast of having one of the best sports facilities in the country, and if one were to go by the reactions of the visitors, it could well be the subcontinent.

The keenly played match ended in a draw with the Yadavindrian cheer leaders shouting innovative slogans like: "Waheguru Ji, score a goal, to boost up their team's morale."

While the Aitchisonians were

students of YPS who visited England and stayed with British families as a part of this programme.

Yadavindra Public School, a 50-year-old institution with a century-old heritage, was born out of a need to provide quality, all-round education to the children. Going around the school five decades later, the young people like Arif Siafullah, the Vice-Principal, who has devoted his life to the institution he has studied in, it is obvious that the school will continue to flourish as long as it continues to fulfil that need.

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Roopinder Singh looks at America

Beyond Baywatch and Picket Fences

HE was pretty, confident and intelligent. Full of life she was bubbling with excitement at the idea of going to the U.S. of A, the land where dreams are realised.

Yet there she was nervously biting her fingernails, betraying her apprehensions. After all, she was starting her marital life. But this was not what was on her mind.

"Is life in America like what we see on TV?" she asked. Ah! So this was it. No. American girls are no more like the cast of Baywatch than Indian girls are like Aishwarya Rai or Sushmita Sen. Most of them are plain Janes, some obese, some not — just like the rest of us. She relaxed suddenly.

Believing that the American way of life is like what we see on the soap operas beamed into every home is a bit like imagining that the Bollywood box-office *masala* films reflect the Indian lifestyles. Yet it doesn't stop people from presuming, imagining, and deluding themselves.

The American dream as we see it, is billions of blondes and Buicks. The reality, on the other hand, is economic disparity and struggle, of people who slip through the social security net into the dark crevices of non-existence; of good supporting families and broken ones with 16-year-old single mothers; of great amount of individual freedom as well as a sad record of civil rights' violations.

In the past few years we have been bombarded with a barrage of images of the life in the US of A, and most of these images are far removed from reality. But we have been taken in by them. Do you know what they do in America in such a situation? They take a cold shower, and that's what we are about to do.

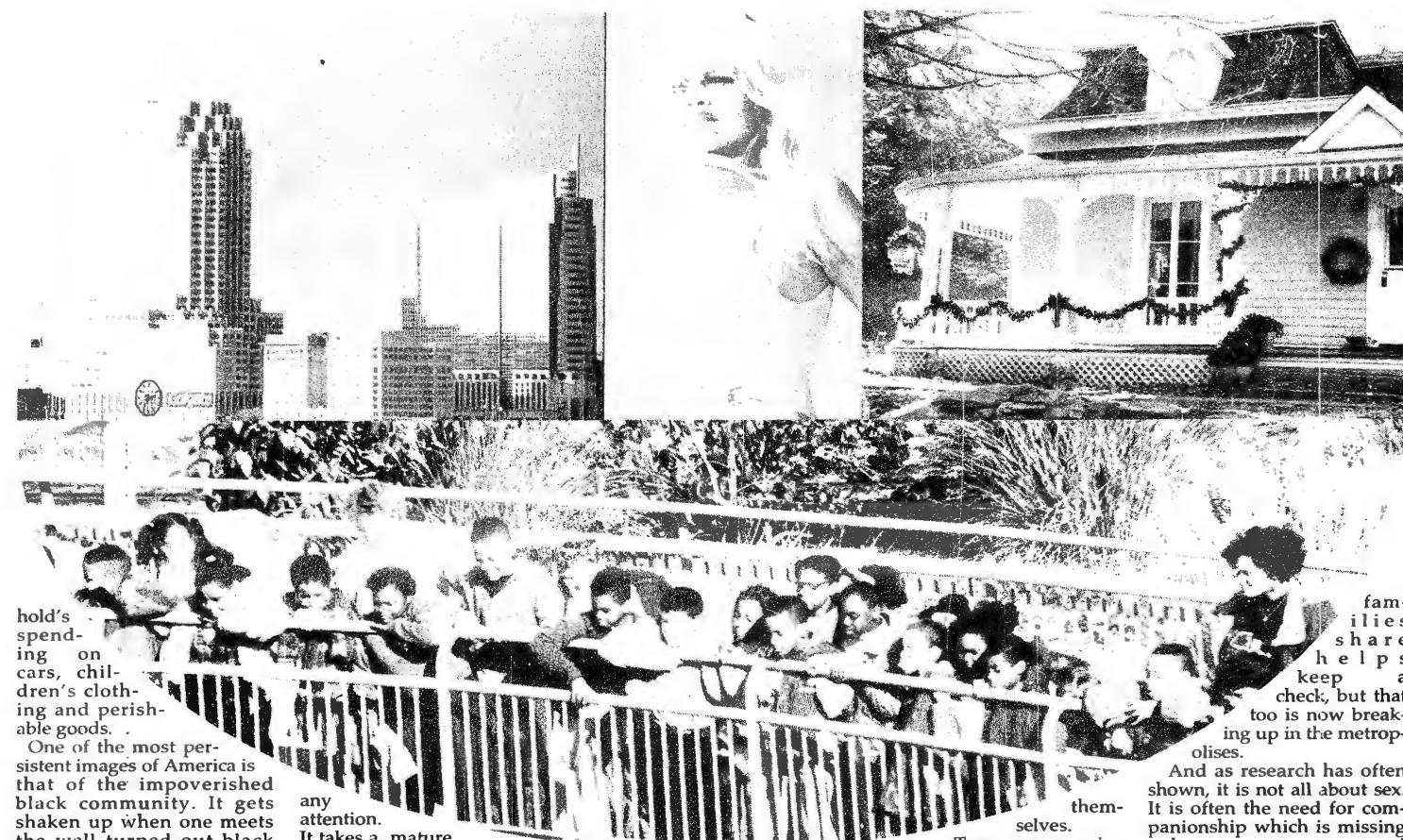
Trying to ferret out the core of America and the essence of being American, is a rather frustrating experience. You peel off layers of capitalism, entrepreneurship, social cohesiveness of the "melting pot" and individual tensions which are (at times) expressed in the violence of serial killers; the strong presence of the Catholic church (in a land which is essentially Protestant); the "Hippy" movement and corporate conformity typified by IBM's workplace; the transaction from Martin Luther King Jr to Louis Farakhan etc, and yet not find the core. Maybe,

The blacks have a large, well-educated, upwardly mobile middle class. They are invariably immaculately dressed, often shade more expensively and tastefully than their white counterparts. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that the black buying power increased sharply last year, outpacing white house

Americanism has no core, no heart.

The USA we imagined to be while we were students, is rather different from the pulsating life of New York, with its crime, grime, and the "I-don't-give-a-damn-for-you" attitude. It takes some time to realise that this is not really an abuse. It is just a statement which reflects the average New Yorker's attitude. In New York, people come in all shapes, sizes, races and kinds. Some are good, some bad. And most a mixture of the two.

"Is there racial prejudice?" Yes, there is. Not the obvious kind, for that you have to go a bit farther to Jersey City where gangs of "Dotbusters" exist. They haven't been quite stamped out despite all the efforts of the police over the years. In most other places, however, the racial prejudice is reflected in the way people socialise, in the fact that most Italian neighbourhoods simply won't allow any black person to their areas, and in the way the prices of property in a particular area fall when



hold's spending on cars, children's clothing and perishable goods.

One of the most persistent images of America is that of the impoverished black community. It gets shaken up when one meets the well turned out black white-collar workers. Of course, there are many homeless men who roam the streets in search of something useful. Many of them are black, though the scene which still haunts this writer is the one of watching a woman pick up a half-eaten hamburger outside a McDonalds store. This woman was not black.

"Most of those on the dole are black," is a litany so often repeated in America that you tend to believe it. Yet facts are otherwise: "Two out of every three welfare recipients are white, and, as a percentage, 13 per cent are black and 32 per cent are whites," says Safir Ahmed, Managing Editor, *Riverfront Times*.

Incidentally, as far as the image of blacks being criminals goes, it is like all other things, a grossly unfair generalisation. Petty crimes do occur in any poverty-stricken area, but it has often been pointed out that none of the "serial killers" have been black individuals.

Going on to another myth, it would seem from TV and Hollywood that the US of A is a land of promiscuity. "How many?" is a query which dogs every male who sets foot in the land of opportunity — and this is the opportunity to exaggerate, fib, lie, invent; in other words go for it.

People are people, they have rather similar values, which they may express in different ways. Girls and boys interact more freely in the USA than they do here, but that is the way their society is. However when an American girl goes out on a date, her parents worry as much as we would here. They also check the antecedents of the boy just as we would do. And just as wearing a jeans and a sleeveless is no invitation to anything here, wearing bikini on the beach has no hidden "come hither" signals there. Incidentally, most foreigners are scandalised by the number of "gay" men they see in India. Abroad, holding hands is seen as being gay!

One of the best things about living in New York is that no one really gave a damn to the kind of clothes you wear. You can walk around in jeans, or a *kurti pajama* with a colourful turban, without attracting

any attention. It takes a mature and, of course, self-occupied society to be so *bindaas* about how one dresses up.

This narcissistic attitude gets one at times. Most Americans don't seem to know where India is like, as a survey by the *National Geographic* magazine found a few years ago, a vast majority of high school students were unaware of even the name of

the capital of the USA.

What is missed the most while living in America however, is the family support. The division of family into a nuclear unit took its toll, but one of the worst tragedies of the USA is of kids having kids. Single mothers have a tough time trying to take care of their offspring as well as of themselves.

Teen pregnancies in a conservative state like Missouri run into horrifying numbers — 14,000 in 1993, and that was the lowest it had dropped since 1991. Nationally, the highest rate was 120.3 per thousand girls in 1991. And let's not be smug, this is the kind of a lifestyle our youngsters are trying to emulate. Of course the traditional closeness our

And as research has often shown, it is not all about sex. It is often the need for companionship which is missing at home, peer pressure, need for love, a cure for despair or plain and simple impetuosity which gets them into relationships. In other words, parents have a major role in providing a healthy and happy interaction at home, they have to be understanding without being too liberal; aware without being nosy. American parents are now learning to spend more time

with their children and to take a break, to "downsize" their ambitions and wants.

It is ironic that at the time Americans are downsizing we embark on a massive wealth-acquisition exercise — I want the latest car, the biggest three-door fridge, and the home entertainment system. The family here is taking a back seat. Talk of being completely out of sync! Can we ever learn from the American mistake? Do we always have to burn our fingers to find out that fire is hot?

This brings us to another aspect — our latest infatuation with capitalism. America's experiment with unbridled capitalism led to the establishment of banana republics — what better way can there be to control the cost of production and safeguard the capital investments than taking over an entire country and more or less run it as a colony?

It was after this that there emerged slowly, the concept of a responsible democratic capitalism which responds to the social and other needs of the society rather than profit-making alone as the *summum bonum*.

Safir Ahmed gave an example of what happens when utility (electric and gas) companies run amuck. In Missouri, the Union Electric Company has a monopoly over the supply of gas and electricity to half the state. In 1993, over 40,000 residences lost heat in the middle of winter because the company said that people were not paying their bills.

The company was right, but the hardship caused to houses which could not be heated in the midst of a harsh winter

Continued on page 3

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A well and Shiv Mandir at Dighal village.



A massive well at Farmana Baadshahpur village.

These landmarks of our cultural heritage should be preserved, says Ranbir Singh.

Well, well, well!

WESTERN-STYLE policies had an adverse impact on our traditional "water science" and technologies because western technology of piped water was introduced in India without assessing the socio-cultural role of wells. Thus, local wisdom decayed much to our regret.

The indigenous technologies for obtaining drinking water were soft in approach with regard to the environment and were rich in "philosophy". Evidence suggests that mechanised methods were invasive and caused heavy drain on precious and fresh ground water. During the British administration in India, large scale power driven water supply schemes and projects came into vogue with total disregard to traditional methods.

Our rural people have not been able to adapt to these culturally alien technologies much to the dismay of our planners. The natural process for making a well in our rural society was quite different from building and energising a modern water supply scheme.

Recently, the society for People's Advancement, Technology and Heritage, completed a random field survey and interviews around Rohtak to understand the various practices associated with wells.

Six decades ago, when the need to build wells was recognised for augmenting the drinking water supply, a surveyor would be summoned by a *tholedaar* — a head of the family. The surveyor possessed appropriate knowledge for correctly identifying a site for a new well. Often, it was on community land.

The surveyor would keep in mind the proximity of the site to the dwelling area, the texture of the soil, underground water the new well may yield, water needs of the people, financial resources available with the commissioning community, the capability of the terrain and adjacent pond for recharging the aquifer and the vegetation cover at the premises.

When so many parameters were considered who would dare say we were unscientific? The true significance lies in the depth of this traditional knowledge gradually developed and successfully utilised by the village surveyors.

An ideal site would be a high corner on the bank of a pre-existing pond. Certain plant species were considered an ideal indication of the type of sub-soil, the taste of the underground water and its quantity. People knew that with a grove of plant species like *peepal*, *bargad*, *pilkhan*, *goolar*, *neem*, *jamun*, *mango*, *salhan* and a thick undergrowth of bushes, the top soil at the site of the new well was capable of holding moisture longer during hot weather.

In the next phase, an architect-cum-mason would be approached who would under-

take construction on behalf of the *thola* or *pannai* i.e. several groups of families of a lineage in a village. The master mason and the surveyor would decide about the size and design of the well.

Shortly, an old *dhaak* or *jandi* tree in the *bani* i.e., community forest, was logged to obtain adequate quantity of wood to prepare the *neenchak* — a circular foundation on which walls or *kothi* of the well was raised. *Dhaak* or *jandi* wood was considered ideal for a *neenchak*, for it would not decay in mud even after many decades. This wood is capable of withstanding immense pressure.

Till 50 years ago, lime rocks dug out from the community land and locally known as *rori* *pathar* were shaped and sized, according to construction plans of a well. Our masons shaped

these blocks with primitive tools but exceptional skills. Later, brick masonry was introduced.

The diameter of the community wells found in Haryana ranged somewhere between three to five meters. The quality of binding material or mortar for bricks is another marvel. The fixing material, a thick paste, consisted of lime rock (*rori*), acacia seeds (*kakroli*) or *guar* seeds, white jute (called sun or *patsun*), wholesome seeds of *urad* pulse ground with water. In a circular trench a bullock would roll a heavy grinding wheel to crush this mixture and prepare it for use.

When the wall of a well was sufficiently raised, a *chabootra* would be built around it. The final structure of a well were the *chabootra*, *purchha* (a depressed and sloped place near

the rim of the well where water would drop), *bhaun* (a large wooden pulley), *burjee* (minarets) and *khels kothi* (tubs).

The ruggedness of masonry was remarkable in the sense that it lasted 100 to 150 years. The structure of most of the community wells in Haryana is visibly intact even today. Four pillar wells with four *bhauns* were commonly built in Haryana. But wells with eight to 12 *bhauns* were also built 100 years ago at Beri, Dujana and Manheru villages in Haryana.

To stabilise the structure, the well was clad with fine white lime. The local artists decorated wells with devotion, by drawing figures of sages, pheasants and mounted warriors. To enhance the grace, *chhatris* (shelters) adorned with wall paintings were also built at a considerable cost. Besides, the upper

half of the pillars was covered with colourfully drawn geometrical designs.

The fine art work on wells in south western Haryana was inspired by later Kishangarh (Rajasthan) style. Regrettably, the fine art work on most wells in villages of Meham and Jhajjar blocks including Beri has either faded or been defaced by urchins. Artists, who made these colours from local material passed away without transferring the secret chemistry to their heirs.

Installation of stone figures of deities on wells was discouraged. Instead, building a well near an existing temple or raising a temple near a well or building both together was considered auspicious.

Wells are an object of our rich cultural heritage. A culturally sensitive relationship evolved between wells and our rural people, especially in semi-arid south-west Haryana and vast desert areas of adjoining Rajasthan.

The socially significant custom of ceremoniously taking a bride to the well is on the decline. Earlier, the new bride wore colourful dress in the evening and was decorated with heavy jewellery of gold and silver. She, then strode gracefully towards the well singing folk songs in chorus in the company of senior women of her husband's clan. Her physical strength and sweet voice was under scrutiny.

The well hummed with colourfully dressed brides twice during the day — late mornings and early evenings. The *teej* festival has historical links with huge trees on the premises of wells. If there were few wells, there were few trees and the celebrations would be a low-key affair.

Nowadays, most wells are dilapidated. The decaying old trees stand mutely in the company of the deserted wells. During the survey, he even chased urchins defecating at the Dadooyalai well at Kalanaur. The younger generation does not possess the vision to preserve the abandoned wells even as a landmark of cultural heritage.

Windows and Performas

By Roopinder Singh

ONCE upon a time, there were those monstrous machines which promised to ease the tedium of your chores, whether they were mathematical calculations (even determining the trajectory of artillery shells) or compiling lists (like addresses of thousands of telephone subscribers), but in turn they intimidated you and made you learn arcane/esoteric commands.

Computers they were called, and even when the Big Blue company finally made some for homes, they were still, well, anything but homely. Then came two mavericks who took

Windows, the computer screen more or less looks the same be it on a Macintosh or an IBM-compatible computer. Thus if you know how to operate one, it is easy to use the other.

Windows 3.1 is a bit clunky version of the Macintosh operating system. Windows 95 has something for everyone, it is also rather sleek and is full of a host of features, including networking. Macintosh, on its part, hit back at the software giant Microsoft by pointing out that most of these features have been available for Macintosh users for a long time.

The changeover from 3.1 to 95 is not cheap and by introducing this operating system, Microsoft has managed to make even last year's computers obsolete. Even though it says that

Computer chat

a bite of the forbidden fruit and gave us the cuddly Macs, but those had their problems....

That was the story. Now fast forward to the present. Two recent events have placed man where he ought to be, on the centre stage of the computing world. People like me who love computers but refuse to be intimidated by them or learn anything more than we have had to, have a reason to rejoice.

The focus has shifted and both the launching of Microsoft Windows 95 as well as a less publicised introduction of Macintosh Performa computers in India are indicative of computers becoming more and more like any other gadget in our fast-burgeoning electronic marketplace.

That is welcome, because once you strip it of all the hype, a computer is nothing but a machine which makes it easier for you to type in and edit and store whatever you want to

(word processing), helps you compile, sort and present in different ways lists of data (data

Windows 95 is compatible with a 386 machine and 4 megabyte (Mb) of Random Access Memory (RAM or dynamic memory which can be accessed in microseconds, as opposed to magnetic data stored on a hard disk where it takes milliseconds and is thus thousands of times slower than RAM), what you really need is a 486 or a Pentium processor with 8 Mb or more of RAM.

