

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 Holi 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 unhurried, 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 panoramas 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.

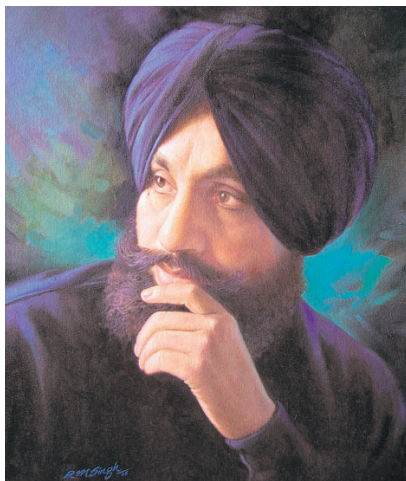
How did he get on the train? Well, his village, Bharoli Kalan, in Gurdaspur district, had only a primary school, and after Class V, he was sent off to Pathankot, about 3 km away. Like other children, he hitched a ride on a train to go to and fro to school.

"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 Gurmukh 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

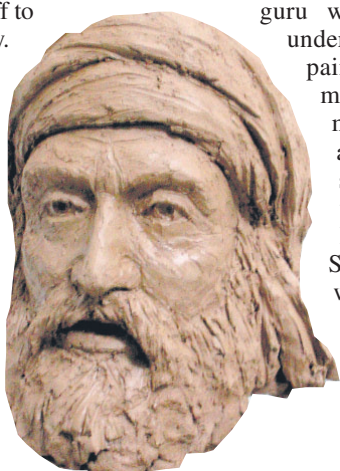
paper," recalls RM. Cheap Soviet-era books brought by vans operated by Punjab Book Centre, Chandigarh, exposed the young mind to Russian artists.

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 Godhokars 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, witting or unwitting, brokers between the lobbyists and law makers. The remaining journalists, some of whom who 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-

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 *WTT*; 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 Godhokars who appeared in *Big Switch-2*. It's all about a widening generation gap. The not-so-traditional Godhokars are parents to a pair of wilful, frankly badly bought 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 Godhokars 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.

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 Swapan Dasgupta. This was not friendly fire. It was rapid fire. They all quizzed her on blurring lines between journalism and power



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. Take a closer look. Fancy curtains on the rear door windows and rear windscreen in complete violation of the motor vehicles rules. Every thing 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 so 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 to build Simon 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.



Illustration: Gaurav Sood

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

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

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

database 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 WYSIWYG ability of 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

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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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 at home while he careens 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

rally there are many limitations whereas in a Raid there are few. A Raid is more grueling 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 Shojha so as to be in position at the Time Control (TC) point at the end of the first competi-

tyre. The first car in is of Satkiran 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 cafe 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. Surhid Sharma is declared the champion biker. Bitto Sondhi is second, though

Diary of a Raid

ter at home while he careens 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. Shojha has a guesthouse, 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 Ghaygi, where Leg 2 of Day 1 will end. The TC is at a point just before a

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.



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 Satkiran 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 Manjeev 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

bridge. We get a sumptuous breakfast at the local dhaba while we wait for the rallyists. As usual the road is blocked to all traffic which leads to some heated exchanges. Hear election results on the radio and see busloads of BJP revellers celebrating the party's victory.

We are told that the Raid has been flagged off as scheduled from Shiloh Resorts after

Leave Marhi at 4 a.m. There is a beautiful dhaba at Gramphoo soon after you cross the Rohtang Pass. We meet the Route Opener and other rally officials. It's a beautiful morning and once you see the sun kiss the mountaintops, your day is made. Desolate, stony granite rocks, formidable ter-

rain, sim- headquarters in Manali, and then to the Himachal 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



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 Ghaygi 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

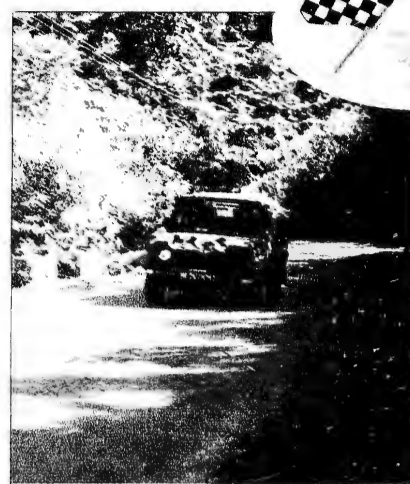
ply beautiful.

We proceed cautiously along the Chandra river towards Chhatru. The road is badly broken at places, and the moon-scape provides a rich contrast to the verdant greens of 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 dhabba, 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 the bikes. The first bike has a



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

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 Himachal 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!



freak accidents that happen. Kular 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 in 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 2 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 Shiloh Resorts, there the Raid de Himalaya officially ends. Rally Steward Tutu Dhawan is stung-ho about the rally. He should know, he has seen many, many of them, both has 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



trophy for the Raid de Himalayas. Surhid Sharma is declared the champion biker. Bitto Sondhi is second, though

he takes home the first prize in his category too. The Chandigarh team also does well with Atul Mandhar being the first runner-up in the 13,000 Gypsy category, Group N.

The Coup de Dames Trophy goes to Mona Desai and Rajni Nagu. As the latter tells her son: "Now you can show it (the photograph of them getting the trophy) to the boys in Sanawar who said your mother would never make it."

The Chief Minister, along with his Cabinet colleagues comes in to give away the prizes.

Hey! It is a tradition to pop Champagne at such events! The management of Shiloh Resorts manages to come up with the politically correct alternative, non-alcoholic apple bubbly!

The speeches are, thankfully, short, the trophies are beautiful, and the cash prizes substantial. It has been quite an adventure, just as promised.

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

Chandigarh Heartbeat

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. Kishie 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

fully and be comfortable. The body does not have to be conformed 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.