All this is expensive business (upgrading a typical 386/1 Mb computer could cost as much as Rs 30,000, and most of the estimated 80 million users of the previous versions of Windows will probably run their computers with what they have, and change the machine later, as their needs increase (and they always do).

Macintosh's Performa was launched with much hype, and to be frank, it deserves some of it. The Sunday Times, London, said: "If you want to see today's state of the art in home computer design, you need to go back to Apple and take a look at



Windows 95



An artistically laid but abandoned well at Bhaini Chandrapal village.

base management), performs complex mathematical functions etc. It can, of course, combine all these functions in various ways, and perform them at an incredible speed.

One of the main problems with computers has been the fact that they don't talk to each other. Various manufacturers decided that their machines were superior to those of the others and thus they either expected other to follow their standards (IBM) or buy machines only from them (Apple Macintosh). Then there were others, Dell, HP, Wang, Unix etc.

Thus, unlike an audio tape or a CD, in a computer, you can't play a floppy disk — formatted for, say, IBM, on any other etc. It is this lack of a uniform standard which has been a major problem for the consumers.

There were some moves towards compatibility, but computers were a bit more like different types of aircraft than cars. If you knew how to use one, you would not necessarily be able to use the other without some re-orientation. Also the "feel" was different. All this has changed. With

its popular Performa 5200."

The Performa is a computer which you can use to work on office projects at home (even if the office has an IBM-compatible computer), do home accounting, word processing etc. and so can your children, who also have numerous educational games and access to an electronic dictionary, atlas and encyclopaedia. All this in one sleek package.

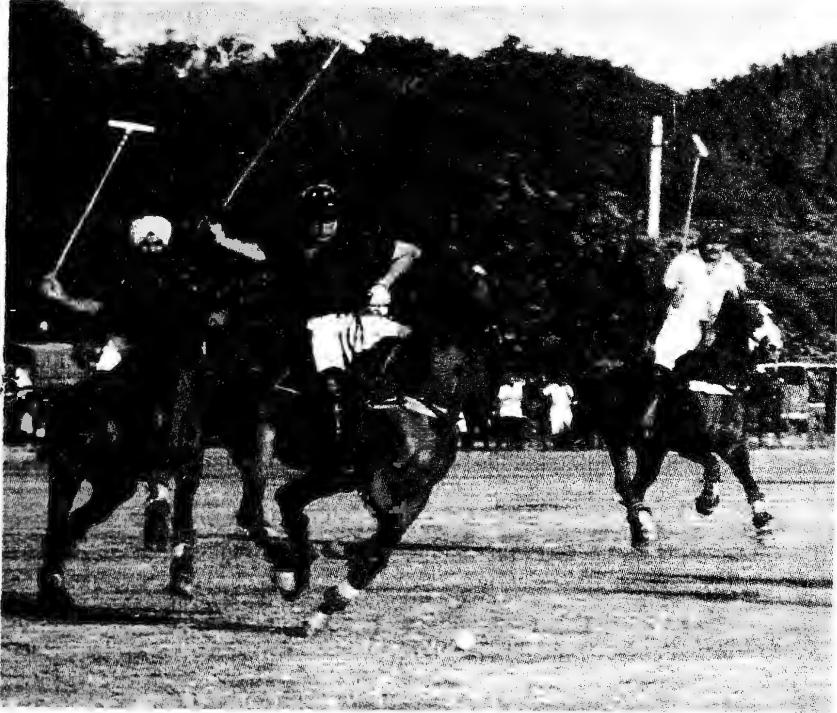
IBM and its compatibles also have similar computers which let you perform similar functions, though, of course, there are shades of differences and what suits you will depend on what your need is (and what you can afford).

Windows 95 and Performa were both launched in India with much fanfare. What does it all mean? In short that we are finally firmly on the international computing scene. As computer makers make it easier for us to use their machines, we will be able to concentrate on the all-important tasks of using computers — that's something we will get to in the subsequent columns, where we will also discuss Windows and Macintosh computers in more detail.

Tribune Features

Of thundering hoofs & swinging mallets

Will polo, long associated with Patiala, make a comeback in Punjab, asks Roopinder Singh



Prince Charles playing with prominent Indian players at a polo match in New Delhi.

PUNJAB, which produced such polo legends as General Chanda Singh, General Hira Singh, his son General Jaswant Singh and General Jaginder Singh, may soon be back on the polo map of India, and perhaps the world.

The Indian Polo Association (IPA) has recently decided to make an attempt to revive the game in this region, and the first match is being organised at Jalandhar, says Col Devinder Chand Katooch, Commandant of the President's Bodyguard, and Honorary Secretary of the IPA.

Punjab has produced many distinguished polo players, both from the Army as well as civilians. Army officers, including Col Kuldeep Singh Garcha (the non-playing captain-cum-coach manager of the team which has just scored impressive victories over Zimbabwe and Pakistan), and the two Sodhi brothers, Billy and Pickles, have dominated the polo scene for decades.

The first Indian victory in World Cup polo was in the fifties at Deauville, France. The team was led by the late Maha-

raja Swai Man Singh of Jaipur and it included the legendary Rao Raja Hanut Singh.

The recent Indian victory over Zimbabwe at Harare, by which the team qualified to enter the World Cup finals to be played in Switzerland in June, and its March 11 runaway 18-5 victory over Pakistan at Sydney have brought it many plaudits and bouquets. As Colonel Katooch says: "Polo is the only game in which we have beaten Pakistan so convincingly."

Contrary to conventional thinking, a large number of civilian players also play polo. "The IPA membership comprises 40 Army officers and 190 civilians," says Colonel Katooch.

Among the civilians is Vikram Sodhi, who hails from Anandpur Sahib. He has a string of 20 horses and has been fielding his team, the Cottonian Polo Team, in various national and international tournaments.

"Punjabis love the thundering hoofs of galloping horses and the swinging mallets of polo. I want to do all I can to make them to revive this game in Punjab. There are a number of stud farms in Punjab and once the game picks up, I am

sure it will get a very positive response from both the connoisseurs and the public at large," says Vikram, who lives in Delhi.

"I am delighted that polo is being re-introduced in Punjab," says Gurpal Singh, a keen Delhi-based polo player. Gurpal also maintains a string of horses...

Polo is a very costly game and this is a major deterrent to many an aficionado, though now corporate sponsorships are coming in a big way to fund the game. Vikram's team was sponsored by the Hyatt Regency group for a tournament. Other teams were also sponsored, and last month one of the most glamorous events to be at the Capital was the "Polo Ball."

Polo in Punjab was associated with Patiala. It was under the patronage of Maharaja Rajinder Singh, who led the team himself, that the game was introduced in the region. A game of polo lasted eight chakars then (as opposed to the present six) and each chakkar was of a longer duration than now.

Maharaja Rajinder Singh introduced polo in Patiala in 1891, and it was he who selected Chanda Singh and Hira Singh,

two young polo players of the Indian cavalry, and inducted them into the Patiala Polo team, which made a name for itself by winning various tournaments.

In 1898, Patiala defeated Jodhpur at Ambala and this was the start of a long rivalry between the two teams, which clashed for the Polo Championship of India in 1920, 1921 (Jodhpur lost by four goals each time) and 1922 (Jodhpur won by one goal).

The Patiala team which competed during the twenties comprised men who were legends at the time: General Chanda Singh (back); Major (later General) Jaswant Singh, Colonel (later General) Jaginder Singh

pockets full of sweets for us."

The IPA is seeking the help of the Punjab Police in its efforts to revive polo in Punjab. "We have written to Mr K.P.S. Gill, and it is in the PAP grounds in Jalandhar that the exhibition match will be held," says Colonel Katooch.

The logic, as Vikram Sodhi put it, is simple. "The Army and the police are the two main government organisations which maintain horses. In the absence of any mounted cavalry units in Punjab, it is the Punjab Police which has the riders, the horses and the organisational strength to give polo a fillip."

Once there is some infrastructure and encouragement,

After decades, India will play in the World Cup finals to be held in Switzerland

and Captain Thakur Singh, the younger brother of General Chanda Singh.

The game was also patronised by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, both of whom played polo.

A big painting of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh posing with his team after winning the Dunlop Smith Club Open Tournament is hung prominently at Moti Bagh Palace, Patiala, where Capt Amarinder Singh, the scion of the Patiala royal family, now lives.

The last time polo was played in Patiala was in March 1985 when Capt Amarinder Singh organised a cattle and horse show in which he and his son-in-law Gurpal played a polo exhibition match, along with Colonel Garcha.

"There was a tremendous response from the people. In places like Bombay nobody comes to see polo matches, whereas here we couldn't control the crowds," recalls Amarinder Singh.

"I would like to start a trust and establish a corpus so that we can have riding clubs in Patiala, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar so that children develop an interest in horsemanship, and thus polo," he says, while pointing out that an expensive game like polo needs corporate and government sponsorship.

It also requires dedication and practice. "You know, they used to do stick and ball (hit the ball as they rode along it) from Patiala to Nabha and back every day! I remember General Chanda Singh, always had

people will respond," Vikram adds confidently. He is exploring the idea of putting up a polo demonstration match at Anandpur Sahib during the Hola Mohalla festivities.

The world's highest polo ground in Chail was converted into a cricket ground. In 1942 or so, Patiala's Polo Ground became a golf course, in time it was used as a venue for sports meets... but it is still called Polo Ground.

Will polo really make a comeback in Punjab?

One wishes that Nostradamus had predicted something about this also. In the absence of any such prediction, all one can say is that there are many who hope it will... soon.

— Tribune Features



Those were the days: A painting showing the winners of the Dunlop Smith Cup Open Polo Tournament (from left): Captain Balwant Singh Harika, Thakur Baney Singh (Kishengarh), Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, Colonel Chanda Singh, Captain Thakur Singh, and Captain Jaginder Singh.

— photo by the writer

The game of polo

POLO is a game played on horseback between two teams of four players each who use wooden mallets with long flexible handles to drive a wooden ball down a (330 by 160 to 200 yards) grass field between two wooden posts, eight yards apart. A game consists of six periods of seven and a half minutes each called chakars.

Polo is of Central Asian origin which was perhaps first played in Persia sometime between 6th century BC and 1st century AD. In time it became

the national sport of Persia which was played extensively by the nobility, including women.

Polo was introduced in India in the 13th century by the Mughals and the first Europeans to play the game were British tea planters in Assam who formed the first European Polo Club in 1859 at Silchar. The Calcutta Polo Club followed in the 1860s.

After a Captain in the 10 Hussars saw a match in 1866, polo spread in the army cavalry units, which soon started playing against each other. There were then eight players in a

team (as opposed to the present-day four) and almost no rules.

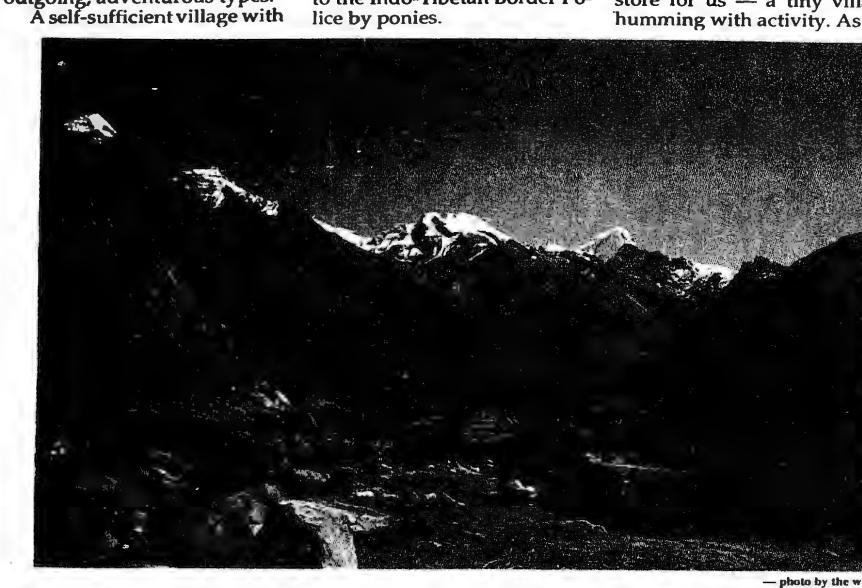
The rules of polo have been codified long since and every player is rated from 2 to 10. Rating is based on horsemanship, hitting ability, knowledge of the game, quality of horses and sportsmanship.

Polo soon spread to the UK and then the USA after the sportsman and newspaper publisher James Gordon Bennett saw polo and introduced it in 1876. It eventually spread to every part of the world, and now polo is played in practically every part of the globe.

Charming Chitkul

By Puneet Joy

FAR away from the Goan caps and pencil heels on the Mall of a hill station, far from the jungle of hotels with windows peeping into each other, lies this place in the Kinnaur district. Chitkul is slightly remote for normal holiday buffs, but is definitely a Mecca for the outgoing, adventurous types. A self-sufficient village with



— photo by the writer

Destination

spot, ammunition, ration and other necessities are supplied to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police by ponies.

Reaching by dusk through a carefully carved *kutcha* road via Sangla, we were warmly greeted by polite policemen in civies. They subsequently asked us for identification documents, a formality which didn't take long. By now it was getting chilly and dark.

Next morning, the bright sun dragged us out of our quilts to show us the splendour it had in store for us — a tiny village humming with activity. As we

walked up along the stream that sliced the village into two halves, we came across a water-driven *chakki*.

Looking at the lush green surroundings with slight patches of rust and yellow, the pollution-free stark blue sky — I felt great and thought about what my cousins living in Delhi would ever be deprived of. Every year they would take evening walks on the over-crowded Mall of Manali and go back to their carbon-filled hometown.

They definitely live in the 21st century. Here at Chitkul though, things are quiet different. Time strides gracefully at a beautiful snail's pace. No target-bound professions. No deadline anxieties. No technical superiorities. No foreign collaborators and no NRI participation.

Till early sixties Chitkul was an important part of a trade route which stretched from Tibet to Uttarakhand in Uttar Pradesh. The main transactions used to be in salt and wool. Ever since the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the trade ties snapped and now Chitkul thrives on its farmers and shepherds. There are over a hundred children and 50 adult students at the local school.

Now, with doors of Kinnaur open to tourists, it's time to discover what was hidden for decades from us. Tourism should be boosted here, but not to an unprecedented scale. It is for us to see that the Sangla valley should not become a Manali-like disaster.

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Saturday PLUS

ELSON Mandela gave a peck to Shabana Azmi on her cheeks. This outraged enough of her countrymen to whip up a major controversy. Four women were branded — the word *jebkatri* (pickpocket) was tattooed on their foreheads by heartless, shameless, brutal creatures....

And there was nothing — not the massive outrage which would be expected in any civilised society, nor any apology from those who are purported to govern and, thus, protect the citizens of the state these unfortunate women live in. And, of course, no action has been initiated against the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

An event which should have seared the conscience of all right-

Brandings, blindings, illegal detentions, extra-judicial murders, etc., are violations of the rights of man *qua* man, rights which have been recognised by all civilised societies.

thinking individuals is more or less ignored and instead of action, we find a degree of callous indifference and apathy which would have been shocking had it not been so common-place now.

Let us now look at some of the bare facts of the case. According to their version, Parameshwari, Surji Kaur, Mohinder Kaur and Gurdev Kaur had gone on December 8, 1993, from their village, Bagrian, in Sangrur district, to pay obeisance at the historic gurdwara in Tarn Taran. They were picked up from the bus stand at Amritsar by the police who suspected them of having stolen a foreigner's wallet. The policemen asked them their caste. "We are Sansis," they said.

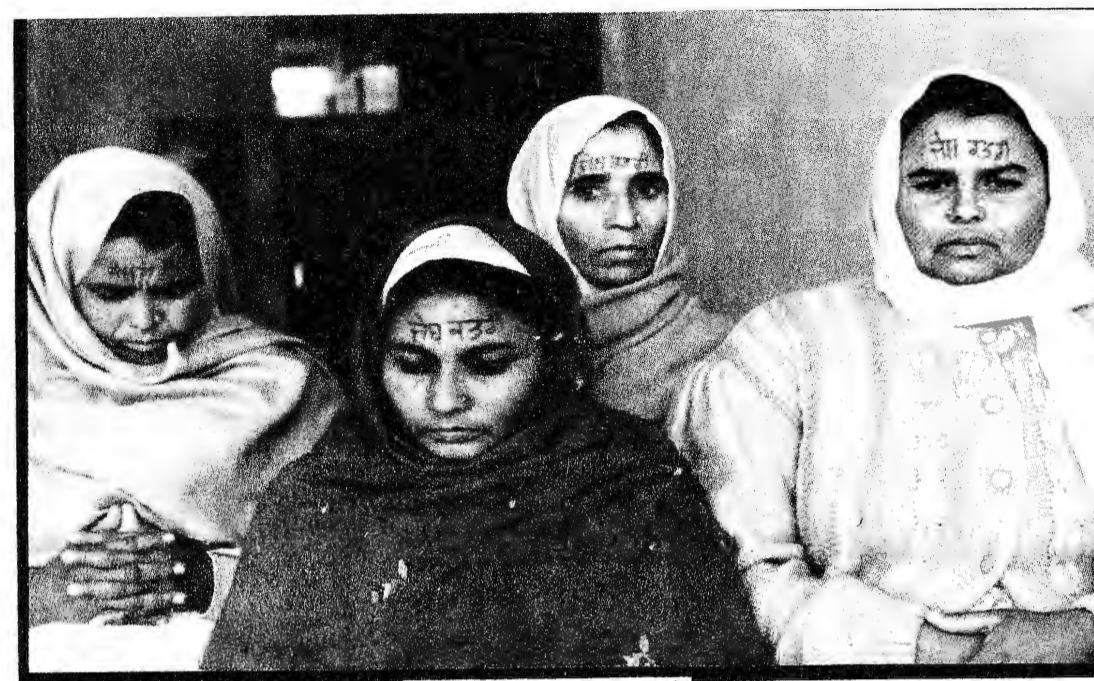
lier served in Sangrur district as a DSP and is said to harbour a grudge against the family of one of the four women.