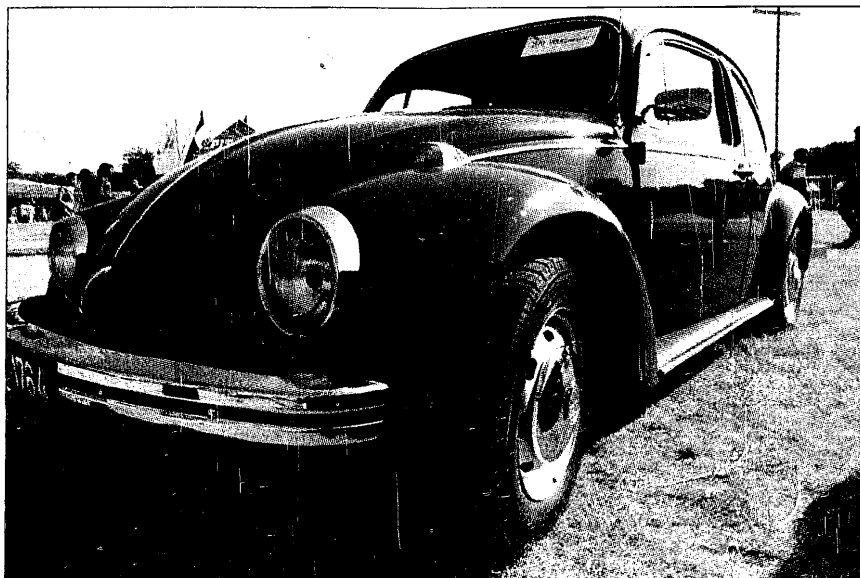
In the first half of the 20th century, car manufacturers went about ensuring a comfortable and smooth ride for their customers in various ways.

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 Manco 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 Kishie 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 VW 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 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 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. Izzat 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 motor cycle, 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



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

in the city," says, Kishie 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

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 Kishie Singh.

Baljit Singh's other car has what was then the conventional configuration then. He owns a front engine, rear wheel drive 1948 Chevrolet Fleetmaster, a straight six cylinder engine car, popularly known as "the steel horse" which he bought in immaculate condition from an old British IPS officer who had garaged his car in India. "Till today, the engine has not been opened and not even a

3,500, and after renovation it cost me Rs 6,500 says A. S. Sodhi, an agriculturist from Punjab who lives in Chandigarh. I kept it for four years and sold it. About four years ago, I bought it again for Rs 20,000 and now, after restoring it, it has now cost me Rs 65,000."

"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 Kishie 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-

Doing up your holiday wardrobe

By Nikhil Bhagat

TO 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 climes, 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

season. For the young and athletic sort, designers are recommending corset dresses, hussy skirts and nymph camitops, besides mermaid dresses, ship blouses and pirate shoes with buckles. These are



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 shots 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 complemented 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 bandhnis to sober batik works have staged a comeback in holiday wear this year. Besides the prints, there is a good deal of Lakhnavi 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)

Dream analysis

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

A muddy pond denotes illness. The dead fish foretells 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, Yamunanagar

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.

with single overhead camshaft, twin cylinder inline. Also on display were the 1952 BSA single cylinder, 350 cc, also a 1952 BSA Bantam 123.5 cc engine two stroke, single cylinder.

"When the whole world was producing 100 cc, 125 cc, 350 cc etc. the British produced a bike which was 123.5 cc. How on earth do you come up with such an absurd figure? You can only do that if you have been dealing with pounds, shillings and pence!" exclaims Kishie Singh

Alongside was a Triumph Speed Twin 500 cc belonging to D. S. Brar. It is a 1951 and from the late 40s to the late 60s the name Triumph was syn-

onymous with British motorcycling excellence. Brar got it from the original owner, an octogenarian in Pune, after much persistence! These motorcycles won almost every Tourist Trophy race in Europe and were the chosen motorcycles for the police forces around the world.

The 1961 R-60 BMW is a shaft drive, with horizontally opposed twin engines. As Shashi Garcha was extolling the virtues of the bikes, someone asked him: "Don't you also have a BMW?"

"Yes, but it is a 1998," replied Shashi. It must have been the ambience of the place, but there was an apologetic note in his voice.

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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 by 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 Frankvon 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 at all, 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 Sifaullah 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-

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 students out of 1125 secured me-



YPS has a tradition of illuminating young minds

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

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

Unfortunately, day-scholars do not get the right sort of grounding, and then one I would like the school to revert to being a

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 as their steeds. They also learn various kinds of crafts, including photography, leather work, cane work etc.

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 Yadavindra 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

Asked whether YPS, as it is now, represented the kind of a school which his father envisaged when he founded it, Capt Amarinder Singh said: Yes, on the whole, though the idea was to incorporate the ethos of the boarding school.

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: "Wahguru bol, score a goal," to boost up their team's morale.

While the Aitchisonians were

dents 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, one finds people like Mr. Sodhi, who has devoted his life to the institution he has studied in, it was 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 blouses 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,

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 kurta pajama with a colourful turban, without attracting

any attention. It takes a mature and, of course, self-occupied society to be so *bindas* 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

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 a lifestyle our youngsters are trying to emulate. Of course the traditional closeness our

the capital of the USA. 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 nosey. American parents are now learning to spend more time

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

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't we ever learn from the American mistake? Do we always have to burn our fingers to find out that fire is hot?

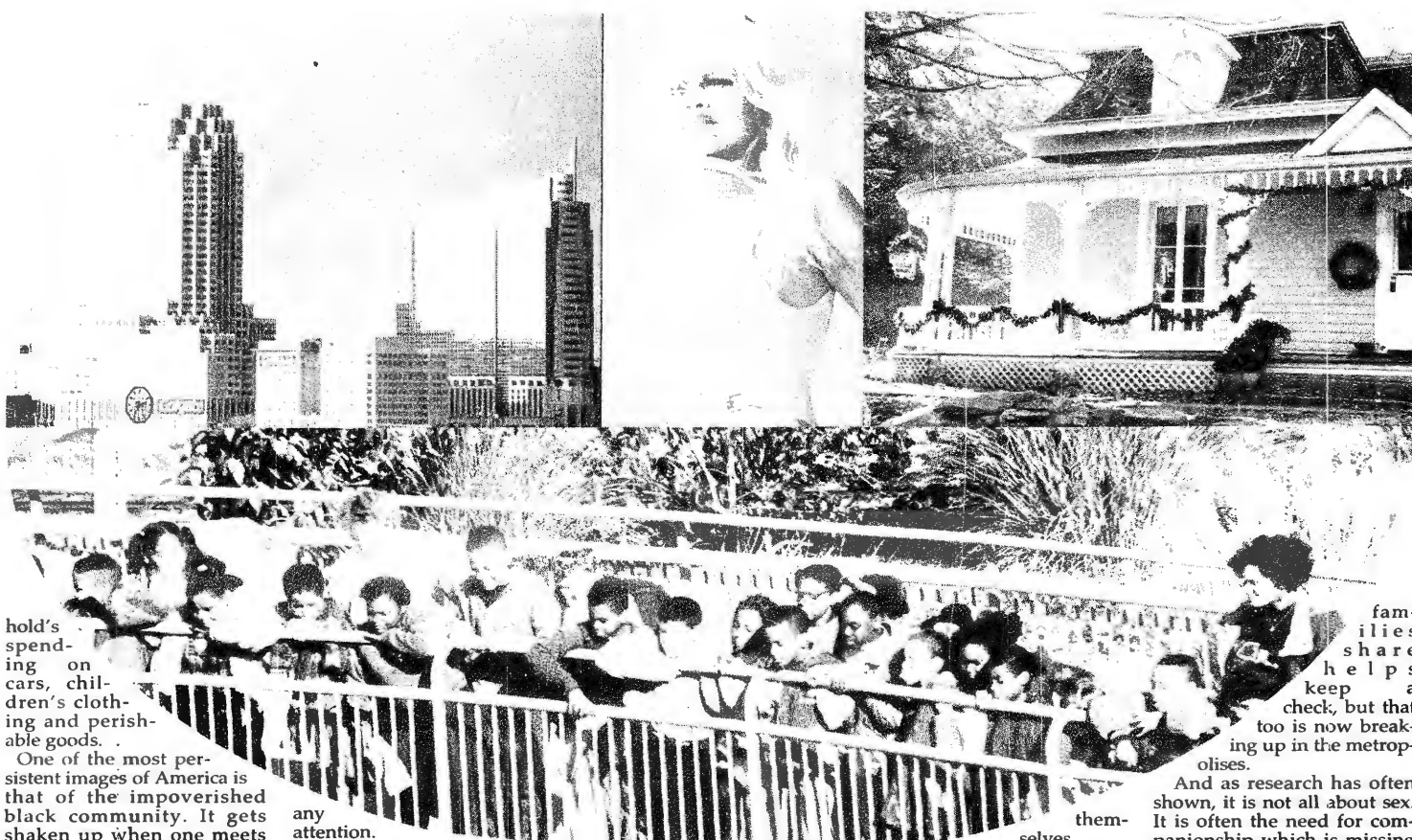
This brings us to another aspect — our latest infatuation with capitalism. America's experiment with unbridled capitalism led to the establishment of banana republics — what better way can there be to control the cost of production and safeguard the capital investments than taking over an entire country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



Madison Square Garden, N.Y.

Photos by the writer

Mercedes-Benz E-Class



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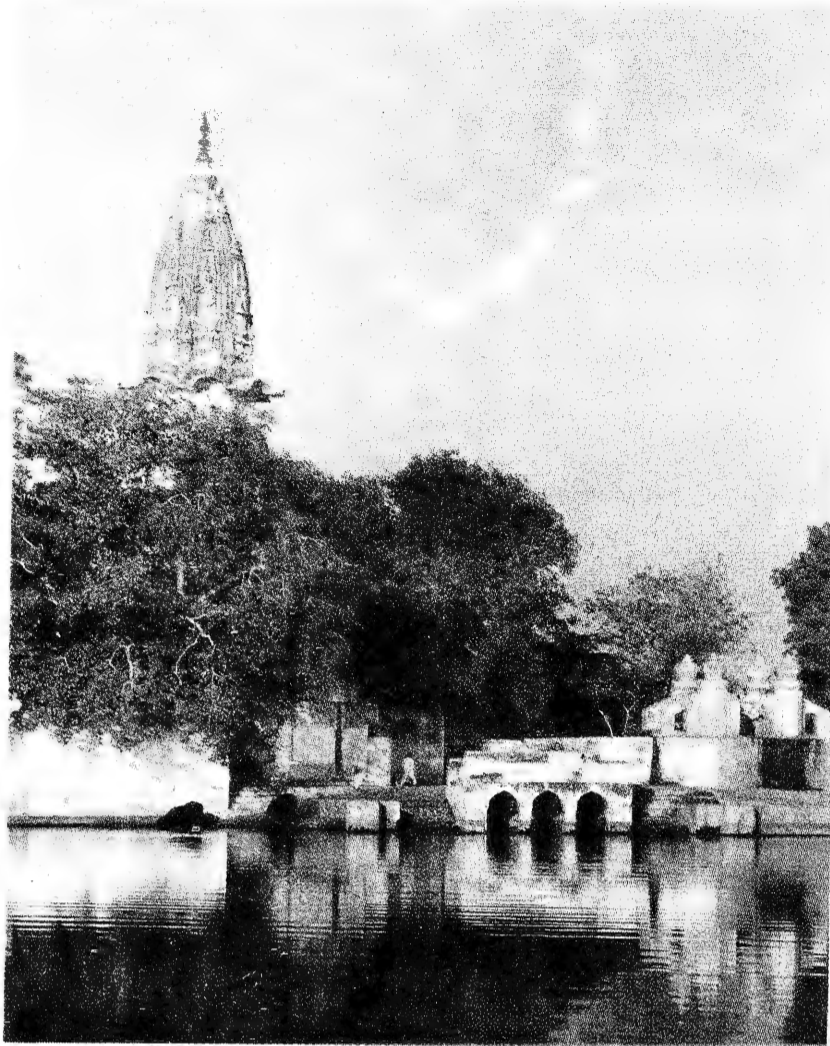
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A well and Shiv Mandir at Dighal village.