When members of the women's families filed a habeas corpus writ petition, the infuriated policemen tattooed the word *jebkatri* on the foreheads of all four, who were subsequently produced before a magistrate, with *duppattas* 'decorating' covering their branded foreheads.

The judicial officer, it has been reported, enquired what the matter was about when the *duppatta* from the forehead of a woman slipped, but he still could not see beyond the straight and narrow. Chenna, on his part maintains that the four ladies are known

They branded them, scarred us

By Roopinder Singh



Our brand of human rights.

thieves, members of a 25-strong all-woman gang of criminals, who had been booked for pocket-picking a number of times. He claims that they had confessed to their crime before the Amritsar police and that their foreheads were tattooed by a mob when they were caught picking pockets at

Bathinda. In a way, it does not really matter if the ladies concerned are pick-pockets or not. The police have no business to illegally detain them or of committing such an outrage. The official version's painting of the infamy as a case of vigilante justice just does not ring

true. If it is indeed so, then why have the culprits not been identified and arrested?

If this barbaric action brings back images of the Dark Ages, it is indeed to be expected. This is just not the way to behave in a society which considers itself to be civilised. A society is judged by the

way it treats the non-conformists, the deviants, those who bend or break its norms.

The difference between "is" and "ought" has been recognised since times immemorial. There should be no crime but there is and we have civilised (on paper at least) ways of dealing with those

said. Brandings, blindings, illegal detentions, extra-judicial murders, etc., are violations of the rights of man *qua* man, rights which have been recognised by all civilised societies. They should not happen, but they do and will continue to do so till such actions are condoned on grounds of expediency.

Let's take a concrete example. If a domestic servant is suspected of having stolen something, the first reaction is threaten him and tell him: "If you don't give what you have stolen, we will call the police. They will beat you and set you right." Why are we condoning, nay, requesting his being thrashed? "But this is different," you may say. No, not really. Let's remember that morality ends where we make an exception of ourselves or in a particular case

What happens at a small scale on the domestic front gets magnified at the level of the society and leads to incidents such as these brandings. In a democracy, ever of the kind we have, it is all in the hands of the people. If we don't condone such barbarism, if we then make our feelings known — through protests, letters, public meetings, etc., those who matter will be put on notice. They will have to respond.

"What is in it for me?" you may well ask. The only answer to such a question, which should not have risen in the first place, is: "Everything". What would you have done if this had happened to any member of your family? If your daughter's husband told her to get out of the house as she belonged to a family which had been branded *jebkatri*? By branding them they scarred us, the whole society. All of us.

We are a democracy. We have the options — provided we exercise them.

"He has gone to the devil"

By Arvind Kala

MY son gets his strength from the spirits of the people he killed. He has gone to the devil."

This is what Charles Sobhraj's robbing mother said in Paris when in 1976 arrest in Delhi and subsequent investigation revealed the trail of dead bodies of young travellers he left behind in Thailand and Kathmandu. He beheaded, drugged and casually killed them for their passports and their travellers cheques.

Today, when Sobhraj in fetters comes to a Delhi law court to stand trial for this escape from Tihar Jail in March, 1986, he's ringed by policemen. But his mother's words about his strength ring true. Nattily dressed, lithe and strong, he walks jauntily. Jokes with his guards, smiles pleasantly at the world. Seemingly unconcerned that a sure conviction awaiting him will extend the 19 years he's already spent in jail, not to mention the death sentence that awaits him in Thailand should he ever be extradited. Looking at Sobhraj, it's hard to believe he'll be turning 50 in another three months.

The son of a Saigon-based Sindhi businessman and a Vietnamese woman, Sobhraj will go down as one of history's most fascinating and deadly criminals. Wherever he was — France, Turkey or Thailand — he checked into the best hotels and shopped extravagantly with stolen cheques and took the first plane out of the country.

He would make hundreds of thousands of dollars and lose all at a gambling table. A master of disguise, he changed his appearance and nationality. With stolen passports he re-entered countries where he was wanted as a fugitive. A compelling talker with an irresistible magnetism, he enthralled and nearly hypnotised his victims.

He used an arsenal of drugs on them — drugs for inducing diarrhoea, hallucinations, or sleep — before robbing them, and sometimes killing and burning them to prevent identification. Cornered by policemen, he would smile and invariably talk his way out, leaving them feeling sheepish that they could ever suspect this charming, rich businessman.

And when arrested, no jail or policemen could hold Sobhraj. Once in a Greek jail, he got his jailers to take him to hospital by "vomiting" blood that he had taken from his arm with a syringe.

On the way he broke out of the jail van. He escaped from the two policemen who had handcuffed him by spiking their tea with a



On way to court

dancer and charmed her into allowing him to drill a hole through. When the drill broke, he persuaded the dancer to get the jewellers to bring his collection to her room. When he came, Sobhraj tied him up and escaped with jewellery worth US \$ 10,000.

He took away his infant child from his mother-in-law's house in Paris by rendering her unconscious with a sleeping draught he slipped into her coffee.

In Thailand, Sobhraj used drugs to keep Frenchmen in a state of semi-stupor for weeks. Mean-

took pity on the blind boy and gave to God to give him eyes.

God agreed and gave the boy light. The boy jumped into the pond for a swim and began to beat the boys, and later the priest. So the priest told God to take away the boy's sight and God did saying he knew the boy was dangerous with his sight.

"Dear Benard," wrote Charles Sobhraj's father, "you have done the same thing with this boy. Let him be in prison rather than let him be free. This was your great mistake. You thought he would do good when he would be freed. He begged you, and you took pity on him. This is the result of your mercy."

Sobhraj's closest relatives knew he would never reform but his most puzzling traits was his total inability to learn from past experience.

Right from his childhood onwards, he got love, affection, and a chance to make good but he remained a juvenile delinquent, getting into a ship sailing for Vietnam as a stowaway, holding up a woman in her house to rob her.

His father called him over to Saigon to look after his shop. Sobhraj went but started stealing things from the shop and banging up his father's car which he was forbidden to drive. He drew 6,000 francs from his sister's bank account by forging her signature and lost them in a casino.

And all those years while he cheated, robbed, and killed, he travelled so much, from Hong Kong to Singapore, to Kathmandu, France, Delhi, Bombay, or Turkey, and under so many identities and in so many guises, that the police of several countries had no idea of Sobhraj's true identity. He was Alain Gautier, he was Daniel, he was Jean, he was an American.

All this time, however, Charles Sobhraj appeared to himself as the injured party. Because from Tihar Jail, he wrote this letter to his well-wisher, Alain Benard: "I have been searching only for a way to live... I promise you I did not kill. I am not a liar... they are wrong who say that I have committed all those murders... They are all liars and now I risk the laws on my head."

Finally, however, when you read Charles Sobhraj's life-story, it seems in credible that Tihar jail has managed to hold him. Because he always succeeds in slipping out of the confinement, the way he did in 1986. "Remember," he told his brother, when the two were in a Greek jail once, "their desire to keep me locked up is no match for my will to be free."

World's a stage

THE following lines are by William Shakespeare. Identify the plays where they figure:

1. I hold the world but as the world,...
2. When we are born, we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools.
3. This wide and universal theatre Presents more woeful pageants than the scene Wherin we play in.
4. As in a theatre the eyes of men After a well-grac'd actor leaves the stage Are idly bent on him that enters next,
5. In your imagination hold This stage the ship, upon whose deck The sea-toss'd (Man) appears to speak.
6. Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow, Ang'ring itself and others.
7. As an imperfect actor on the stage Who with his fear is put besides his part...
8. That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows Whereto the stars in secret influence comment.
9. Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more; it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing.
10. And like a strutting player whose conceit Lies in his hamstring, and doth think it rich To hear the wooden dialogue and sound 'Twixt his stretch'd footing and the scaffoldage.
11. Would you have me False to my nature? Rather say I play The man I am.
12. For they are actions that a man might play.
13. It is apparent foul-play; and 'tis shame That greatness should so grossly offer it.

Literary Heritage
By M.S. Aneja

Answers:

1. King Lear, I, IV, V.
2. King Lear, II, VI.
3. As You Like It, II, VI.
4. Richard III, V, VI.
5. Merchant of Venice, I, II.
6. King Lear, IV, V.
7. Merchant of Venice, II, III.
8. The Merchant of Venice, II, III.
9. Merchant of Venice, IV, V.
10. Merchant of Venice, I, II.
11. Othello, III, IV.
12. Hamlet, I, III.
13. Troilus and Cressida, I, III.
14. Twelfth Night, II, III.
15. Much Ado About Nothing, II, III.
16. King Lear, III, IV.
17. Merchant of Venice, III, IV.
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203. Merchant

Hazratbal hostages

We ate even grass

by Asha Khosa



One of the released hostages mobbed by media men.

Photo: Raju Kheri

TEARS mingled with raindrops at the reunion of 35 hostages of Hazratbal with their families after a month-long ordeal.

The haunted half-gutted building of Nageen police station, 2 km from the Hazratbal shrine, where the hostages were released, was awash with emotions and heavy winter showers on November 18.

Mothers hugged their sons and sisters kissed the foreheads of their brothers while relatives and friends helped them complete the police formalities for the final step to freedom.

A phren-clad woman muttered to herself in Kashmiri "No never, never will I allow him to go out again". Her son was besieged by friends and relatives.

Jamal Sheikh, a beggar in his 20s, stood alone shivering in the rain. No one had come to receive

him. He was the oldest of the hostages.

Like the 15-year-old deaf and dumb boy who sneaked out of the shrine furnished, the 35 hostages appeared handicapped when it came to talking about their captors.

"We don't know anything", said one. Another young man claimed he had never seen anyone holding a gun inside the shrine complex.

The 14-year-old Bilal Ahmed, was the youngest of the hostages. The fear of the gunmen was writ large on his face.

Suddenly, one of them, claiming to be their leader, went around threatening: "Remember, no one is to say anything". He effectively conveyed the veiled threat on behalf of the militants.

Nevertheless, the hostages' nightmarish experience for 32 days inside the shrine was re-

flected in their behaviour. They had lived in near starvation. "We ate raw-dried maze which is kept for pigeons", said Ghulam Qadir.

The hostages had eaten even grass, raw rice and chinara leaves to sustain themselves. "It was the United Nations, which sent us food inside", said Rafique Ahmed.

However, others knew that it was the court order that had enabled them to have meagre meals of three chapatis, one vegetable, sweetmeat and salt tea comprising 1200 calories to live.

Kashmiris, being rice-eaters, loath the very idea of eating chapatis, but for hostages even that was a palatable food, said Bilal Ahmed, who was gulping down cupfuls of milk brought by his relatives for all the released hostages.

Another major challenge for life inside the shrine was the chill. The marble walls of the shrine ac-

centuated the fall in the temperature and nights became unbearable.

The militants enjoyed the privilege of quilts while the hostages were left with curtains, durries and carpets for keeping themselves warm at night, confessed one of the released hostages seeking anonymity.

Most of the hostages claimed to have strayed inside the shrine while extinguishing fire which was set by militants on October 16 in order to distract the attention of the Army which was laying a cordon.

Bilal Ahmad and Manzoor Ahmad, whose houses were next to the shrine, rushed to the place with bucketfuls of water.

"There was a melée—everyone was running around," said Zaved Ahmed Shah, owner of an electronic shop.

However, when they wanted to come out, the Army had already laid the siege. "We were afraid of the Army. They had threatened to kill us", claimed Shakeel Ahmed, apparently on the instructions of his captors.

Ghulam Qadir, an employee of the Regional Engineering College, claimed he had gone inside the shrine to serve tea to the stranded people, a common service rendered by the devout at the shrine.

"I held my younger son in my lap when the Army advanced to the shrine", he said. In desperation, Ghulam Qadir dropped his son at the gate and the toddler walked to his waiting mother.

The eight outsiders were the stranded devotees who could not return to their homes following the Friday prayers and decided to stay overnight in the shrine.

Jamal Sheikh and two others, who eked out their living by begging around the shrine on Fridays, had been following this routine for years. "Things will never be the same for us", claimed Jamal in his feeble voice.

Hostages revealed that curtains were put up near the toilets to make-shift lavatories. "The toilets were full of stench and unclean. That was another major problem for us". No wonder, many of the hostages appeared filthy and infested with scabies.

The threat to their lives always loomed large. "We were only praying", said young Manzoor Ahmed. They had chosen Ghulam Qadir as their leader to "negotiate with the government".

Hostages claimed they had come out following an "agreement" with the government and there was no surrender.

Amidst the joyous reunion, Naza stood alone oblivious of the heavy downpour. Her brother, who she thinks is not a militant, had not been released. Naza refused to be coaxed by others' reassurances that her brother was to be released under an "agreement" soon. Symbolic of Kashmir's agony, Naza's tears made the November chill unbearable. The Nageen police station building echoed back her cries.

"**G**REED and sin have become the king and the minister. Falsehood is the local governor. Lust is the deputy with whom consultations are held." A very apt description of the world we live in, given by Guru Nanak Dev more than five centuries ago.

The *bani* of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, is revered by millions of Sikhs as well as non-Sikhs. It is replete with penetrative observations and answers which pertain not only to the religious aspects of our lives, but also to those which have been ordinarily considered beyond the purview of religion.

In *Var Sri Rag* the Guru says: "We are good at talk, vicious in deeds. Our minds are black from within though white from without."

It is a sad reflection on mankind that the contemporary world, described them as *kalyug* by Guru Nanak, does not seem to have changed for the better in any way.

Thus the need to study the teachings of the Guru carefully. In *Var Malhar* Guru Nanak Dev says: "Those who confer authority on those who deserve not are fools, and they, who accept it, are shameless..."

Yes. We are shameless. It is time that we all who live in democratic nations and say that we have the right to elect and thus select our representatives take the responsibility for what we are doing to our society with our ignorance, apathy, cowardice and foolishness.

Inhibitions, superstitions and taboos fetter the functioning of our mind's freedom, leave us much less as human beings than we ought to be. As one sees divisive actions all around oneself, and seeks a way out of such madness, one goes to the *Bani Sri Rag*, where Guru Nanak says:

"There are the lowliest men among the low castes. Nanak, I shall go with them. What have I got to do with the great? God's grace comes on those who take care of the lowly."

The late Principal Teja Singh, an eminent scholar, narrates the incident of the Guru and Mardana visiting the house of Lalo in *A Short History of the Sikhs*: "At Shadipur (now called Eminabad) he put up at the house of a carpenter named Lalo. This strange combination of a so-called *khatra* saint with a low-caste Muslim minstrel, living and dining with a Hindu *sudra* became the subject of common talk. Mere gossip turned into severe criticism when Guru Nanak refused to participate in the grand feast given by Malik Bhago, a Hindu official of the local Pathan faujdar.

Ghulam Qadir, an employee of the Regional Engineering College, claimed he had gone inside the shrine to serve tea to the stranded people, a common service rendered by the devout at the shrine.

"I held my younger son in my lap when the Army advanced to the shrine", he said. In desperation, Ghulam Qadir dropped his son at the gate and the toddler walked to his waiting mother.

The eight outsiders were the stranded devotees who could not return to their homes following the Friday prayers and decided to stay overnight in the shrine.

Jamal Sheikh and two others, who eked out their living by begging around the shrine on Fridays, had been following this routine for years. "Things will never be the same for us", claimed Jamal in his feeble voice.

Hostages revealed that curtains were put up near the toilets to make-shift lavatories. "The toilets were full of stench and unclean. That was another major problem for us". No wonder, many of the hostages appeared filthy and infested with scabies.

The threat to their lives always loomed large. "We were only praying", said young Manzoor Ahmed. They had chosen Ghulam Qadir as their leader to "negotiate with the government".

Hostages claimed they had come out following an "agreement" with the government and there was no surrender.

Amidst the joyous reunion, Naza stood alone oblivious of the heavy downpour. Her brother, who she thinks is not a militant, had not been released. Naza refused to be coaxed by others' reassurances that her brother was to be released under an "agreement" soon. Symbolic of Kashmir's agony, Naza's tears made the November chill unbearable. The Nageen police station building echoed back her cries.

He was expected to earn about \$ 70,000 this trip.

"He'll have a place in history for sure," said Mr Gennady Kolukhin, a biologist. "But without a doubt, it will be a place of shame."

Nearly two years have passed since Mr Gorbachev relinquished

Guru Nanak & today's world

by Roopinder Singh

"The Guru was called by the Malik who remonstrated with him for preferring to dine with a low-caste carpenter and refusing to accept the invitation of a high-caste man like himself.

"The Guru called for a dish from the sumptuous feast of the Malik

"rise no caste," he said. "There is only one brotherhood, that of humanity and only one pollution, that of separateness."

It is this perception of separateness which is the root of all

Nanak's *bani*. He lambasts the Brahmins and the Qazis for their hypocritical attitude and urges them to become better Hindus and Muslims respectively.

As he says: "Religion consists not in mere words. He who looks upon all men as equal is religious."

This is difficult enough since in our times religion is not defined by what the faith entails, but often negatively, in terms of what it is not. We have allowed religion to be reduced to dogma. What to talk of religion within various religions also we denigrate human beings on the basis of their caste. Says Guru Nanak: "The caste of a person is what he does."

The Guru's *bani* containing his teachings has a universal appeal. It provides answers to myriad social and ethical problems we face today, and will probably face tomorrow. If one were to go about one's day-to-day living following just one of Guru Nanak's injunctions in *Sri Rag*—Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful conduct—one would be on way to becoming a good human being.

Tribune Features

and also a piece of coarse bread from the house of his poor host. Holding the two in his hand, he said that he saw wholesome milk issuing from the honestly-earned bread of Lalo and the red blood of tortured humanity from the rich dainties of Malik Bhago. I recogn-

ise no caste, which do not permit us to see our fellow beings of different denominations and persuasions without vision coloured with bias and prejudice.

Prejudice often comes with hypocrisy and this also finds strong condemnation in Guru



Guru Nanak and Mardana. (A Janamsakhi painting)

Gorbachev: Never on top again

LIFE in the new Russia hasn't been easy for comrade Mikhail Gorbachev. A hero in the West, the former Soviet leader is a target of scorn and a symbol of failure in his own country.

Just before he flew to the United States recently at the invitation of Senate Republicans, a court ordered Mr Gorbachev to apologize for insulting Moscow's Mayor.

The slander suit was the latest humiliating episode for Mr Gorbachev, still treated as a powerful statesman abroad but a pariah at home.

Russia's disdain for the man

who presided over the demise of communism is bewildering in the West, where the Nobel Peace Prize winner is credited with ending the cold war and lifting the iron curtain.