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*, *saljan* 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-mason would be approached who would under-

take construction on behalf of the *thola* or *panna* 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 *neemchak* — a circular foundation on which walls or *kolhi* of the well was raised. *Dhaak* or *jandi* wood was considered ideal for a *neemchak*, 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* *patthar* 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 limerock (*rori*), accacia 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 wheel to crush this mixture and prepare it for use.

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

the rim of the well where water would drop), *bhaun* (a large wooden pulley), *burjee* (minarets) and *khels kothe* (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 a 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 Mehamand Jhajar 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 Dadoodayali 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.

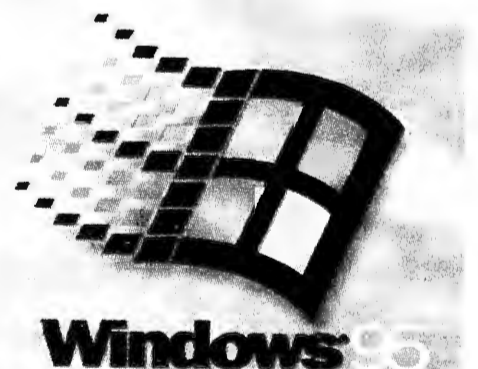
The focus has shifted and both the launching of Microsoft Windows 95 as well as a less publicised introduction of Macintosh Performa computers in India are indicative of computers becoming more and more like any other gadget in our fast-burgeoning electronic marketplace.

That is welcome, because once you strip it of all the hype, a computer is nothing but a machine which make 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

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.

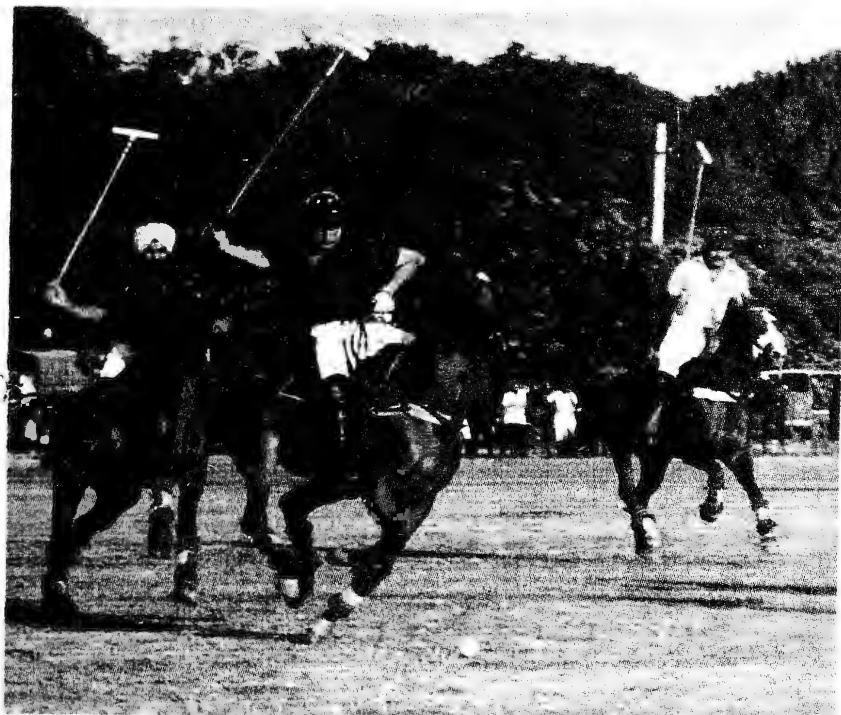
—Tribune Features



An artistically laid but abandoned well at Bhaini Chandrapal village.

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 Katoch, 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 Katoch 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 Katoch.

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 Gural Singh, a keen Delhi-based polo player. Gural 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 held in 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 chakkars 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 Katoch.

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 Yadvindra Singh, both of whom played polo. A big painting of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh posing with his team after winning the Dunlop Smith Cup 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 Gural 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 Holi 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 chakkars.

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

a population of merely 500, Chitkul is in the Sangla valley, just 30 km away from the Chinese border and is at the end of the road, literally. From this

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 Uttarakashi 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, its 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.

— photo by the writer



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Hazratbal hostages

We ate even grass

by Asha Khosa



One of the released hostages mobbed by media men.

Photo: Raja Kermi

TEARS mingled with rain-drops 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 phiren-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 70s, 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, 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 reflected in their behaviour. They had lived in near starvation. "We ate raw-dried maza which is kept for pigeons," said Ghulam Qadir. The hostages had eaten even grass, raw rice and chinar 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, sweetmeats 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 accentuated 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 stayed 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 melee-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 for 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 inflicted with scabbies.

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 cajoled 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.

The Hazratbal shrine.

Photo: courtesy Frontline

Tribune Features

GURU NEEK and his 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 penetrating 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 then 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 *khatris* 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 laudary."

Mr Gorbachev quickly vanished from the headlines in the Russian press and few stories about him appear these days.

The former Communist Party Daily Pravda didn't miss a chance to take a dig at Mr Gorbachev's domestic woes in September.

Mr Gorbachev's mother reportedly sold the family home to a Russian pop singer to get money to live. In its report, Pravda implied Mr Gorbachev didn't care 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 per cent 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 never will 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

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 and 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 religious."

“If one were to go about one's day-to-day living following just one of Guru Nanak's injunctions — "Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful conduct" — one would be on way to becoming a good human being."

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 recog-

divisive notions 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

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



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 apologise 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.

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

power on December 25, 1991, and the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

Mr Gorbachev quickly vanished from the headlines in the Russian press and few stories about him appear these days.

The former Communist Party Daily Pravda didn't miss a chance to take a dig at Mr Gorbachev's domestic woes in September.

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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 autobiographical 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 Machiavellian 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 autobiographical article: "Some of the reformist leaders had been seized by the government. Baba Kharak Singh was among them. These detainees 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 Akalis 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)

As with most of the leaders of the Independence movement, being jailed for anti-British efforts was a point of honour. He was jailed for six months in 1924 for welcoming a jatha of Sikhs going to participate in the Jaito Ka Morcha at Lyallpur.

Jails became "finishing schools" for the revolutionaries and forums for discussions on the freedom struggle, and the future course of action. It was in the prisons that they could meet each other and hone their ideas. As Giani said while writing about his second incarceration: "...we had set up in

by Roopinder Singh

was not held. 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

of their own, the Punjabi Suba, says Jasdev Singh Sandhu, a former Minister who was associated with Giani for a long time and had in fact taken the dictation of Giani Kartar Singh's memoirs.

On March 17, 1948, the Akali Dal Working Committee met under the presidency of Giani at Delhi and resolved that "all members of the Panthic Akali Dal Party, both at the centre and East Punjab are advised to join the Congress Assembly parties forthwith."

He became a minister for the first time on June 11, 1948, in the Bhargava Cabinet. Despite personal friendship with Dr Gopi Chand Bhargava, which dated back to the pre-partition days, he fell out with him when he felt that Chief Minister was not finalising the language policy of the state.

Giani then joined Bhim Sen Sachar and toppled the Bhargava ministry, a move which displeased Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel so much that he placed a ban on the induction of Giani Kartar Singh in the cabinet. Giani, however, stayed with Sachar till the finalisation of the Sachar Formula.

The formula provided for the demarcation of Punjab into Punjabi and Hindi speaking zones. The language of the zone would be the medium of instruction, and the official language at the district level.

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 Punjabi 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

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, the Akalis again revived the demand for Punjabi Suba and launched an agitation which was crushed by Kairon. Giani was dropped from the Cabinet in 1963, but continued his efforts for Punjabi Suba within the Congress.

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-

Giani Kartar Singh's 18th death anniversary falls next week.

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 Chardigarh have only aggravated the Punjab problem.

He fought the 1967 elections on the Congress ticket, but lost. Later, he joined the Akali Dal at the instance of Sant Fateh Singh and Gurnam Singh, the first Akali Chief Minister of the state.

He was made the General Secretary of the Akali Dal where he managed to unite the Sant Fateh Singh and Master Tara Singh factions in 1968. The Akalis formed the government after the mid-term elections of 1969.

At the instance of the Akali Dal, Indira Gandhi reopened the case of boundary demarcation between Punjab and Haryana in 1970. To prepare Punjab's case, the government formed a committee under Giani's chairmanship. The case that he prepared is relevant even now, even though the dispute continues.

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 a dedicated to this person who he says "lived and died as a genuine faquir."

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* (Act I), 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-

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.

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.

Then there is the fuel that fires the obsession: video images of pop are increasingly erotic and disturbing — Madonna writhing with a Christ figure, Cher in nothing but bondage straps, Kylie

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 handband 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 vengefulness. 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

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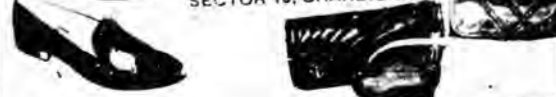
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A Punjabi woman's fight against...

'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.

Almost 39 per cent of women who have a heart attack die within one year, compared to 31 per cent of men.

In America, someone dies from cardiovascular disease every 32 seconds; the ratio between men and women being 50:50. "Surprisingly, women had been completely left out of major studies until very recently," says Ms Mantosh Singh.

even when non-invasive evaluation indicates the high probability of coronary artery disease."

A doctor in India, Dr Bhavani Shekar, gave her interesting insight into the prevailing situation in India. She was told that "a woman's heart disease is often not taken seriously, until it begins to affect her housework. She has then become a liability instead of an asset."

If a young Indian woman has 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. Once she is married and has a few children she will not be as vulnerable, Ms Mantosh Singh was informed. In a similar context, she quotes

al decisions "based on evaluations of social worth or preconceptions about the probable roles of men and women."

The Council also recommended that the patient/doctor relationship should not be compromised by "cultural and social conceptions of gender".

Recalls Ms Mantosh Singh: "Some years ago I was attending a dinner party in Phoenix (the USA). I felt terribly ill. When my friend turned to her husband, a doctor, he replied that all 'she needs is a lover'."

"This may not be a typical medical comment, but it is typical of the ignorance, nonchalance, indifference and even callousness that the medical establishment has exhibited towards women's health. In male-dominated cultures where girls are not as important as boys, treatment may be delayed or denied."

She says that her manuscript — "Strong Women — Weak Hearts" — is a cross-cultural medical journey which attempts to explain in lay person's terms causes, prevention and treatment of heart diseases in women.

"It is a book which combines medicine and faith and it's approach is holistic. This has been possible with the help of four eminent doctors — two in the USA and two in India," she says.

Ms Mantosh Singh agrees that the wear and tear of life in America, the falling away of traditional support structures, and the struggle to make it as a single parent, after separation from her husband, may have led her to her brush with heart disease. But with her journalistic training, she launched on her adventure of writing a book, in the course of which she found a lot of ignorance prevailing among doctors and others regarding women and disease. "You would be surprised,"



Ms Mantosh Singh

"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, medic-

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."

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

Dr Hari Ram Gupta Punjab's great historian passes away

by Roopinder Singh

Confederacies, was examined by among others, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the famous historian, who wrote that it struck him as "a work of outstanding merit which completely fills up a gap in our knowledge of modern Indian history."

Dr Gupta had a long teaching career. In Lahore, he was a lecturer at Punjab's famous Forman Christian College, and the head of department of History at Aitchison College. After Partition, he started teaching at Punjab University, where he was the Professor and Head of the Department of History and the Dean, University Instruction.

After retiring in 1963, he taught for another 14 years as the head of the post-graduate department of history at Dev Samaj College in Ferozepore, as an Honorary Professor. He then shifted to Delhi. "A hard taskmaster, Dr Gupta was for his students a paradigm of

while. 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 Keshgarh 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 Punjab 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 Sutlej 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 unsparring with his daughter, Chandan Gupta, who studied with us," recalls Professor Goswamy.

He never let his limitations become an impediment in the growth of those who sought his guidance. He even let a student of his do his Ph.D. in Art History, despite the fact that the subject was beyond his area of expertise, and even his ken of awareness.