But in Russia, Mr Gorbachev is blamed by all sides for all things. He is held responsible for the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of ethnic violence and the ruin of the country's economy.

Mr Gorbachev now ranks so low in popularity polls that it is doubtful he could be elected to any major office in Russia.

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To enjoy the limelight, Mr Gorbachev has to travel abroad, where he commands fat speaking fees many Russians envy and celebrity status they cannot fathom.

He was expected to earn about \$ 70,000 this trip.

"He'll have a place in history for sure," said Mr Gennady Kolukhin, a biologist. "But without a doubt, it will be a place of shame."

Nearly two years have passed since Mr Gorbachev relinquished

about his mother.

Not that Mr Gorbachev's government monthly pension of about 4,000 roubles (\$ 3.39) provides much of an income to care for his family.

"It's not nice. It's cheap. Do they (government) really think Mr Gorbachev is going to beg?" said Mr Vladimir Poliakov, a spokesman for the former Soviet leader's think tank.

Mr Gorbachev has increasingly attacked his old rival, Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

He has accused Mr Yeltsin of

violating the constitution and has condemned his use of tanks against his enemies in parliament an especially ironic charge since the Soviet President sent troops and tanks against civilians in Georgia, Tajikistan and Lithuania during his rule.

Mr Yeltsin has taken his own shots at Mr Gorbachev. Last year, he released damaging Communist Party documents some of which indicated Mr Gorbachev continued Soviet support of terrorists and he humiliated the former president by confiscating his limousine and much of his office space.

Every once in a while, Mr Gorbachev drops hints he would like to "save the nation" by returning to politics.

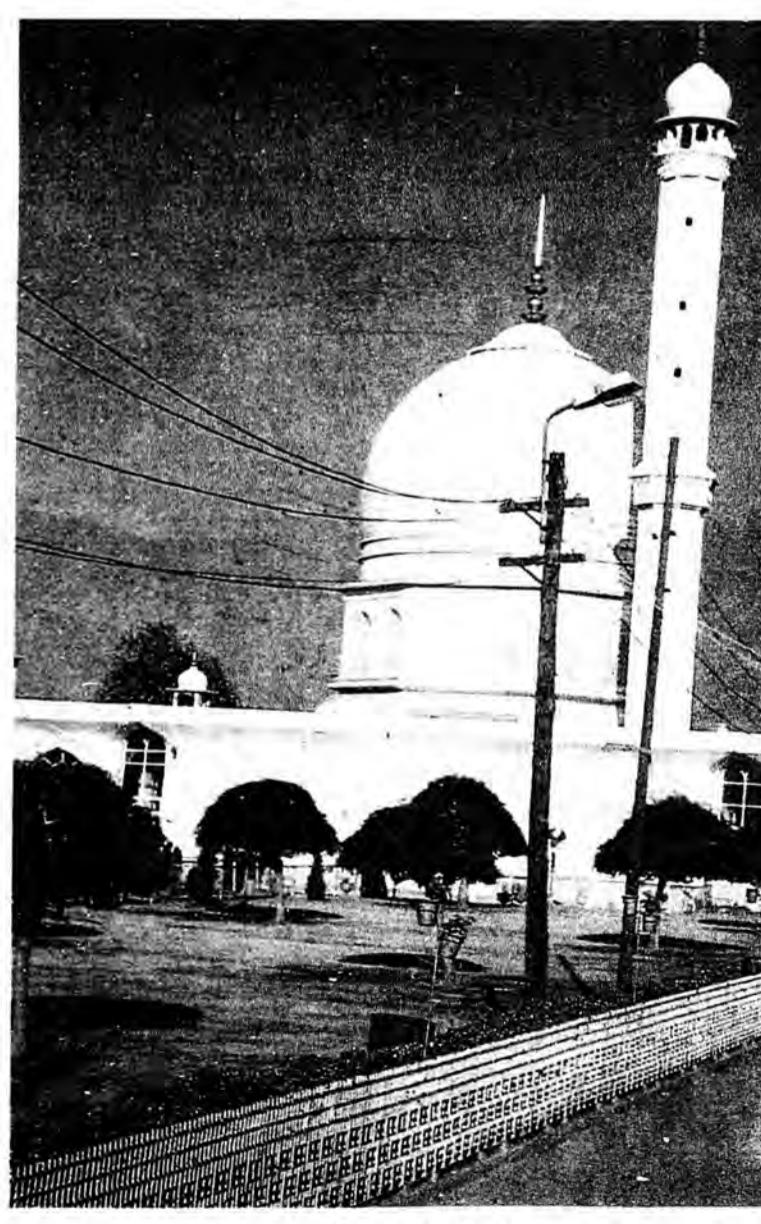
But Mr Gorbachev's attacks on Mr Yeltsin haven't won him many fans, and recent public opinion polls don't give him much hope.

A poll taken in late October for the newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gzeta* ranked him 79th on a list of Russia's leading politicians. In a poll published this week for the *Kuranty* newspaper, only 3.6 percent of 1,407 Muscovites surveyed said they had confidence in Mr Gorbachev.

Not one party has asked Mr Gorbachev to be a candidate in the December 12 election to the new federal parliament.

Even his old party comrades won't take him back.

Mr Gorbachev will never be on top again. He will never be forgiven for the Soviet Union's collapse," said Mr Valentin Kuptsov, a leader of the Russian Communist Party. Communists can't forgive him for changing the ideology. "He betrayed the party." AP



The Hazratbal shrine.

Photo: courtesy Frontline

Tribune Features

A perceptive, pragmatic politician

POLITICIANS, they say, live for the present, seldom bother about the past, and often don't care for posterity.

Giani Kartar Singh, whose 18th death anniversary falls next week, was the exception which proved the rule. He was one of the rare self-effacing political leaders who have shaped the destiny of Punjab in a manner which will continue to affect the lives of the people of the state long after his memory fades into oblivion.

Giani, as he was popularly known, played a major role in the creation of Punjab Agriculture College in Ludhiana (which later became Punjab Agriculture University) and of Punjabi University, Patiala. He was also the main architect of the 1949 Sachar Formula and the 1956 Regional Formula (which demarcated the Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas of Punjab).

Giani Kartar Singh was a man of humble origins who did not even know when he was born. "I have always believed it to be February 22, 1902," he wrote in an auto-biographical article.

Giani was in class IX when the Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place. In fact he had gone to Amritsar with the uncle to spend his summer holidays when the infamous bloodbath took place. Later, he read an appeal by Madan Mohan Malaviya and with the help of his schoolmates, he collected Rs 500 for the Jallianwala Bagh victims.

This was to be the first political activity of the man whose life was to be entwined with political events of the region for the next six decades or so. His detractors would call him Machiavelli who broke governments and changed party affiliations at will, but his supporters defend him by maintaining that public good, not personal gain was the reason for his actions.

After school, he joined Khalsa College, Amritsar, the focus of the Akali morcha for the repossession of the Golden Temple keys.

As Giani recalled in his auto-biographical article: "Some of the reformist leaders had been seized by the government. Baba Kharak Singh was among them. These detenus were brought to the court every morning for trial and taken back to the gaol in the city in the afternoon. Many people used to accompany them as they were escorted to the gaol."

"My daily routine those days meant going to the court and watching the trial of the Akali and then walking towards the gaol to hear public lectures. I did not give much attention to my academic work. The second year at college went the same way. This time it was the Guru-ka-Bagh morcha." (Excerpt from an English translation by Prof Harbans Singh)

NATIONAL DAIRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (I.C.A.R.)

Sealed tender superscribed Tender for "Cattle Feed" will be received on behalf of the Secretary, Indian Council of Agricultural Research by the Director, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal (Haryana) upto 3.00 P.M. on 15.6.1992 in the prescribed form available at Rs. 10/- each from his office for the supply of following items:

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. G.N. Cake | 375 Quintals |
| 2. Soyabean Cake | 150 Quintals |
| 3. Mustard Cake | 200 Quintals |
| 4. Barley Grains | 1200 Quintals |
| 5. Wheat Bran | 2500 Quintals |
| 6. Salt | 50 Quintals |

Two sealed packets one kg each of every item may also be sent along with your tender.

Tender without Earnest Money of Rs. 10,000/- and proper sample will not be considered. Tender will be opened on 15.6.92 at 3.30 P.M. in the presence of attending tenderer/their representatives.

Note:-
Rates in the tender should be @ per quintals for full quantity. Part supply rates for different Quantities or Broken rates in the tender will not be accepted and the tender will be rejected if presented in such form. The validity period for issue of Purchase Order should be reasonable.

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by Roopinder Singh

As with most of the leaders of the Independence movement, being jailed for anti-British efforts was a point of honour. Giani Kartar Singh, whose 18th death anniversary falls next week, was the exception which proved the rule. He was one of the rare self-effacing political leaders who have shaped the destiny of Punjab in a manner which will continue to affect the lives of the people of the state long after his memory fades into oblivion.

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It was this kind of candour, courage and logic which put Giani Kartar Singh at entirely a different level as compared to his contemporaries.

He was elected to the first Punjab Assembly on an Akali ticket in 1937 in elections which were held under the Government of India Act 1935. The Akalis and the Congress had fought elections independently, but they joined hands to oppose the ruling feudalistic Unionist Party.

Then came the Second World War in which the Congress



Giani Kartar Singh

in the Sikh Gurdwara Act and hence the SGPC. He also concentrated on the demarcation of Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas under the Regional Formula.

Due to Kairon's opposition to the implementation of certain aspects of the Regional Formula, on March 17, 1948, the Akalis again revived the demand for Punjabi Suba and launched an agitation which was accepted by the Government of India in March 1966, but instead of accepting the boundaries of the Regional Formula it appointed the Shah Commission to demarcate the boundaries.

Giani persuaded the majority of Congress legislators to submit representations to the Hukam Singh Parliamentary Committee in favour of re-demarcation of Punjab on linguistic basis.

The Government of India accepted the formation of Punjabi Suba in March 1966, but instead of accepting the boundaries of the Regional Formula it appointed the Shah Commission to demarcate the boundaries.

The proceedings of this com-

mission were boycotted by the Akali Dal, both Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh factions, and only Giani Kartar Singh presented the case of Punjabi Suba before this commission. The boundaries demarcated by this commission and its award of Chandigarh have only aggravated the Punjab problem.

The Sachar formula was significant in so far as it did not originate from the Akalis but had in fact been hammered out by the Congress. It was supported by 74 out of 80 members of the East Punjab Assembly at that time. It was later signed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Union Home Minister Vallabhbhai Patel.

After the dissolution of the second Bhargava cabinet, Giani Kartar Singh rejoined Akali Dal on October 13, 1951, and was made General Secretary of the party by Master Tara Singh.

He waged a relentless war for the creation of Punjab Suba. After the report of the States Reorganisation Commission in 1955, the

talks between the Akali Dal and the Central Government were started to hammer out a solution of the Punjab problem which resulted in the creation of the Regional Councils.

Punjab and the PEPSU were merged in one state and the Punjab was divided into Punjabi and Hindi speaking regions with regional committees to look after 14 subjects from the state list under the Constitution.

Giani called this formula a shagan for the Punjabi Suba and persuaded the Akalis to join the Congress in order to implement this formula fully.

Giani Kartar Singh became Revenue Minister in the Kairon Cabinet in 1957. As Revenue Minister he was instrumental in getting PEPSU gurdwaras included

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What a nose

by M.M. Lal

NOSE has, of late, been in the headlines. At the fag end of the recent elections to the British Parliament, there was a headline: "Tories nose past Labour - win fourth successive elections."

Another news item carried an advice to the visitors to a flower show: "Be careful while smelling the flowers in the hope you will be photographed doing so by the Press. You may get a bee up your nose and look like a blooming idiot on page one the next morning." A stock and share report was headlined, "The silver nose-dives."

There is a saying, "Keep your nose clean and you will keep out of trouble." Nathaniel Field in "A Woman is a Weather-cock" writes: "One may tell by her nose what pottage she loves."

John Dryden in "The Rascal Fool" says: "There's... the Dutchman with my mistress, my nose is wiped today."

Robert Burton in "The Anatomy of Melancholy" laments: "We... condemn, insult, vex, torture, molest and hold one another's nose to the grindstone hard."

Shakespeare in his play "As You Like It" refers to "Cleopatra's majesty." Her charm lay in her vibrant countenance broad forehead, bewitching eyes, "sensitive mouth", shapely chin and above all - prominent nose. She was a femme fatale who captivated the two greatest Romans of her day and actively influenced the Roman politics.

Napoleon used to say, "Give me a man with a good allowance of nose - when I want any good head-work done, I choose a man - provided his education has been suitable - with a long nose."

Vain human's pursuit to possess a good nose has given rise to the use of plastic surgery to achieve an even shape of an ill-matched nose. The art of nose-shaping is not wholly new. In India, as long as 3,000 years ago, it was prac-

tised in some form. Nose-improving by the methods of pressure and massage was common in the 15th century in the United Kingdom. Believe it or not, there have been cases when an artificial nose turned out to be a mark of beauty rather than blemish!

The primary function of the nose is to serve as an air conditioner for the inhaled air before it reaches the lungs. It also serves as an organ of smell. Persons having a keen sense of

wise one is likely to be in trouble. In America, some time back, a brewery workman was convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol.

In fact he was not given to drinking at all. He had been only clearing brewery vats for eight hours before signing off. The Judge agreed with the prosecutor who had submitted that the accused should not have driven irrespective of whether he had drunk or inhaled alcohol. The



smell are employed in oil refineries to judge whether certain odours in the process are normal or not. In big cities, water and sewage boards employ men with a sensitive nose to detect whether water supplied for human consumption is free from contamination.

Protection of nose against wild influences is very essential, other-

accused was sentenced to a fine of \$ 100. So, "Great is the ornament that the face receives by the nose." It does several things to its owner. It gives grace, and beauty and importance to his personality. Above all, its use in common talk and literary writings gives glow and lustre to human life and adds spice to humour.

Fans with fangs

In the past two decades the role of the ordinary fan - especially in pop music - has changed from passive to active. At concerts the audience no longer just listen: they perform. On a good day they clap aloft, sway and fling up coke cups in synchronised red snow storms. On a bad day they all but riot. One has only to see the security at a Rolling Stones or Guns 'n' Roses concert to see in what paranoia this so-called good time music is played.

A man who left such a legacy for Punjab and Punjabis, left nothing for his family. He died penniless at Rajindra Hospital, Patiala on June 10, 1974, after a long illness.

It is very unusual for a politician to be honoured by a historian. Hari Ram Gupta's fourth volume of the History of the Sikhs is dedicated to this person who he says "lived and died as a genuine faqir."

Minogue like an offering in a children's white slave market.

Working at the same time are the images of violence, archetypal hero with his two-handed gun-grip, crumpling bodies, exploding cars, cloven skulls, fountains of blood from technicolor exit wounds. It is ludicrous to argue that violence on film and television has no effect on behaviour. We are surrounded by those effects. Would the Hungerford murderer ever have gone berserk with his handgun and private arsenal if he had not seen Rambo?

In this cocktail of change we have created a new fan: the modern obsessive, locked in an im-

agined intimate relationship with the idol. It is not impossible to see how spurned advances can turn admiration into rancour and vengeance. Psychoanalysts have listed the reasons for this emotional curdling. It can be simple, unrequited lust. It can be religious mania, twisted a la Manson - a desire to gain dominance over the star by "converting" him or her to some indefinable state of grace. It can be an insult or an unkindness that has happened nowhere but in the watcher's imagination, but the important thing is that they each believe they have power or must achieve power over the star.

Sunday Times

The new Whiteline

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on your last anniversary,

the hair-do he loves so much,

and the smile he fell for.

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Large enough to take on your entire washload. Clothes, bedsheet, towels, even curtains. And powerful enough to leave them never-before clean, rinsed and ready-to-dry. What more could any woman ask?

New Whiteline Power Washing Machine. Let it take care of your washing, so you can begin to care a little about yourself.

A Punjabi woman's fight against...

'Sex bias & macho medicine'

by Swaraj Chauhan

WHEN the attractively dressed Ms Mantosh Singh started talking animatedly about the gross gender bias that exists in "macho medicine", especially regarding research and treatment of women heart patients, while sitting in the ambience of a Delhi's five-star hotel, I initially dubbed these as the outpourings of an upper crust feminist.

A granddaughter of Sardar Bahadur Justice Teja Singh, Ms Mantosh Singh realised the "brutal fact about gender bias" when she herself suffered a heart problem.

She was quick to detect the sceptical look in my eyes and placed before me the manuscript of the book she has been working on for the past three years. And what a devastating treatise, which is bound to make waves in the tranquil medical fraternity.

Ms Mantosh Singh, who migrated to the United States of America more than two decades ago, has a strong Chandigarh connection. She was among the first group to pass out from the Department of Mass Communications in Panjab University. She did her Masters in Political Science from the same University. Her father, Justice Gurdev Singh, passed away recently.

A granddaughter of Sardar Bahadur Justice Teja Singh, Ms Mantosh Singh first realised the "brutal fact about gender bias" when she herself suffered a heart problem in the USA four years ago.

Says Ms Mantosh Singh: "Often women are viewed as complainers, attention-seekers and hypochondriacs, who are 'doctor shoppers' and have all their symptoms in their head."

"If we are pre-menopausal, we are not expected to have coronary artery disease and our diagnosis and treatment is neglected. If we are post-menopausal, we are suffering from the 'empty nest syndrome' and need an affliction to fill our emptiness. Our illness is of the mind rather than physical."

Even in the USA most doctors still believe that women do not get heart disease until after menopause, despite the fact that heart attack is the number one killer of American women (50 per cent of the 5,00,000 annual cardiovascular deaths among women), the figure is according to the American Heart Association.

One in nine women, aged 45-64, in America has some form of cardiovascular disease; rising to one in three after the age of 65.



Ms Mantosh Singh

America's National Institute of Health (NIH) failed to follow its own four-year-old policy to ensure inclusion of women in clinical studies. "A National Heart-Lung and Blood Institute study on the effect of aspirin on heart disease was conducted on 22,000 men, and not on a single woman," she adds.

An example of gender bias in testing: "Only 4 per cent of women who tested positive for heart disease were recommended for further testing, compared to 40 per cent of the men for the same symptoms."