"Get me the names of three experts who can judge whether an enquiry into your topic is worth-

tried to shed some light on this epoch... after continuous, persistent and strenuous labour of 10 years, during which time I have seldom observed any holiday entirely to myself.

"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 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.

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

As Sir Jogindra Singh wrote in 1943, he had, "the gift of summing up processes of the pictures of the past and revivifying 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, "Punjab 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.

This was then the great historian. 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.

History of the Sikhs (Five volumes)

Studies in the Later Mughal History of the Panjab

Punjab on the Eve of the first Sikh war.

Marathas and Panipat

Sir Jadunath Sarkar Commemorative Volumes

Life and Work of Mohan Lal Kashmiri

India Pakistan War, 1965



Khushwant Singh

imbalance in these killers as well but they are the ones who are often lauded as heroes because people regard them as righters of wrong. Such were Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Udhham Singh who went to the gallows to avenge the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh decades after it had taken place.

In what categories fall terrorists in Punjab, Kashmir, Assam and Tamil Nadu? It is a very difficult question to answer. The one common factor they have is a feeling that the State and Society has been unfair to them and their cry for justice remained unheeded.

This brings me to the boys shot by the police on April 7. One of them was Rajinder Singh Penta aged 18. His eldest brother Surjit Singh Penta, who had the blood of 17 innocent persons on his hands, committed suicide after he was nabbed in Operation Black Thunder. A second brother, Paramjit Penta, was killed in an encounter with the police at Jhalpur. Now

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-

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 Raghav 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 passionnel*.

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

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 Ratnas 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. Ramchandran 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 Manag-

ing 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 Bharata Ratna) and 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 a Padma Vibhushan but even a Padma Bhushan 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

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 inter-

In 1932 when he went to the Indian Military Academy (IMA) at Dehra Dun, among his batch-mates was none other than A.L.S. Dara, who after playing in the Berlin Olympics, rose to the dizzy heights by controlling the Pakistan Hockey Federation for a number of years.

After more than two and a half years at IMA, Gurmit Singh went to Malaya to fight for the British in World War II. He was captured as a prisoner of war.

As luck would have it, Gurmit managed to escape from the POW camp and reached Singapore where he took shelter in the

“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.

house of Mr Ishar Singh.

It was around the time when General Mohan Singh was trying to organise "Peace Asia Conference". Gurmit Singh, who held the rank of a Captain in the British Army, was among the first group to join Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army (INA).

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 along with some Italian POWs.

Sansarpur to teach the un-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

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 Narain 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

was selected.

He was the only Sikh in the team. The team on its way to Los Angeles played a series of matches, 15 to be precise, eight in India, two in Ceylon, one in Singapore and four in Japan.

In the Olympics, there were only two other teams. India beat Japan 11-1 and the USA 24-1, the highest score in the competitive hockey so far. The team, before it returned home after a seven-month around the world jaunt, played 20 more matches.

In the 37 matches, including two in Olympics, the Indian team scored 338 goals and conceded only 34. Maj Dhyan Chand, who led the team, was the highest scorer with an individual tally of 133 goals. He was followed by his brother, Rup Singh, who scored 94 goals.

Gurmit Singh was the third highest scorer with a tally of 55 goals. It took the Indian team more than a month to reach Los Angeles by ship. They travelled by train in the USA, Europe and in India.

The team which assembled in Delhi in May dispersed on October 16 at Lahore after playing its last match against Panjab University.

Gurmit Singh could not play for the country afterwards because he joined the Army.

He believed that present day Indian players lacked the will or determination to win, which players of his day had in abundance.

When Prince Charles visited St Stephen's College

A royal handshake

by Roopinder Singh

STEPHANIANS have a reputation of affecting a casual air. A visit to the college by Prince Charles was not going to change our humdrum existence. Or so it seemed.

The year was 1980. He was still counted as the most eligible bachelor in the world. H.E. The Prince of Wales was coming to St Stephen's College, Delhi, to present to our college a scroll on behalf of University of Cambridge, UK.

That year the college was celebrating its centenary and we had become blasé about celebrity visits. Of course, there was no question of admitting that a Royal visit was, after all, an exciting affair.

The usual preparations were being made by the college author-

of a packed auditorium by sprinkling his lecture with anecdotes. Commenting on the noisy demonstration, he said: "You know, it reminds me of the time I went to Scotland. At first, they dug up the football ground so that my helicopter couldn't land. When it did, they wouldn't let it take off."

After the function, he was introduced to the Secretaries of various college societies like the Shakespeare Society, the Philosophical Society, etc., and taken around the college campus.

I was standing next to a pretty young lady. I must confess that I was somewhat self-conscious since an injury on my big toe meant that I had to wear a big, conspicuous bandage. This resulted in my sporting a blazer and a tie as well as sandals. Quite a sight indeed!



Prince Charles in 1980.

ties for the function which was scheduled for November 25, 1980. If memory serves me right, there was also a bit of painting and sprucing up of the campus, but the students feigned a casual attitude.

As we went for breakfast to the college mess on the 25th, we saw a number of plainclothesmen wearing balaclavas and regulation brown shoes.

Instead of the usual crumpled kurta-pajamas, there were blazers galore on the breakfast table. A bit of a shock since the college authorities had not too long ago posted notices informing "gentlemen in residence" that bathroom slippers and vests were not to be worn inside the mess.

A glance outside the mess showed that most girls were decked up in sarees. The jeans and *kurta*s had been given a break and had probably been whisked away to the dhabas by the long-suffering wards.

Not everyone was pleased. A number of students from the college and Delhi University staged a rally outside the college to protest against his visit and the harassment of Indians by the British immigration department.

At last Prince Charles arrived. He managed to keep the attention

I shook hands with Prince Charles, exchanged a few polite words, and that was it. His attention was rivetted on the girl who was standing next to me. They spoke about Shakespearean plays and chatted for a while before the Prince moved on.

I don't quite know what impact she had on him, but as soon as he was out of sight (and I hope out of hearing) she screamed what seemed like: "Wow! He spoke to me! He actually spoke to me! He shook hands with me! Yippee!" It was quite a sight. I had always seen her as calm, poised, and quite in command of every situation.