Fewer women are referred to specialists, although they experience chest pain as their chief symptom more often than men, or

"If a young woman in India has a heart disease, which requires surgery, very often her parents will not get her operated upon. A scar on her chest would hurt her chances of marriage."

from a report of the American Medical Association which states that social value judgements may place women at a disadvantage in receiving "certain major diagnostic and therapeutic intervention". The Association's Council of Ethics and Judicial Affairs roundly condemns as inexcusable, medical

says Ms Singh, "how soon you become well-informed about a subject when it is life-threatening. My illness has allowed me to use my personal experience and my background as a writer to write a book which may help other women understand and conquer heart disease."

Awards & racketeering

IHAVE nothing against award-giving: I have gratefully accepted quite a few in my time. At the same time I am aware that there are now so many institutions and individuals giving awards that the whole business has become a racket by which award-givers get publicity by exploiting names of recipients.

We cannot do anything about regulating private institutions indulging in this pastime, but we should frame rules whereby only the deserving get recognition from the State.

In recent years Republic Day awards have lost much of their credibility. Most of this was due to successive governments' desire to make political capital out of giving Bharat Ratna to dead heroes and one to an ex-Prime Minister who during his tenure had abolished award-giving and proclaimed that he would never accept government recognition.

Amongst the posthumous recipients are Netaji Subhas Bose, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, M.G. Ramachandran and Rajiv Gandhi. The reluctant recipient is Morarji Desai.

This year's recipients were by and large deserving of recognition

though Atal Bihari Vajpayee did not accept his Padma Vibhushan with grace.

Nobody forced it on him. Hence his saying that he didn't care whether he got it or not was in poor taste.

However, there was one award for which I think the government deserves the strongest censure. This was to Seth Lalchand Hirachand.

Let me tell you something about this man. He is the younger brother of Seth Walchand Hirachand who was the first to venture into commercial shipping in British times.

In his turn, Lalchand went from Sugar mills to construction: he built H.A.L. (Hindustan Aircraft Ltd) complex in Bangalore in the record time of one year. Then to Hume pipes and copper engineering.

He was the first to start manufacture of motor cars: the Premier Automobiles, manufacturing Fiat cars, was a pioneering venture. A huge industrial township, Walchand Nagar is his creation.

He was member of Bombay Legislative Council and for six years member of the Rajya Sabha. He is today Chairman and Managing

Director of 13 major industries and Director of scores of others.

Innumerable Jain charitable institutions owe their existence to him. In short, Seth Lalchand Hirachand is in the same league as J.R.D. Tata (awarded Bharat Ratna) and he is the head of one of the top 10 industrial houses in the country.

What do you think the government gave him in recognition for his services to the country?

Not a Bharata Ratna, not even a Padma Vibhushan but a Padma Shri, the lowest in its list of awards usually given to athletes, minor dancers, musicians and pressmen.

Why did he accept this slap in the face of Indian industrialists?

The only explanation I can offer is that he is 88 years old and did not realise that by accepting a Padma Shri he was letting down Indian entrepreneurship.

A bloody lesson

All national papers of Tuesday, April 7 carried photographs of two

young Sikh boys lying dead on a floor spattered in their own blood. Both were terrorists shot by the police.

On other pages were photographs of yet another young man, a Hindu, killed in the cross-fire exchanged between the terrorists and the police. According to information extracted during the interrogation of two other terrorists nabbed alive, they meant to explode bombs at Kalkaji Temple on Navratri celebrations so that they could kill a large number of pilgrims.

What made these young plan such a diabolical crime against people who they did not know nor had done any harm to them?

Killers can be put in three categories: one are psychopathic cases who take lives because they are mentally deranged. We have the classic case of Raman Raghu who killed over 40 men, women and children and died in a lunatic asylum.

A second category is of people who kill for monetary gain or when overcome with passion. Such homicides are described by the French as *crimes passionnels*.

And there is a third category of killers who take life to avenge old wrongs done to them, their kin, class or fellow citizens.

There is an element of mental

A YOUNG student was trying to find ways of pleasing his teacher. He asked a fellow student what interested the teacher most. "Sikh history", he was told.

The student, Hari Ram Gupta wrote two books in Urdu, and thus started his research on Sikh history, a subject on which he was to work till his last day.

Before his death on March 28, 1992, the legendary scholar of Sikh history, Dr Hari Ram Gupta had published four volumes on Sikh history – the fifth is in print.

They covered a period from the time of the Sikh Gurus to Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

His books were based on original research and are, many scholars contend, the most exhaustive treatment of the subject by a contemporary historian in English.

The life of the man who chronicled the past of Punjab was entwined with that of the state. Dr Gupta was born in Bhurewal village, a part of the pre-Partition

rian. Who was this man? Well, he was a person of humble origin and a meticulous mind. He was born in Bhurewal village of Naraingarh tehsil, Ambala district. He came from a family of limited means – he could not afford shoes when he went to school.

He went bare-foot and had to cross three *choes* (seasonal streams) and the bed would be very hot in summer. Hari Ram would always carry a *parna* on his shoulder and whenever it became too hot, he would spread this cloth on the sand, wait till his feet felt a bit better and carry on.

—

Dr Hari Ram Gupta, a legendary scholar of Sikh history, was born in Naraingarh tehsil (Ambala district). His books were based on original research and provide an exhaustive study on the subject.

Punjab in 1902. He studied and taught in Lahore which was the capital of Punjab then, and after Partition he joined Panjab University (PU) which in July 1960 shifted to the new capital, Chandigarh.

As Sir Jogindra Singh wrote in 1943, he had, "the gift of summoning processions of the pictures of the past and reviving them with the breath of life. He has delved deep into the records of nearly 200 years past and from the fragments of scattered documents built up a connected story, revealing the decay of the Mughal empire and the adventurous rise of the power of Khalsa."

Dr Gupta's *Later Mughal History of the Panjab* covered the period from 1707 to 1793. During this period, "Panjab witnessed a clash of four great powers – the Mughals, the Marathas, the Durranis and the Sikhs; on the whole it was a period of continuous warfare."

On hearing about his death, a former President Giani Zail Singh, was the first to reach the house of Dr Hari Ram Gupta's son Surya Gupta, in Delhi to pay his respects. Giani recalled "When his son called me to say that Dr Hari Ram Gupta had passed away at 5.30 a.m. I immediately went to their house in Greater Kailash. There were papers and books strewn around the room in which the historian had died. He had been at work till the very last. The room was very spartan and it was obvious that this great scholar was not very well-off."

At his cremation, Sikh leaders, including Giani Gurdit Singh, president of the Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha; the Secretary of the Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee; and Dr Mohinder Singh, Director, Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, Delhi, paid homage to the historian.

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Dr Hari Ram Gupta

Punjab's great historian passes away

by Roopinder Singh

"If they say it is, I will let you pursue your studies," Dr Gupta told his student. "Only a great, open and imaginative mind would acknowledge his own limitations but throw open a new field for a student," says Professor Goswamy.

"It is sad that he did not get the honour and recognition that was due to him," laments Prof Mehra.

While this is true, many honours did come his way. He was conferred the Sir Jadunath Sarkar Gold Medal by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, in 1949 for his "outstanding original contribution to the history of the Panjab." Here this writer's ignorance forces him to leapfrog a few decades, but...

In 1981, the Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha honoured him at a massive gathering at Takhat Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, on the occasion of Baisakhi. Mr Hukam Singh, a former Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President SGPC, were present on the occasion.

He was also honoured by his peers at the 23rd session of the Punjab History Conference held at Panjab University, Patiala in 1989.

The Bhai Vir Singh International Award was presented to Dr Hari Ram Gupta by the Vice-President, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma at a function held at the Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi, on December 15, 1989.

In the Preface of his *History of the Sikhs, Volume III - Trans Sutley Sikhs*, which was published by the Minerva Book Shop, Lahore, in 1944, Dr Hari Ram Gupta wrote: "From the time of Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708, till Ranjit Singh's occupation of Lahore in 1799, it was a period of complete darkness not only in the history of the Sikhs, but also in that of this province. I have



Dr Hari Ram Gupta addressing a congregation at Anandpur Sahib on Baisakhi, 1981.

Giani Zail Singh was the first to reach Dr Hari Ram Gupta's house on hearing about his death last month.

A hard-working, dedicated and meticulous researcher who expected his students to come up to his exacting standards," says Prof P. L. Mehra, a former Chairman of the Department of History, PU, who was a colleague of Dr Gupta. "He was completely unsparing with his daughter, Chandan Gupta, who studied with us," recalls Professor Goswamy.

"The life of a researcher, however, in this country is miserable. Not to speak of any encouragement, the teaching profession does not provide him with a decent means of livelihood... I find it unable to make both ends meet. I therefore, feel compelled to call a halt to research activities, and even re-direct my energies into some other channel."

Thank God he did not stop his research and writing. What a pity that what Dr Hari Ram Gupta said about the life of a scholar in 1944 remains true in 1992.

of us decides not to add another of us to the burgeoning billions already squatting on this ravaged planet, another ray of hope shines through the gloom."

Knight had himself sterilised 18 years ago and exhorts everyone to follow his example: a baby bastard may not be as beautiful as a baby human but we must choose to forgo one if the others are to survive.

Engine to spare

A Sardarji bought a new car which had its engine in the rear. One day while driving his car to a halt, he got out, raised the bonnet and was surprised to see the engine missing.

While pondering over the next step, another car of the same model pulled up. Its driver, another Sardarji, asked if he could be of any help. "My engine seems to have dropped out," replied the first Sardarji.

The other driver opened his dickey and was surprised to see an engine there. "You can borrow mine," he said generously, "I have a spare one at the back."

— (Contributed by Virender K. Kaushal, Hisar)

THIS ABOVE ALL...

Khushwant Singh

the youngest of the three is also dead.

How does one explain this kind of dedication to crime? In the case of the Pentas it can be traced back to the massacre of Sikhs following the assassination of Mrs Gandhi and the reluctance of the government to bring the perpetrators to justice.

After seven years barely seven persons have been convicted for the murders of over 3,000 people.

Independent commissions of inquiries, including the one presided over by a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, have held many Congress party leaders and the police guilty of abetting or active participation in that massacre.

One of the worst affected areas was Gobindpuri. Criminals still go about freely in the streets of this locality.

The three Penta brothers lived in Gobindpuri. Rajinder was 10-

He fought for and against the British...

Punjab's unsung Olympic star

by Prabhjot Singh

GURMIT SINGH KULAR, who was a fascinating blend of a remarkable soldier and a great hockey player, passed away at Jalandhar early this month. He was 84.

He was the last surviving member of the Indian hockey team which won the Olympics gold medal at Los Angeles (USA) in 1932.

Gurmit Singh Kular was the first ever product of Sansarpur, the nursery of legendary hockey players of Punjab, to play in the Olympics.

A week before his death I had an opportunity to meet and interview

Gurmit Singh Kular, who held the rank of a Captain in the British Army, was among the first group to join Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army (INA). He commanded INA's guerrilla unit. He also raised INA's hockey team.

view him at his bungalow on the outskirts of Jalandhar.

That evening he defied his old age and pain in knee joints to attend the reception of India's hockey star and captain Pargat Singh and his bride, Barinder Kaur.

Olympian Gurmit Singh had another rare distinction — of fighting for and against the British as a soldier. After donning the national colours in the Los Angeles Olympics, Gurmit Singh joined Army in 1936.

A little later, he landed in the custody of the Japanese again. It was in the custody of the Japanese that all Indian soldiers were allowed to attend a conference



Gurmit Singh Kular

addressed by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Captain Gurmit Singh rejoined Indian National Army and was elevated to the rank of a Colonel. He even commanded guerrilla regiment of INA besides raising INA hockey team.

He was soon captured by the British Army as a POW and brought back to Red Fort in Delhi from where he was shifted to Bhopal alongwith some Italian POWs.

At Bhopal camp, Colonel Gurmit Singh started playing again. The camp commandant used to take him out to play for his team after he learnt that he was an Olympian and an outstanding inside-right forward.

When his release was ordered on April 19, 1946, Colonel Gurmit Singh was 37 (he was born on May 9, 1909). After Independence, the Indian Army initially refused to induct INA personnel. Instead, in 1946 the British Government even withdrew pay and allowances entitled to him.

Like other INA activists, he refused to rejoin Indian army as a Second Lieutenant.

Realising his contributions to the freedom struggle as well as his talent as a hockey player, General Bhosale, who headed the National Discipline Scheme, made Colonel Gurmit Singh incharge of the Eastern sector. Later, he was transferred to Punjab.

He lived a retired life. Hockey was his main love. Even in his late 70s and early 80s, he would go to

TULSI OF THE MOUNTAINS

by Sarojini Chopra

THE majestic Himalayas ... Snow peaks elusive to the eye shrouded by clouds and ground mist most of the time. The kites float easily, catching the thermals. The blue magpies of the hills dart noisily and flash their long tails to mock us static humans.

But we are glad to be static. Away from "shaihari" life with its obligations to pay electricity bills under threat or suffer many power cuts.

Here if the electricity fails, you skip having a bath and take a walk round the hill instead. Soak in the sun, flick away the flies and watch star beetles mating.

Nothing disturbs our Dalhousie sough through the day and even at night.

Then there is Tulsi. Tulsi of the mountains. The chowkidar's wife. Every beautiful house is equipped with a chowkidar, who is supposed to guard the home. He is generally "bazaar gaya hai,"

amps be infested with a million lice."

The latest edition of *Maledicta* — *The International Journal of Verbal Aggression* published twice a year has devoted an entire edition to abuse and cursing in different languages.

According to Reinhold Aman, America's leading expert on the subject, the richest vocabulary of abuse is to be found in Hungarian closely followed by Yiddish.

I am a very slow driver. That irritated them to explode verbally.

I was surprised to note their limited vocabulary of abuse. It was usually aimed at my head: "get on *grand-pere*" (grandfather), or "*Chameau*" — camel!

I could get more than even with my Punjabi "teyree maan dee!

teyree bhoinee dee!" etc. They listened and being unable to make out what I was saying would raise their caps, beg my pardon, and move on.

I am sure if there was an international competition for abuse, Punjabis would be in the running for a gold medal. Most other Indian languages rarely go beyond *Saala* (brother-in-law), *haramzada* (bastard) or imputing incestuous relationships.

However, I concede that I have rarely heard anything new in the form of abuse in India. Arabs are more inventive e.g. "May your

pension besides drawing pension as an old sportsman of Punjab. Because of his old age, he could not go to Hyderabad in January this year where former Olympians from Services were honoured.

He asked me whether the Punjab Government was also planning to honour Olympians from the State.

"There is a sea of change in hockey," he commented when asked about how the game has changed since his playing days.

Born at Sansarpur, he had his primary education at Naran Dutt Victor High School before joining Doaba High School from where he did his Matriculation. He completed his F.Sc. from Khalsa College, Amritsar, before joining Agriculture College at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) for his B.Sc. degree.

He was a student of the B.Sc. (third year) when he was selected to represent the country in the 1932 Olympics. His father, a doctor in Indian Army, wanted him to sit in an entrance examination to do his degree in medicine from Britain. He did take some of the exams but was later persuaded by his team-mates to miss the last exam and play a crucial inter-college match at Lahore.

This infuriated his father but Gurmit's love for hockey stood unruffled.

Unlike the present times, the Los Angeles bound Indian hockey team had no coaching camp. There was inter-provincial hockey championship at Calcutta in March where a 16-member team

Sansarpur to teach the tiny-tots the tricks of the game.

In the end, he had some problem in walking because of unstable knees. He used to take the help of his son who would drive him to Sansarpur every Sunday to watch the game. He did not miss any major hockey event in Jalandhar.

A freedom fighter, he was the recipient of Central Government

straight. Her gait is lovely in its rhythm.

We need Tulsi everyday when in Dalhousie. She ensures a regular water supply from water tanks.

When we fail to get water, our cook and I are not perturbed. We have a few tricks up our sleeves.

But my poor husband chews his pencil faster and faster, and, on occasions, gives up writing altogether. As our bread and butter depends on his thoughts appearing on paper, water has to be found for him to splash in.

At such a time Tulsi reveals another facet of her character. Tulsi the thief. She gets water from unsuspecting neighbours. She is of course too proud to ask.

She tricks the next door chowkidar's wife by imitating *langour* sounds. The owner vanishes for a while to chase the non-existing simians. Tulsi quickly manages to fill a few buckets and several plastic containers.

Even with all this going on Tulsi finds time to ripen her cucumbers and watch "minjar" (corn) blossom.

Tulsi, who must wake up early, perpetually smells of a mixture of cowdung and wood smoke. It is the "pahari smell".

She is a proud and beautiful woman. Her clear skin and regular features are like a Champa miniature. Carrying loads of grass on her head may reduce her capacity to think, but it keeps her back

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Carrying loads of grass on her head may reduce her capacity

Hindustan-Tibet Road

Scenic, romantic & deadly

by H. Kishie Singh

T beckons. It is irresistible. Like a beautiful woman. Or a deadly snake. You can't take your eyes off her beauty or the fascination of imminent danger.

This is the Hindustan-Tibet Road. A masterpiece of engineering, a work of art, a dedication to man and mountain.

Starting from Ambala as NH 22 it was a good road and basically meant to get the British to Shimla and then Narkanda, which was the road head.

From Narkanda till Kaurik on

takes the path of least resistance, so this is where the road should be." And the road is right next to the Sutlej, India's fastest flowing river.

In the early '50s the road from Narkanda to Luri on the Sutlej river was re-aligned completely through Dera, Oddi, Kumarsain and Kingal. The old track, good for mules, was too steep for cars.

From here on the road is one of

most ancient temple has a garishly painted exterior in stark contrast to the elegant and intricate wood carving inside. A steel shutter guards the entrance with a horrible huge halogen lamp for company.

Another horrible contrast is the marble chips used to replace the worn out stone. Aesthetic sensitivity is nowhere in evidence. A beautiful intricately worked silver

most important gompas are here. There is Tabo, called the Ajanta of the Himalayas and the most important Buddhist Gompa in India.

A non-descript mud house is the entrance to this treasure house of Buddhist culture, history and religion. Tabo Gompa celebrates its millennium in 1996. The Tabo village nestles comfortably in a wide plain on the banks of the Spiti river.

About 12 km away from Tabo is Dhanakar, once the capital of Spiti which has another magnificent Gompa and important to the Buddhists. Further along the road is Kaza, the district headquarters. The drive is at all times exciting, exhilarating and awesome.

More so as we go to the monastery Kye. Whereas Tabo is spread out, being on a plain, Kye is built on a hill. The steep steps and long corridors make for a breathless encounter with Kye.

As a change from other monasteries, this Gompa has photographs of the Panchen Lama, a first for me. No photography is allowed and surprisingly no notes can be taken down inside the building. The monastery belongs to the Gelug-pa sect and is about 985 years old.

Further up the road at the termination of a state highway is Kibber. The highest year round inhabited village in the world, being 4270 metres above sea level. It boasts a dispensary, a school and a post office. Buildings only! But they don't function? Only in record books and sarkari notations.

The road then crosses the Spiti river and enters the Lahaul Valley, over the Kunzum Pass.

A fantastically beautiful countryside, a dangerously delightful drive where driving would be the only way to see this country, and enjoy the amazing road. But be careful. Board, lodging and petrol are in short supply.

Also check if permission for travel beyond Wangtu is required. Last year there was confusion. Such things can spoil a holiday.



Kye Gompa

the Tibet border it was a mule track. This part was the Hindustan-Tibet Road. For centuries it was the sole link Tibet had with the outside world. As such its importance was immense.

In 1886, the mule track became a road to Karinghat, about 6 km beyond Chini, renamed Kalpa after the Chinese aggression. In 1927 it was extended a little beyond Namgye, the last village on this side of the Indo-Tibet border.

The road was always of great economic importance. It assumed military importance with British designs on Tibet and Central Asia. At one time, 1904 to be exact, Col Francis Younghusband's military expedition to Tibet was to take this route.

It was abandoned because Lhasa was too far to the East. However, its economic importance never diminished. From little acorns mighty Oaks do grow, and this once-upon-a-time bridle path for mules today is a highway that is the lifeline for Spiti and Kinnaur.

The Hindustan-Tibet Road in its new reincarnation continues to support commerce, economic activity and is of such great strategic importance that after being built and completed its existence was kept a highly classified secret. It was opened to the public only last year.

The entire road has a new alignment and names of villages that were on the original H.T. Road and are now sometimes 6-8 km off NH-22.

"The British built their roads, like their houses, high on the mountains. We have aligned the road closer to the river," an engineer with Border Roads Organisation told me. "Water

most scenic, romantic and dangerous roads in the world. There are many roadside memorials to the brave men who built this road, and died so that we may drive. One of the most serious hazards faced by the engineers was the constant fusillade of rocks, big and small, that kept up a steady shower on the workers.

After Rampur, once the capital of the princely state of Rampur Bushair, the road goes to Jeori. We leave Jeori to reach Sarahan 18 km away. It is a steep climb and a beautiful drive.

The HPDTC has an excellent hotel for the brave of heart. A most heartening aspect of the Hotel Srikhand is that the architect has tried to maintain some harmony with the other buildings in the area. The most important being the Bhimakali Temple.

There is a marked change from Hinduism to Buddhism in this area. Indeed some of Buddhisms

door allows entrance to the second courtyard. Lions stand guard on either side.

In the outer courtyard is the "Pataal Bhairon". It is said that human sacrifice was performed here on the original temple site. Now the "Ball" or sacrifice is sheep and their horns adorn the entrance to the Bhairon temple.

We follow the Sutlej river joins the Spiti. It is a mighty gorge that the two rivers have carved out of this mighty mountain. The Sutlej does a sharp turn and heads towards Tibet. We climb steeply through about 20 hairpin bends along with Spiti river to reach the Spiti Valley, which is about 4,000 metres above sea level.

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but he resigned two years later.

Hukam Singh passed his LLB examination in 1921 and started practising in Montgomery. He was nominated member of the newly-formed Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee (SGPC). It was declared unlawful on January 7, 1924.

The members offered themselves for arrest and Hukam Singh spent the next two years in Mianwali jail, where he came in contact with Baba Gurdit Singh (of the Kamagatamaru fame), Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and Sardul Singh Caveesher. He was released in September, 1929, and he resumed his legal practice in Montgomery till August, 1947.

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Not for long. The Maharaja of Kapurthala appointed him a Judge on the recommendation of Giani Kartar Singh and Master Tara Singh (see box). He was soon nominated, through the intervention of Giani Kartar Singh, as a member of the Constituent

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Some people accuse him of having struck a secret deal for giving up the demand for Punjabi

As I entered the drawing room of the Ring Road residence of Sardar Hukam Singh in New Delhi, I saw him at the far end of the room - cold, stiff, erect and forbidding with his hands folded in greeting. As my eyes adjusted to the soft light of the room, I saw that I had been fooled by a life-sized cardboard cutout presented to the Ex-Speaker of the Lok Sabha when he was Governor of Rajas-

th. The real Hukam Singh was smiling warmly and beckoning me closer to him.

I was not the only person to have been fooled in this manner. Many had been confounded by the two images, one an illusion and the other real. In fact, there were so many ironies about the man whose 10th death anniversary fell on May 27.

As Speaker and Governor, he swore to uphold the Constitution. The very Constitution which he had refused to endorse as a representative of the Sikh community in the Constituent Assembly.

A man who did not hold any political office before Independence, Hukam Singh rose to the highest echelons of political life in free India. He could be as firm as he could be polite - one could go on and on, but we must know more about the man who shaped the parliamentary traditions of our nation.

He was born in Montgomery, now in Pakistan, on August 30, 1895. His parents were poor and after studying at the local gurdwara, he enrolled in the high school. S. Hukam Singh's father, S. Sham Singh, died before the former completed his matriculation.

He graduated from Khalsa College, Amritsar in 1917. A job as Inspector in the Department of Cooperative Societies followed.

—“

Sardar Hukam Singh, the first Sikh Speaker of the Lok Sabha, served during the tenure of three Prime Ministers - Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi.

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Sardar Hukam Singh

A humane parliamentarian

by Roopinder Singh



Hukam Singh

Assembly, where he was sworn in on April 30, 1948.

The Constitution was adopted and India was declared a Republic on January 26, 1950, and the Constituent Assembly became Provisional Parliament. Hukam Singh, as an Akali representative did not sign the Constitution contending that it did not have

—“

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Singh.

Hukam Singh continued as Deputy Speaker till 1962, when he was elected to Parliament from Patiala constituency on a Congress ticket. He was then unanimously elected Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

Sardar Hukam Singh, the first Sikh Speaker of the Lok Sabha served during the tenure of three Prime Ministers - Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi. He was often described as a fair and firm Speaker who set a number of healthy precedents in conducting Parliament.

As R.G.K. wrote in an article in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* in 1967: "The Speaker is like both judge and schoolmaster. As schoolmaster Hukam Singh used the rod sparingly, as judge his sense of fairness and impartiality was never seriously questioned."

He did not stand for re-election because he wanted to set the precedent that the Speaker must be elected unopposed and he could not be assured of this.

He was appointed Governor of Rajasthan in 1967 and he retired in 1973. He took over as the President of the Singh Sabha Centenary Committee in 1973. The body was renamed Kendriya Singh Sabha in 1976 at Anandpur Sahib. It is the apex body of Singh Sabhas in India and abroad.

Hukam Singh fell ill on May 23, 1983. He was admitted to a nursing home in New Delhi where he died on May 26, 1983. At his death bed were his daughter, Raminder Kaur, his son Brig Hari Singh (retd), and other family friends including Pratap Singh.

The first Sikh President of India was also at the death bed of the first Sikh Speaker. Giani Zail Singh, on being informed about the precarious condition of the former Speaker, had rushed from Rashtrapati Bhavan to the nursing home. I saw the then President's eyes filled with tears, even as he stood there with folded hands.

Court attire

HUKAM SINGH often narrated the anecdote of how he became Judge in Kapurthala State High Court, but was almost rejected summarily because of his attire. An interesting account of the incident is given in Biography S. Hukam Singh:

When he (Hukam Singh) reached the palace, Maharaja Jagat Singh was sitting in the verandah. His Prime Minister was by his side. Hukam Singh wore a khaki shirt and trousers, but he had no coat or tie.

The Maharaja was known for his refined taste and cultured manners. He outright rejected Hukam Singh. The Maharaja's view was that with a trouser and shirt, one must have a tie.

But destiny was playing its own part. The Prime Minister intervened and said: "He is a refugee coming here without any belongings. When he draws salary from the treasury of Your Highness, then he will buy ties and other things." The Maharaja agreed to appoint Hukam Singh as a Judge of the High Court.

- R.S.

Demon Drink

by Eulie Chowdhury

drunk as an intoxicant. Soma was a god similar to the god Bacchus of ancient Rome. Soma is lauded in 114 hymns of the Rigveda and the god was considered an equal of Indra, Agni and Rudra.

The uses of Soma as a drink go back to Iranian times. It was valued, both in India and Iran, as a medicine which prolonged life.

According to mythology, the celestial variety of Soma, as distinct from the variety of the earth, was drunk by the gods, and incited Indra to create the universe.

The drink Soma was made from a plant called Soma and was imbibed at Vedic rituals.

The British brought whisky to India. In Britain, whisky is a short drink taken before or after

growing countries of southern Europe wine was the liquor which was distilled whereas various types of grain were used in the north.



During the Mørcha for Gandhi cap in Dera Baba Ghazi Khan Jali.

BABA KHARAK SINGH MARG is situated in the heart of Delhi. People from all over the world go there hunting for handicrafts at emporiums of different states, including Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. But who is this Baba after whom this important road in the nation's Capital has been named?

What was his role in India's freedom movement? Why did free India's rulers decide to rename the famous Irwin Road as Baba Kharak Singh Marg? Lord Irwin was a Viceroy of British India (of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact fame).

Driving from Connaught Place towards Rashtrapati Bhavan recently, I saw a Nihang Sikh crossing Baba Kharak Singh Marg. I asked him if he knew anything about the Baba. He replied: "Beta, Baba ji Sikhan de betaj badshah san." (Son, Baba ji was the uncrowned king of the Sikhs). A politician who spurned positions, perks and privileges, Baba Kharak Singh (1867-1963) was often addressed by this title.

To quote Khushwant Singh: "In

the history of every nation, some figures stand out as landmarks by whose presence we recognise the events of time... Baba Kharak Singh is such a landmark – not only in the history of the Sikhs, but that of India itself."

"Baba Kharak Singh's name is associated with the birth of political consciousness in Punjab, its maturing into a movement and the first triumph of the experiment of passive resistance to be carried out in India. He is the most important Sikh character of the Indo-British history."

An aristocratic lineage and his family's good relations with the British (Baba Kharak Singh's father and his elder brother held the titles of Rai Bahadur), did not prevent this well-educated man (the Baba was among the first graduates from Panjab University, Lahore, in 1899) from joining the freedom struggle.

What made him give up a comfortable and privileged life-style and opt for long terms in prisons? In a word – patriotism.

Baba Kharak Singh's long public life began innocuously enough – when he was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the fifth session of the All-India Sikh Conference held in his home town, Sialkot, in 1912.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919 and the subsequent events in Punjab under Martial Law galvanised him into political activity. He addressed the annual session of the Indian National Congress which was held at Amritsar in December, 1919, under the presidency of Motilal Nehru.

Baba Kharak Singh was elected the first President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee (SGPC) in 1921.

In November that year, the Punjab Government passed an order where by the keys of the *toshakhana* (treasury) of the Golden Temple at Amritsar were to remain in the custody of the Deputy Commissioner of the district.

The SGPC protested and an agitation was launched. Baba Kharak Singh was arrested. The agitation continued.

As Rana Jang Bahadur Singh, a

On January 17, 1922, the keys of the Golden Temple were handed back to Baba Kharak Singh, who had been released along with thousands of other political prisoners, at Akal Takht. On this day Mahatma Gandhi, who was then "Dictator" of the Indian National Congress, sent the following telegram to Baba Kharak Singh: "First decisive battle for India's freedom won. Congratulations."

former Editor of *The Tribune* wrote: "Ultimately the proud ruling power had to bend before the iron will of the puissant Baba. The key was delivered to him at a public function by a representative of British Imperialism. And, metaphorically speaking, with that key he eventually opened the gates of the temple of freedom. He became a general of the army of liberators in the Punjab and his life became a saga of sustained, valiant struggle."

Hal, who was then President of the Punjab Provincial Congress, was imprisoned. Baba Kharak Singh was elected the new President. Commenting on this move, Mahatma Gandhi wrote in *Young India*: "I congratulate the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee on its decision to elect Sardar Kharak Singh its President... In doing so, the Congress has honoured itself more than it has honoured Sardar Sahib. It is indeed an excellent choice."

"In the days of our struggle for freedom, he was a pillar of strength and no threat or coercion could bend his iron will. By his example, he inspired innumerable persons..." Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said on the occasion of the 86th birthday of Baba Kharak Singh.

The Mørcha for Gandhi cap is a good illustration of this statement. While Baba Kharak Singh, along with Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, was among the 40 prisoners held in Dera Baba Ghazi Khan Jali, the British jail authorities issued an order under which political prisoners were not allowed to wear anything which formed a part of their national dress. Thus Sikhs could not wear black turbans (the Sikh symbol of protest since the Nankana Sahib tragedy) and Hindus as well as Muslims could not wear, Gandhi caps.

When Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya went to request Baba Kharak Singh to give his support for the "Nehru Report" which accepted Dominion status, the Baba said, "Panditji, I respect you but how can I accept semi-slavery?" Baba Kharak Singh did not bend and eventually the Congress revised its policy and rescinded its decision.

President Rajendra Prasad, writing about Baba Kharak Singh later said: "In the midst of fluid alignments and changing politics which swept many patriot off his feet, Baba Kharak Singh ever remained steadfast to his convictions of sturdy and secular nationalism."

After partition, Baba Kharak Singh settled down in Delhi. He refused offers for any position and became an elder statesman

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decided to violate the ban. When a month or so later, in January, 1923, the Inspector General of Prisons came on an inspection,

the political prisoners wore their black turbans or Gandhi caps.

When the enraged British authorities

tree and homespun thread. These kept us busy the whole length of the day, in biting winter as well as in scorching summer.

The third age in Shakespeare's

As You Like It is that of the lovers

who "sigh like furnace": I do not

know whether many of us pass

through that stage except that

most villages were always blessed

with at least one beautiful young girl that perhaps the entire

village dreamt about.

Shakespeare himself, in one

of his works, used the image of

toy for dallying amorously. Man's

toys at this stage are "mister

of his eyebrow" or for that matter

toying with emotions of a myriad kinds like writing letters,

long and tiring filled with conventional clichés like "crying a river"

in despair.

As buckling and strapped sol-

diers men in this age shift to

medals and honours in the bat-

tlefield. It is there that he braves

challenges to his reputation and life;

often winning glories in life

and more often posthumously.

These war medals too are like

toys that jingle from puffed up

cheats of the soldiers, puffing up

their pride too.

Later, most of us get committed

to ideologies of various col-

ours and hues. These range from religious faiths to doctrinal concern for the downtrodden; that is socialism.

Man pursues these ideological

toys working up eloquent in de-

fence of his convictions as well

as in offence against hostile

faiths and isms. This is when the

mind rattles with ideas and pas-

sions, political or economic, reli-

gious or secular.

Later as one grows old, one

finds vigour and passion, energy

and enthusiasm ebbing away.

What else is there to play with

in the second childhoodness.

The last scene of all, to revert

to Shakespeare, is the old age

which he describes as the phase of

"second childhoodness". With

all the five senses weakening,

one yet has toys to fiddle with.

These are grandchildren in the

second childhoodness.

Shakespeare himself used

tingling imagery of toys in many

permutations and combinations.

He compared toys to something

fondly desired but of little value.

In yet another play he thought

that it was a futile chase as "man

often sells eternity to get a toy".

He thought that even dreams

were like toys. He also referred

to these toys as idle fancies and

referring to women, he described

the phenomenon in which "the

tricks and toys that in them lurk".

So many of us would have

before departing from the stage

of life as players piled up mind

boggling diversity of toys. These

toys are the playthings for us,

the players on the world's sprawling

stage.

So what if the word Toyism

does not figure in the dictionaries.

As it is most faiths and ideologies can be dated back in time and place to specific persons, places and periods.

Let this new faith of Toyism be

proclaimed to the world today.

Baba Kharak Singh

The uncrowned king

by Roopinder Singh

of the nation and the Sikhs.

As Gurdit Singh Jolly, a 93-year-old veteran freedom fighter who was a close associate of Baba Kharak Singh, recalled in a firm voice which belied his years:

"We could not celebrate the 84th birthday of Baba ji's because of his ill-health. Pandit Nehru came to Baba Kharak Singh's house near the Old Secretariat in Delhi, at 9.30 a.m. to greet Baba ji.

"We received the PM and ushered him to the drawing room where Baba ji was sitting. After the exchange of greetings, Nehru said: 'To whom has this house been allotted?'

"Sant Singh Layalpuri said that the house had been allotted to Baba ji's grandson to compensate the loss suffered by the family in Pakistan (Baba ji's son died in 1947 in a car accident in the Kulu valley).

"Nehru said: 'Baba ji aap ke... Before he could complete the sentence, Baba Kharak Singh snapped back: 'Jawahar, mere ko kharidne aye ho?' Jawaharlal Nehru was left speechless," recalled Mr Jolly, who witnessed the exchange, when I met him in New Delhi recently.

Two years earlier, on June 6, 1949, Nehru presented Baba Kharak Singh with a silver replica of the National Flag at a public function held to commemorate his birthday.

He had then said: "There are few hands which can uphold the honour and preserve the dignity of the National Flag better than those of Baba ji's. Baba Kharak Singh's record of honesty and integrity could not be easily equalled."

Baba Kharak Singh died on October 6, 1963. Even in his death, he caused a stir. "Pandit Nehru was in Parliament when he heard that Baba Kharak Singh had passed away. He rushed from Parliament to be by his bedside.

"When he arrived there he saw that Baba ji was still struggling. Nehru was angry at having to rush out in the midst of a Parliament session and he asked the doctors for an explanation. 'Well, technically he is dead. But this is some kind of a struggle going on within him,' said the doctors. There he was, struggling till the very last", recalls Mr Jolly.

It is interesting to see how perceptive Baba Kharak Singh was. On July 10, 1949, in an appeal to the nation he said:

"It is a matter of genuine pride that India has become free from foreign domination and I pray the Providence to bless my motherland with lasting prosperity and abiding peace.

"But I regret to say that the lot of the common man in India has



Baba Kharak Singh.



The Nihang Singh Babaji on Baba Kharak Singh Marg.