Then there was tea with staff members. The excited girl had not regained her composure even then.

Whenever any of us teased her about the incident and asked her to shake with us the hand she shook with Prince Charles, she would bunch it up into a fist and tuck it inside her shawl.

Doubts were expressed about whether she would ever wash the hands that had been honoured with the royal touch.

But next morning she was her usual (old) self. So was life in college — the dull routine of classes, cafe and coffee.



The 1932 Indian Olympic team.

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 in-charge 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 magnifies of the hills dart noisily and flash their long tails to mock us static humans.

But we are glad to be static. Away from "shahari" 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 sojourn 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,"

which could often mean the local pub.

Tulsi's lot is the same. As her husband often does the vanishing trick she is the doer of many things. She is the keeper of the estate, the cowmilkmaid, mother, cook, cleaner, masseur to the "memsahib". She even buys atta from distant stores.

She is there all the time doing everything for her young, energetic, growing family. She provides love and whacks as the occasion demands, being whacked herself in turn by her husband when he does turn in.

She can only hope that the echo of her wails waft across the valley to sympathetic ears.

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 Chamba miniature. Carrying loads of grass on her head may reduce her capacity to think, but it keeps her back

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 *langoor* 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.

Pakistani Air Force

If a Pakistani were to write a book on India's Defence Services, an Indian reader would almost certainly raise his eyebrows and ask: "What is the big deal? Where did the fellow get his acts? Is this subtle propaganda?" And so on.

Those were my initial reactions in receiving *Fida'ya: Psyche of the Pakistan Air Force* by Pushinder Singh and Ravi Rikhye (illustrated by Peter Steinemann Society for Aerospace Studies). Who are these Indians pronouncing on Pakistan's Air Force? How much do they know? How unbiased are they?

My suspicions were set at rest. I scanned a few pages. Pushinder Singh's passion in life is aeroplanes, chiefly the fighting variety, and he has written a lot about them. The same is true of Ravi Rikhye who has specialised in Pakistani prowess on the field of battle.

They did not have access to classified material and did not ask proper to ask either the Pakistani or the Indian Air Force a help in compiling their material. Steinemann is a Swiss born Australian aerial photographer.

The authors have compared the performances of the two Air Forces in the 1965 and 1971 wars. They concede that in 1965 confrontation the Pakistani Air Force did better than ours.

In 1971 Indians more than settled their scores by crippling Pakistan in the air. The more important questions are what are their comparative strengths today and what will be the outcome of the fourth Indo-Pak War?

Numerically India has many more fighter planes and personnel than Pakistan. But Pakistan is training more fighter pilots than India. Pakistanis know they cannot match us in quantity and therefore concentrate on better quality and efficiency. They regard themselves equal, if not better, than the Israelis who are generally acknowledged to have the most proficient pilots in the world.

The book warns the Pakistanis against the danger of exaggerated self-esteem and the Indians against the danger of complacency born out of numerical superiority. They give us timely caution that in case of another war, which God forbid, we may be in for some nasty surprises.

The art of abuse

In the two years I lived in Paris, I was at the receiving end of a lot of abuse from car drivers. When on the road, the French are always in a desperate hurry to get some place where they have nothing to do but drink and gossip.

I am a very slow driver. That irked them to explode verbally. I was surprised to note their limited vocabulary of abuse. It was usually aimed at my beard: "get on *grand-père*" (grandfather), or "*Chameau*" — camel!

I could get more than even with my Punjabi "*teyree naan dee! teyree bhainee 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), *harām-saada* (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

armpits 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.

Strong language does not necessarily add punch to abuse; it has to be so subtle that the recipient has to work out its double meaning e.g. "May you become famous; they should name a disease after you!"

Aman who has Doctorate on Cursology observes that bad language is by no means a monopoly of the uneducated lower classes. Nations and races that have suffered most without having the means to give it for fat on the field of battle make up by inventing new formulas to curse their persecutors.

Since the Jews have centuries of suffering behind them, they are equipped with the most venomous tongues to fight their battles e.g. "May your bones be broken more often than the Ten Commandments!" or "May you inherit

a shipload full of gold and it should not pay for your doctors' bills!"

The trouble with such long imprecations is that by the time you finish uttering them, the intended recipient may be out of earshot.

Maledicta also points out ethnic differences in abuse. The Mongloid races who have little hair and therefore less body odour direct their abuses to hiruteness and smell of sweat.

The Latins use sexual terminology; the Germans have anal fixation; the English break religious taboos; the commonest being dam, bloody, blast, hell and gorbimey.

Australians who are descended from English convicts whose ancestors were Cockneys make the upper class English as their favourite targets. When they talk of the English, the usual epithet is "Pommy bastard".

It has been rightly observed that swearing is the poetry of the exploited class. The Australians were exploited by English colonists.

The genteel have their brand of gentle abuse as when referring to the old and senile they talk of them as senior citizens, old age as the golden years, etc., when they really mean "You putrefying old corpse".



THIS ABOVE ALL...

Khushwant Singh

Blasphemy and sexual obscenity lack subtlety of the kind common in Yiddish: "May your tapeworms develop constipation! May they circumscribe your son and throw away the wrong piece!"

Collector Sahib recollects

I am not enamoured of my memories of Civil Servants. But Y.D. Gundevia's *In The Districts of The Raj* (Disha Books — Orient Longmans) is an exception because it makes very pleasant reading.

It is about Gundevia's 15 years (1930-45) in the I.C.S. in different districts of Uttar Pradesh before he joined the Foreign Service to serve in Burma, Moscow, Switzerland, London and Sri Lanka.

He ended his career as Foreign

Secretary and Secretary to President Radhakrishnan. Gundevia died of cancer in 1986.

Gundevia enjoyed himself hugely wherever he was posted. After a day's work in office or touring villages he played tennis and billiards.

He and his wife became keen shikaris and environmentalists. They shot tigers, panthers and speared wild boar. They made close friends with their English and Indian colleagues.

Gundevia, who had not enjoyed his student days in London because of English boys reluctance to befriend coloured people had no problem with them in India.