Photo by Roopinder Singh

Of toys and toyism

by Man Mohan Singh

Here man feels a sense of integral identity being a child himself, and playing with his grandchildren. He can narrate to them stories of his own childhood or maybe of his valour on the battlefield.

In this second childhoodness one's short memories fade but memories of childhood can sometimes be recalled with the sharpest precision and with virtually three dimensionally vivid imagery.

Shakespeare himself used tingling imagery of toys in many permutations and combinations. He compared toys to something fondly desired but of little value. In yet another play he thought that it was a futile chase as "man often sells eternity to get a toy".

He thought that even dreams were like toys. He also referred to these toys as idle fancies and referring to women, he described the phenomenon in which "the tricks and toys that in them lurk".

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boggling diversity of toys. These

toys are the playthings for us,

A marassi's lunch with PM

by Roopinder Singh

It was drizzling. Sharif was transporting goods past Punjab Raj Bhavan in Chandigarh on his horse-driven cart as usual, when he burst into a song.

A crowd gathered, impelled by his rich bass voice. One of the ladies said that he had the making of a good artiste.

That is when Sharif Idu decided to return to the family profession of folk devotional singing.

Marassi (minstrels) who still sing traditional folk songs are hard to find now, but in any case a "sharif" **marassi** is, many would maintain, a rarity indeed. Guru Nanak Dev's follower Mardana was a **marassi**. These people have come to be known for their knowledge of traditional instruments like the **rabab** (rebeck), as well as their craftiness, ready wit and, of course, their singing. They are, as they say, **sabha de shingar**.

The 46-year-old Sharif, the **marassi** from Manimajra, says he owes a lot to Mrs Ravneet Kaur who was then the Director, Cultural Affairs Department, Punjab, and Mrs Geetika Kalha. They recognised his talent in 1981 and brought him to the stage.

After that it has been a cakewalk. His talent, his unschooled but powerful voice, and his presence on stage, all helped him to gather laurels, be it at the cultural mela organised by the North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala in 1985, the Goa, Daman and Diu silver jubilee cultural festival in 1986, Apna Utsav in Delhi and Maharashtra in 1989, or his performance on Doordarshan the next year.

Sharif did not receive formal education. He started learning the art of his forefathers at his ancestral village Lalauda, near Nabha. He was only seven when his uncle used to wake him early in the morning and teach him sarangi. He used to accompany his father Idu on melas and other occasions. After his father's death, Sharif found it difficult to make both ends meet. He shifted to Manimajra and earned his livelihood in Chandigarh by plying a **rehra**.

They say you can't keep a **marassi** quiet for long. Well, this fourth-generation folk singer has a voice which renders megaphones



*Tu hai sharaa da pujari
eh hai ishq binari
rahee vaaste mein tere aye ga pa*

The card read: "The Prime Minister and Shrimati Sonia Gandhi request the pleasure of the company of Sharif Idu at lunch on Monday, the 24th of November 1986...at Teen Murti House, New Delhi."



Sharif Idu with Sonia and Rajiv Gandhi.

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When he had gone past Punjab Raj Bhavan on his horse cart, Sharif had wondered what it would be like within the high walls. How was he to know that one day he would not only perform there but, because of his innate talent, would eventually get an invitation card (which read): "The Prime Minister and Shrimati Sonia Gandhi request the pleasure of the company of Sharif Idu at lunch on Monday, the 24th of November 1986...at Teen Murti House, New Delhi."

He has come a long way indeed.

A retrospective of Jatin Das's paintings from the "Collectors' Collection" has been on display at the Rabindra Bhavan Galleries in the capital since Sunday, and will be attracting admirers till December 9, 1991. On loan from institutions, museums and individuals, the exhibition marks not only the painter's growth in the past 22 years but also his vision and style.

I suddenly feel old because out of these 22 years I have known him for almost 20. I have been present at several of the openings of his one-man shows as I was for this comprehensive one which highlights not only his range and talent, but also lapses in concentration and an inconsistency which has, probably, prevented him from gaining a better status amongst the contemporary artists. This, however, does not mean that all his better-known peers are really more talented than him.

That, I guess, is destiny: lesser talents occupying better positions either because of an aggressive temperament or because they know the art of selling themselves at the cost of everything else. So ruthless is their ambition to succeed that every relationship seems to serve only as a stepping stone towards the magnet called power.

Jatin Das has a very unassuming temperament which is very unusual in ambitious and successful people. He is friendly and caring, and like M. F. Husain does not suffer from the celebrity status factor which is the case with many others who bask in the garb of arrogance.

I personally feel Jatin demonstrates greater maturity in his line drawings than in his oil paintings. His lines are sharper and figures more penetrating. I think my last book of poems is having a better impact because of his cover draw-

ing which has been reproduced in most reviews, and used with extracts.

And that reminds me that Jatin is also a very fine poet as well, though for some reason, despite an occasional threat, he has refrained from publishing a second book since the first one appeared back in 1972.

wider appeal. Sample the following lines from "Earth Fire Water": *"When meeting becomes heavy
being alone is better
space is needed between words
space-time, time space
individual space conceptualised
breathing-space
like opening the window
on a summer afternoon
being outside*



Cover drawing Jatin Das

His poems have an economy of expression, as if they were extensions of his line drawings. Strong metaphors, stark images, clarity of thought, intensely personal with a

is taking the insider out."

Back to the painter and the exhibition. There are 57 canvases on display, consisting of 36 in oil, and 21 graphics, conte on paper

and pen and ink. There is a general and all-round impression that his pen and ink works are far superior than his paintings, though I am sure like any other artist Jatin will violently disagree. Not necessarily rightly so.

The "Collectors' Collection" highlights Jatin's obsession with the human form. His expressions and interpretations of the female form celebrates beauty in the raw. While his more recent oil canvases show better formulations and sharper lines, I think so far his best works were in the early eighties when he was himself was in the naughty-forty knot. I think he was creatively at his best then though there is no reason why he cannot retrieve that phase in the near time-future.

In a career span of nearly 30 years, the twinkle-eyed, greyed and balding Jatin has had more than forty one-man shows and 70 participations. The 57 works on display in the retrospective forms just a part of the main body of work, works he has been able to lay his hands on.

Red, mauve, green and light yellow are the predominant colours he seems at ease with. The red particularly seems to impart a special pregnant meaning to his forms in colour, threatening to burst out of the hanging canvases which another friend, Raghu Rai was at pains to rearrange to give the maximum impact.

Perhaps the personal factors are dominating his vision more than the juices of creative expression. The sooner he comes to terms with his inner and outer self, the better it will be for him.

He has emerged as a fine craftsman. There is near-unanimity about this perception. So a lot of his well-wishers and admirers wonder what is holding him back from the next panther's leap. It is time for introspection, and I guess he knows best how to emerge from the self-created cocoon. So, rise and shine sleepy Jatin.

Reflections



by Suresh Kohli

the most complex." Separated twice, he ought to understand that better than most of us.

Jatin does not admit to the charge of complacency over the past few years. He will not even agree that he is tending to be repetitive. There seems no visible reason for Jatin, to borrow a phrase from Dom Moraes, possesses "aggressive energy". The chemistry in his paintings is perfect and there is a lot more aggression, but the creative intensity is missing.

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Mystery of mathematics-VIII

Units & dimensions

A POINT has no length, width and height. A line has length and width and cube has length, width and height. Cube has three dimensions, square has two dimensions and line has single dimension. Point has zero dimension.

Units are measure of dimensions. All lines have one dimension but length of any line can vary from one unit to any number of units.

A man walking on the street throws his shadow. Shadow is two dimensional. A shadow can have no height. Man's body is three dimensional. His mind makes it four dimensional, length, width, height and time. And that makes man different from machines.

Physically, man is three-dimensional. Man's body can't go into past or future, mind can. That makes mind four dimensional and that is the glory of mind.

Imagine like mind if you can go at will into a time machine (refer to H.G. Wells' "Time Machine") and have the liberty to go into the time of your birth or witness the times of your grand grand grand children. Then you have the freedom not only of travel in space but through time too.

Dimension determines the degree of your freedom. A point has zero degree of freedom. It is fixed and can not move. In a line, a point can travel but only in one dimension. It attains the first de-

gree of freedom.

A point on a surface is free to move in all directions but can't leave the surface. It now has two degrees of freedom. If point can move then it reaches the freedom of man's body – three dimensions.

But no material thing can ever hope to go into the past and future, only man's mind can and therefore man's mind is the lord of this world. His thinking has the fourth degree of freedom.

It is hard to visualise life in a dimension in which we don't live. Though it is easy to talk of higher dimensions, yet it is not easy to imagine the shape of things in those dimensions. The circle is the shadow of the sphere. Square is the shadow of the cube. Whose shadow is the sphere? The figure whose shadow is the sphere ought to be in one higher dimension.

Edwin Abbott, a London school Headmaster gives a very interesting account of a stranger from a third dimensional space who comes into a world of two dimensions.

A dialogue takes place between a first person 'I' living in two dimensions and a stranger from three dimensions space in his book, published in 1884, "Flatland – A Romance of Many Dimensions".

Stranger: From Space, from Space, Sir, whence else?

I: Pardon me, my Lord, but is not your Lordship already in Space, your Lordship and his

humble servant, even at this moment?

Stranger: Pooh! what do you know of Space? Define Space.

I: Space, my Lord is height and breadth indefinitely prolonged.

Stranger: Exactly, you see you do not even know what Space is. You think it is of two dimensions only; but I have come to announce to you a third – height, breadth, and length.

It is hard to visualise life in a dimension in which we don't live. Though it is easy to talk of higher dimensions, yet it is not easy to imagine the shape of things in those dimensions. The circle is the shadow of the sphere. Square is the shadow of the cube. Whose shadow is the sphere? The figure whose shadow is the sphere ought to be in one higher dimension.

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I: Pardon me, my Lord, but is not your Lordship already in Space, your Lordship and his

side their space and no means of moving off the surface on which they live?

Flatlanders are small plane figures, the shape of each person depending on their social status. Women, being at the bottom of the hierarchy, are straight lines; soldiers and the 'lowest class of workers' are triangles; the middle class of equilateral triangles; professional men and gentlemen are squares – and so on up the polygonal ladder, until one arrives at the priestly order, the members of which are so many sided, and the sides are so small that the figures cannot be distinguished from circles.

At last the stranger takes the Flatlander on a voyage into three-dimensional space. When he returns, he is eager to instruct others in the newly revealed theory of three dimensions, but is promptly denounced by the priests as a heretic, sentenced to "perpetual imprisonment" and cast into jail.

★ ★ ★

Beautiful numbers

9x9=81
99x99=9801
999x999=998001
9999x9999=99980001
99999x99999=9999800001

★ ★ ★

JOY OF LEARNING

by Garg & Bains



I: Your Lordship is pleased to be merry. We also speak of length and height, or breadth and thickness, thus denoting two dimensions by four names.

Stranger: But I mean not only three names, but three dimensions."

James R. Newman, the writer of four volumes on the world of mathematics, has the following comments to offer on Flatland:

"It deals with the world of two dimensions, a plane, inhabited by intelligent beings who have no faculties by which they can become conscious of anything outside."

Stranger: From Space, from Space, Sir, whence else?

I: Pardon me, my Lord, but is not your Lordship already in Space, your Lordship and his

story is told in the first person by "A Square" – Dr Abbott, I presume – who has the misfortune one day to be descended upon by a sphere, a visitor from the third dimension.

In Flatland, of course, the sphere can be seen only as a circle, first increasing in size (from a point) and then decreasing and finally vanishing as the sphere passes through the plane. The sphere makes a number of descents and stays long enough to describe to "A Square" the wonders of Spaceland and to make him realise the wretchedness of

From the following facts find in what two occupations each man is engaged:

1. The driver offended the poet by laughing at his long hair.
2. Both the poet and the gardener used to go boating with Amar.
3. The painter engaged the advocate for his case.
4. The driver courted the painter's sister.
5. Akbar owed the gardener Rs 500.
6. Anthony beat both Amar and the painter at tennis.

PUNJAB POLICE HOUSING CORPORATION LIMITED

S.C.O. NO. 171-72, SECTOR 8-C, MADHYA MARG CHANDIGARH

TENDER NOTICE NO. 49/91-92

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the manufacturers or their authorised distributors for the supply of Ordinary Portland Cement to be supplied to the Executive Engineer, Punjab Police Housing Corporation Limited, Police Lines, Patiala at the destination given below so as to reach the undersigned by 3.00 p.m. on 16.12.1991 and will be opened soon after receipt in the presence of suppliers or their representatives, who may like to be present:-

| SL. NO. | DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL | QTY. | DESTINATION | EARNEST MONEY (Rs. in lacs) |
|---------|--|--------|--|-----------------------------|
| 01 | Ordinary Portland Cement conforming to I.S. 269-1976 (with latest amendments) duly packed in Gunny or HDPE bags factory stitched having 50 Kg. cement in each bag. | 400 MT | Patiala (Within Municipal Committee limit). | 0.12 |
| | | 200 MT | Bahadurgarh (Outside the Municipal Committee limit). | 0.06 |
| | | 300 MT | Sangrur (Within Municipal Committee limit). | 0.09 |

TERMS & CONDITIONS:-

1. Rates should be inclusive of all taxes, duties and levies, loading, unloading, stacking stores of Corpn., and Octroi etc.
2. Earnest money in the shape of Deposit-at-Call in favour of Managing Director, Punjab Police Housing Corporation Limited, Chandigarh shall accompany the tender.
3. Supplies are to be completed within one month from the date of allotment.
4. The quantity can be increased or decreased as per requirement of the Corporation and no claim on this account will be entertained.
5. The payments shall be released only after the test report is found to be complying with physical and chemical requirement or the relevant Indian Standards.
6. Only fresh cement, free from effect of moisture and rainy season will be accepted.
7. Samples will be collected by the Corporation from the cement brought at stores of the Corporation and the same shall be got tested from a reputed test house

Punjab's precursor of Red Cross

by Roopinder Singh

MORE than a century before the idea of the Red Cross was mooted in the West, a follower of Guru Gobind Singh had already acted on the principle in a battlefield around Anandpur Sahib.

Jean-Henri Dunant, a Swiss humanitarian, established the Red Cross in 1864. He was an eyewitness to the battle of Solferino, a major engagement in the Second War of Italian Independence, in which the Austrian army and a Franco-Piedmontese force had clashed in 1859.

The estimated 40,000 casualties and a large number of wounded, for whom Dunant organised aid, led him to write *Un Souvenir de Solferino* which was published in 1862, in which he proposed the setting up of voluntary relief societies in all countries for the prevention and alleviation of suffering in war as well as peacetime, without discrimination on the basis of race or creed.

But, according to the Ludhiana-based Bhai Kanhaiya Ji Mission, Bhai Kanhaiya (as the name is spelt in authoritative texts such as M.A. Maculiffe's *The Sikh Religion* and Prof. Harbans Singh's *The Heritage of the Sikhs*) was the precursor of Dunant.

Bhai Kanhaiya tended the wounded (including those who had fought against the Guru's forces) in the battles around Anandpur Sahib in 1705. When some zealous soldiers complained to the Guru that Bhai Kanhaiya was helping the enemy by tending the wounded, the Guru blessed his efforts, gave him a balm for healing the wounds, and appointed him a *mahant*.

The order founded by Bhai Kanhaiya continues till today and the *Adanshahis* as well as the *Sewapanthis* (named after Adan Shah and Seva Das, two of his successors) trace their origin to

him. The International Red Cross has its national affiliates. Red Cross is the name used in most of the world, but at the insistence of the Ottoman Empire, the name Red Crescent was adopted in 1906 for Islamic countries.

The Indian Red Cross was founded in 1920 by an act of the British Parliament. It split after 1947 and the Pakistani body, like that of other Islamic nations, changed its name to the Red Crescent.

In a secular country like India, it would be appropriate to adopt an indigenous historical symbol - Bhai Kanhaiya, the mission contends. After all since Independence, King's Way became Rajpath; Queen's Way, Janpath; the Viceregal Lodge, Rashtrapati Bhavan - several symbols of the Raj have been replaced.

Various affiliates of the Red

Cross have their own emblems besides the more prevalent red cross, and the red crescent. The Iranian agency is represented by a sun and a lion emblem while the Israeli one has a red star.

The mission, in a letter in 1987 to the President, who also heads the Indian Red Cross, had asked why should India continue with the symbol of a distant land rather than an indigenous one. It demanded that the Red Cross, as well as the emergency wards of hospitals all over the country, be named after Bhai Kanhaiya.

This buck did not stop at the President's desk - he passed it on to the Punjab administration, which in its infinite wisdom, referred it to the Chief Medical Officer, Ludhiana.

Mr Bahadur Singh, the president of the mission says: "Bhai Kanhaiya's inspiration was the humanitarian principles taught by

the Guru. Just as he did not see any distinction amongst the wounded, Bhai Kanhaiya should not be seen in a regional or parochial light.

"Support for recognising his contribution could not be forthcoming during the Mughal and the British rule. It should be given now, just as the West espoused the work of Henri Dunant."

Members of the mission met then Punjab Governor S.S. Ray. Later, addressing a gathering at Ropar on the International Red Cross Day Mr Ray did not hesitate in saying that Punjab, not Switzerland, was the mother of the concept behind the International Red Cross.

The Bhai Kanhaiya Ji Mission's efforts to lobby for a resolution seeking appropriate changes in the Red Cross Act have also not produced the desired results, according to Bahadur Singh.

However, it got a comparatively more favourable reception from



The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee which started a dispensary named after Bhai Kanhaiya at Anandpur Sahib. The mission runs a charitable hospital in Adarsh Nagar, Ludhiana. It also organises blood donation camps besides medical camps in rural areas. In this, it follows the ideals of the man it is named after, as also of Henry Dunant.

What Chandigarh can learn from Singapore

DURING my last visit to Singapore in December last year, I was thrilled to know that the Government of Singapore had started a unique project to bring back home some species of birds which left the island country.

These birds had left home for the neighbouring islands in Malaysia and Indonesia as a result of habitat loss due to rapid urbanisation.

The eco-development activities in 31.8 hectares area at Singapore's East Coast Park started in 1986 to attract, breed and nest the birds, had now been completed. This concept can be applied in Chandigarh.

The concept of sustainable development (development without destruction) gained momentum following Stockholm conference in 1972. The Government of Singa-

apore, while chalking out conservation strategy realised that urban development activities had destroyed the traditional homes of rich avifauna.

Therefore, wildlife experts were deputed to the neighbouring islands to locate the birds and to study how they could be lured back home.

The parks and recreation department of Singapore government started planting about 10,000 trees and 40,000 shrubs. The plants that produced fruits and berries for the birds were grown.

Surveys indicated that the fig trees such as the Indian banyan, waringin, and peepul are among the most popular nesting places for birds. These trees bear small attractive fruits. Other fruit bearing trees planted include the tembu-



ਫਰੋਦਾ ਕੁਰੇ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਸਾ ਮਨਿ ਨ ਹਵਾਇ ॥
ਦੇਹੀ ਰੋਗ ਨ ਲਗਾਈ ਪਲੈ ਸਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਾਇ ॥

su, jambolan, cherry and wild cinnamon. Besides, a large number of insects, a tasty feast for birds, are also found in these trees.

Among the sixty species, the department hopes to attract the pink-necked pigeon, bronze cuckoo, fly-eaters, crimson sunbird, olive-backed sunbird and brown-throated sunbird, scarlet-backed flower pecker, common lora, black-chested prinia and common tailorbird.

Chandigarh birds

Chandigarh and surrounding satellite towns experienced similar changes when hundreds of villages were razed to ground. The indigenous vegetation, i.e., sheesham, kikar, peepul, banyan, dhak, mulberry, mango, jamun, dates, palm, mallah, karkanda, sarkanda and other wild grasses were destroyed to build the new city Chandigarh in the early fifties, and the two satellite towns of

Mohali (SAS Nagar) and Panchkula in the early seventies.

It was not only the villagers who left their traditional homes but also thousands of birds. These include peafowl, partridges, quails, green pigeons, woodpeckers, grey hornbills, weaver birds, bunting, larks and preybirds, such as owls, falcons.

While the peafowl, partridges, quails, green pigeons, bunting, larks, etc., have almost disappeared in the urban areas, the grey hornbills and weaver birds, cuckoos are decreasing day by day and are struggling for their survival.

Other birds like crows, bluerock pigeons, doves, mynahs and the house birds, such as flower peckers, tailorbirds, bulbuls and robins

have adapted to the new environment in the orchards, mini gardens, nurseries created in and around residential areas, educational institutions, offices, etc.

Avifauna knows no boundaries. With ecological changes in Panchkula area, thousands of migrant parakeets made their homes in mangroves in Sector 21-A, Chandigarh. The Environment Society of Chandigarh came to their rescue. The Chandigarh Administration declared this area under the Wildlife (Protection) Act in 1988.

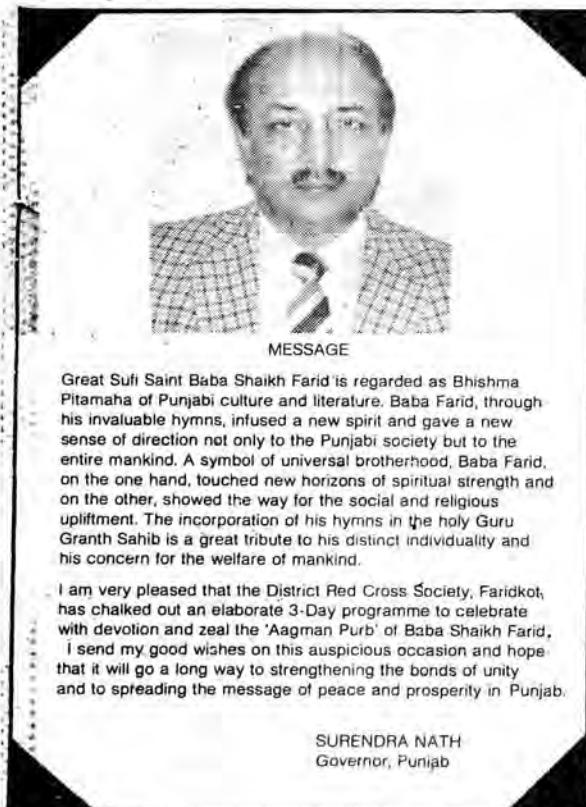
Mr A.S. Randhawa, Chairman of the Wildlife Group of the Environment Society of Chandigarh, says that ideal conditions should be created in some parts of Leisur Valley to attract some species of birds.

Wildlife experts from Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, and also nature lovers should meet and draw a conservation plan.

BABA SHEIKH FARID AAGMAN PURB

21st to 23rd September, 1991

(under the auspices of Distt. Red Cross Society, Faridkot)

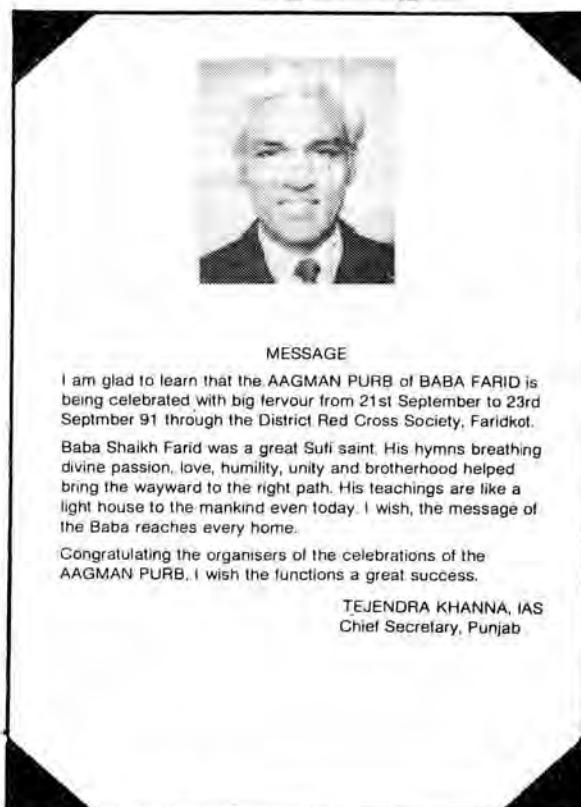


MESSAGE

Great Sufi Saint Baba Shaikh Farid is regarded as Bhishma Pitamaha of Punjabi culture and literature. Baba Farid, through his invaluable hymns, infused a new spirit and gave a new sense of direction not only to the Punjabi society but to the entire mankind. A symbol of universal brotherhood, Baba Farid, on the one hand, touched new horizons of spiritual strength and on the other, showed the way for the social and religious upliftment. The incorporation of his hymns in the holy Guru Granth Sahib is a great tribute to his distinct individuality and his concern for the welfare of mankind.

I am very pleased that the District Red Cross Society, Faridkot, has chalked out an elaborate 3-Day programme to celebrate with devotion and zeal the 'Aagman Purb' of Baba Shaikh Farid. I send my good wishes on this auspicious occasion and hope that it will go a long way to strengthening the bonds of unity and to spreading the message of peace and prosperity in Punjab.

SURENDRA NATH
Governor, Punjab



MESSAGE

I am glad to learn that the AAGMAN PURB of BABA FARID is being celebrated with big fervour from 21st September to 23rd September 91 through the District Red Cross Society, Faridkot.

Baba Shaikh Farid was a great Sufi saint. His hymns breathing divine passion, love, humility, unity and brotherhood helped bring the wayward to the right path. His teachings are like a light house to the mankind even today. I wish the message of Baba reaches every home.

Congratulating the organisers of the celebrations of the AAGMAN PURB, I wish the functions a great success.

TEJENDRA KHANNA, IAS
Chief Secretary, Punjab



MESSAGE

I am immensely pleased to know that the District Administration and people of Faridkot are celebrating, as ever, the "AAGMAN PURB" of great Sufi Saint Baba Shaikh Farid from 21st Sept., to 23rd Sept., 91 with full devotion, enthusiasm and grandeur. A symbol of universal brotherhood Baba Farid preached humility, love, tolerance and non violence. He impressed upon us to do good deeds, practise honesty, nurture no avarice or ill will against others. Shaikh Farid taught us to worship the almighty and to do a good turn to even evil doers. If we act upon the philosophy of FARIDA BURE DA BHALA KAR, GUSSA MAN NA HANDE, all the sufferings of the world and mutual animosity will come to an end and there will be, an atmosphere of love and happiness. The Punjabis are proud that by preserving their glorious cultural heritage, they have kept in tact mutual accord and religious tolerance. They have jointly defeated the nefarious designs of the nation's enemies who are bent upon sowing the seeds of discord. Let us vow that keeping in mind the teachings of Baba Farid, we shall not allow the peace and prosperity of Punjab to be shattered at any cost and take the development of the State to a new high.

DR. B.C. GUPTA, IAS
Commissioner Ferozepur Division
FEROZEPUR



MESSAGE

A Passing sojourn of Hazrat Baba Sheik Farid-ud-din-Masaud Ganj-i-Shakar at Faridkot generated a vibrant eruption of spiritual emotionalism which permeated the area to such an extent that his sublime lyrical teachings acquired universal acceptance through their incorporation in holy Guru Granth Sahib. A beacon light of punjabi poetry, his hymns emitted the fragrance of love, fraternity, tolerance and humility.

Baba Sheik Farid who had the simplicity of a common man and divine spark of the highly enlightened spiritual soul stood as a distinct symbol of national integration and universal brotherhood. His teachings have a special relevance for the present day world.

I pray to the strife-ridden & suffering humanity to follow in the footsteps of Baba Farid who preferred simplicity and spiritual way of life to temporal authority. His blessings to the town will always serve as a boon for the people of this area.

SARVESH KAUSHAL, IAS
Deputy Commissioner-cum-Chairman, District Red Cross Society, Faridkot

| 21st September, 1991 | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Rural Sports at Nehru Stadium | 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. |
| 2. Kirtan Darbar at Red Cross Amar Ashram | 7.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. |
| 22nd September, 1991 | |
| 1. Cultural Programme Fair/Exhibition at Darbar Raj Complex | 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. |
| 2. Qawalis at Red Cross Amar Ashram | 7.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. |

| 23rd September, 1991 | |
|--|--|
| 1. Nagar Kirtan starting from Gurdwara Chilla Baba Farid to Gurudwara Godri Sahib | 8.00 a.m. |
| 2. Drama and "Light & Sound" programme on life and teachings of Baba Farid at Qila Mubarak | 7.00 p.m. (daily) (25th Sept. onward) |

PROGRAMME



Bhangra on Broadway

AMERICAN social scientists think of their country as one in which peoples of all nations subsume their cultural identities. Every Baisakhi, thousands of saffron turbaned Sikhs surge down Broadway, the very heart of Manhattan, and the venue of many a spectacular show, in New York, the so called "melting pot" of the USA, proudly reaffirming their visibly distinct identity, and challenging the "melting pot" theory.

Immigrant Punjabis celebrate the festival with much the same fervour as they did in India, and in ever increasing numbers. The scale on which the event is marked has changed and for the past three years there have been "Baisakhi parades" in New York. The religious, the cultural and the social aspects are all reflected in the way the occasion is celebrated.

Baisakhi used to be the major event in which the Punjabi community got together at the gurdwara in the morning and held a cultural function in the evening on the Sunday nearest to the festival. The oldest gurdwara in the city is the Sikh Cultural Society (SCS), Richmond Hill, an old church bought by Punjabis and Sindhis, in April, 1972. It is now among the most important gurdwaras in the USA, and it hosts the "Baisakhi parade."

Since 1984 the community has become increasingly polarized and the festival, as it is celebrated now, is a Sikh affair with a token non-Sikh presence. The India Day Parade, on the other hand, is held around Independence Day every year, and has no unofficial Sikh presence, whereas in the pre 1984 period Sikhs were actively involved in the event. It generally features a film star, Sunil Dutt being a favourite, as well as the Mayor of New York and other American political leaders.

Unlike in Punjab, there are no melas on Baisakhi in New York, though as on any Gurpurb here, the Panj Piaras, carrying the Nishan Sahib lead the parade, as

it proceeds down Broadway from near the famous Times Square on 42nd street in Midtown Manhattan to the Union Square on 14th street. They are preceded, in accordance with the American tradition, by the mounted New York City policemen and an American honour band.

Volunteers distribute handouts describing the festival, the faith and the people, for the benefit of American onlookers. As the para-

de winds its way down-town, it crosses Macys, the one-time "world's largest department store", which is still a major attraction for Indian and other tourists, as well as thousands of local shoppers every day. It has an amazing variety of goods from jewelry to quilts spread out in its many floors.

Then comes the flashy Herald Square with its polished black glass and granite, perhaps proc-

ing the "black money" with which the Marcos' of Philippines allegedly bought it.

The parade then crosses the area where many new expatriates from Delhi have kiosks selling brass and other curio items from India, reminiscent of "Karol Bagh". It then goes past the "Flatiron Building," the first Skyscraper in the city of skyscrapers.

Most of the males don western attire, much like people in Pun-

jab, though women wear the traditional *salwar kameez*. Saffron being the colour of the day, most men sport saffron turbans, while the ladies wear *dupattas* of the same colour.

Punjabi women in the USA are a dynamic lot. Many are top drawer professionals who revert to the role of traditional "domestic" wives at home. Their activities range from organising kitty parties to seminars on "human right situa-

tion in Punjab" (organised by the Sikh Women's International Organisation, headed by Dr Satwant Kaur Dhamoon, a physician).

Floots bearing the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and a to-the-scale replica of the Harmandar Sahib highlight the religious aspect of the event. Another one with paintings of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh, and the message "We are all equal and children of one God" stresses on the egalitarian nature of the Sikh religion.

The scars of 1984 have yet to heal. Local Sikh leaders condemn Operation Bluestar on every public occasion and compare the sanctity of Harmandar Sahib with that of the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem. A special float, according to Jagjit Singh Mangat, the then President of the SCS, was "made to remind the people of the desecration of the Golden Temple."

The drums of *bhangra* strike up a heart stirring toe-tapping beat, as men, a number of them born and nurtured in America, perform the dance while on another tableau, women dance the *giddha* to songs which take back many a participant to their days in Punjab's villages. Many Americans are enthralled with the vigorous movements of the *bhangra* and compare it with the Russian Cossack dance. They find the traditional costumes worn by the *bhangra* dancers as well as the Punjabi *salwar kurtas*, "gorgeous!"

American converts to Sikhism also participate in a big way in the parade. Like all new converts they are very zealous and are always dressed in their "bana" the spotlessly white traditional *kurtas* and *churidars*, which they also wear to work, unlike most Punjabi Sikhs. Some of them ride horseback, while others march on foot with the rest of the parade.

Just as the Sikhs buried their differences at the Harmandar Sahib on the Baisakhi and Diwali days, centuries ago, here also on

Continued on Saturday plus page 4

The celebration of the festival of Baisakhi marks the founding of the Khalsa Panth. Today it is the festival of harvest, of romance, of unrestrained dancing and singing. Baisakhi is Punjab's gift to India's rainbow of composite culture. Wherever there are Punjabis the festival is sure to be celebrated with the same enthusiasm and devotion as it is in Punjab. ROOPINDER SINGH

gives a fascinating account of how Baisakhi is celebrated in distant New York.



Neigh — they seldom get to see real horses on the streets of New York. American Sikhs participating in the Baisakhi festivities. Photographs by Roopinder Singh.

Continued on Saturday plus page 4

Breed and perish

REMEMBER the days we used to sing Hindi *ham chaurases crore* with national pride? There were 4000 millions of us pitted against a handful of Britishers: ultimately we would overwhelm them with our numbers and force them to flee our shores. Now we are more than double that number, almost *chaurases* crore but have nothing to sing about. If we go on increasing at this rate, we will only overwhelm our country and soon

so as literate. Perhaps all that most of them can do is to read or write their names and nothing more.

Besides literacy figures I am alarmed at the continuing disparity in numbers between males and females. The only conclusion one

can draw is that females continue to be discriminated against from birth to death in matters of nourishment and health care. I

will not be around when the next census comes to be taken, but I hope that our population will have stabilised itself around the 850 million mark and the number of females will equal that of males.

Goa — (II) — Atmosphere and routine

There is a lot more to Goa than sea beaches and tent. Though Christians form no more than 20 per cent of the population, the ambience (awful word) remains Catholic and Portuguese. The most attractive feature of the state is its colonial heritage: its beautiful cathedrals and its taverns and its highly animated mestizo population bursting with song and dance. I think India made a big mistake invading and annexing it. If China could let Hong Kong and Macao remain nominally under a foreign flag, we could have left Goa alone and got a lot more out to it than we do today. As it is, it has evolved a colonialism of its own. In everyone of its five star hotels,



come to a stage when there will be little left to eat besides ourselves. It is evident that propaganda and persuasion are not enough. Daily reminders on radio and Doordarshan, free availability of contraceptives, abortions and sterilisation have borne marginal results: a drop from 24.66 per cent to 23.5 per cent in the past 10 years. Literate states like Kerala and Goa (despite their large prop-

THIS ABOVE ALL...

Khushwant Singh

ortion of Catholics) have shown better results than less literate Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The only Indians to be seen there are wogs of my kind who were allowed admission to "whites only" clubs during the Raj days.

Christian influence is dominant. Even Hindu temples have close resemblance to churches. The two I visited this time were Shanta Durga and Mangeshi, the birthplace of the Mangeshkar sisters. But for the *sarovars* outside there is little to distinguish — their stark white facades including the *deep-stambhas* (lighting towers) — them from Catholic places of worship. They were much better kept and maintained than Hindu temples of U.P., Bihar, Rajasthan, Orissa or Bengal. No beggars, and no *pandas* harassing you for money. And melodious *bhajans* in an atmosphere of peace that

Continued on Saturday plus page 4

Baisakhi on BBC

BAL-JAGAT", the BBC Hindi Service Children's programme celebrates Baisakhi, the Northern India harvest festival, in its transmission on Sunday, 14 April.

The programme features harvest festival music, in which vigorous dances by the menfolk and group dances by the women in colourful costumes accompany the beating of drums.

Listeners will also hear the first of a special series of stories from the classic book of anecdotes "Hitopadesha".

This special harvest festival edition of "Bal-Jagat" can be heard on the BBC Hindi Service on Sunday, April 14, in the 0615-0705 (IST) transmission, on 1413 kHz (212 metres medium wave), 7235, 9600, 11850 and 15380 kHz in the 41, 31, 25 and 19 metre bands.

**THE ONLY SCOOTER WHOSE
Demand
IS INCREASING DAY BY DAY . . .**



KINETIC HONDA
THE FUTURE BELONGS TO US