He was one of the very few Indians in the I.C.S. who always wore khadi. Gundevia's descriptions of the UP jungles, rivers in

spate, tensions in villages following murders and attempts at *Sati* stay in the reader's mind for many days. He can also be witty — as the following passage shows:

"I am tempted to tell another tale. We had bought from Robinson a pair of beautiful Rhode Island Reds at an enormous price: four rupees for the pair. The cock whom we called, Frank, was almost the size of a turkey. He could pick up crumbs from a breakfast table in our camp by merely straining his neck. Frank and his lady, Linda, travelled with us from camp to camp in a special box made for them for the purpose. Almost every morning Linda would lay a lovely egg for us, but she made it a point of laying her egg only on the *rezai* or eiderdown, on my stenographer's bed, in his *chholdari* or tent. Subramaniam, the stenographer, who spelt his name the real Dravidian way as Yes-Yu-Bi-Yar-Yeh — Yem-Yeh-Yen-Ai-Yeh-Yem, was a good orthodox Brahmin. Linda always made it a point of laying her blessed egg, much to Subramaniam's disgust, after he had his morning bath. Subramaniam was always late coming to me in morning because he had to have a bath yet again, after he had found the 'yeg' in his *rezai*."

Hindustan-Tibet Road

Scenic, romantic & deadly

by H. Kishie Singh

It 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

This 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 Gumpa in India.

A non-descript mud house is the entrance to this treasure house of Buddhist culture, history and religion. Tabo Gumpa 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 Dhankar, once the capital of Spiti which has another magnificent Gumpa and important to the Buddhists. Further along the road is Kaza, the district headquarters. The drive is at all times exciting, exhilarating and awe-some.

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 Gumpa 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 Gumpa

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 Namgyce, 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 mule track 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 daring 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 fustilade 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 HPTDC has an excellent hotel for the brave of heart. A most heartening aspect of the Hotel Srihand is that the architect has tried to maintain some harmony with the other buildings in the area. The most important being the Bhimakali Temple.



Hotel Srihand: harmonious architecture — photos by H. Kishie Singh

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

Suba and getting the post of Deputy Speaker as a reward.

Hukam Singh's defenders, however, maintain that he had consulted Master Tara Singh before accepting the post of Deputy Speaker, that the matter was even brought before the general house of the Akali Dal where no one opposed it and that he had accepted the post while being a member of the Opposition. Also, as Pratap Singh points out in *Biography S. Hukam Singh*: "The day when the bargain was allegedly struck, Hukam Singh was in Rohtak jail with Baba Harkishan Singh."

The charge did, however, hurt deeply. Pratap Singh narrates a poignant incident of how Hukam Singh, soon before he died, said that God was his only witness but that he was clear in his conscience that he had never betrayed the Sikh cause. "After saying so, Sardar Sahib was a bit emotional. Tears rolled down his cheeks. I tried to console him but he wept like a child," recalls Pratap

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 Kendri 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 Jagatjit 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."

On seeing him from a distance, the Maharaja enquired of his Prime Minister, Mr L.R. Sikand, as to who he was. Sikand guessed that he was probably the candidate recommended by Master Tara Singh who had come for an interview for a seat on the bench.

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

TAKEING alcoholic beverages is on the rise, especially in India. From the lowliest peasant to the upper crust it is consumed regularly. In fact, whenever and wherever prohibition has been introduced, it has inevitably led to illicit distillation or moonshine as it is known in the USA.

The word alcohol is derived from the Arabic *al-kohl*, "al" being "the" and "kohl" being powdered antimony or any fine powder. In Asian countries "kohl" powder was used for painting eyebrows.

The word alcohol is popularly used for one particular form of alcohol - ethyl alcohol or ethanol. It has other names such as spirits of wine, eau de vie, aqua vitae, idogne spirits, grain alcohol, ethyl alcohol, methyl carbinol, spirits and just plain liquor. Fermentation of fruit juices and other carbohydrate-containing liquids was known to the ancients in the form of wine, beer and mead.

In Vedic India, Soma was

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 in other books.

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 imbued at Vedic rituals.

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

dinner. The word whisky is derived from the Celtic *uisque-beatha* meaning water of life.

The British, at home, drink whisky in the proportion of one-third of whisky to two-thirds of water at room temperature. When the British took whisky to their tropical colonies, they made it of a long drink to be taken before dinner. It was known as a sundowner as it was taken at sunset. You could have a *chhota* peg or a *burra* peg topped up with ice and soda or ice and water. We must not forget the Patiala peg which is the strongest of them all.

The distillation of an alcoholic beverages from fermented liquors became common in Europe only during the 16th and 17th centuries. In the grape

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

Whisky may be classified according to its geographical origins - Scotch, Irish, American, Indian (IMFL) and others.

The Scotch malt whiskies fall into four main types - the Highland malts, the most popular as they have a full flavour as a result of the malt having been cured over peat fires, the Lowland malts of the south of Scotland, those produced in Islay (used mostly for blending) and those produced in Campbeltown which are similar to the Islays.

The principal ingredient in Scotch whisky is malted barley. In Irish whisky the ingredients

are malted and unmalted barley, oats, wheat and rye. The process of production in Scotland and Ireland is roughly the same though the Irish use much larger potstill, a pot still having a capacity of as much as 20,000 gallons or 9,000 litres.

The Americans make and drink rye whisky made from fermented rye grain, bourbon whisky made from corn grain, wheat whisky made from wheat grain and rye malt whisky made from malted rye grain.

The American drink whisky "on the rocks" - that is neat whisky poured over cubes of ice.

During the past century and a half whisky has been blended - even Scotch whisky - and practically no unblended whisky is sold. This practice ensures both a standard flavour and a cheap mild flavoured spirit to meet popular demand.

Whisky has to be matured to remove the harshness of new spirit.

There is no need to decant whisky as it is best served straight from the bottle.

Poot denotes the standard of strength of distilled alcoholic liquors. For distillation, ancient

forms of stills were used all over the world - Tibet, Peru, Tahiti, the British Isles, Europe, India, etc.

The purpose of some of these stills was to make potable water from salt water where no fresh water was available.

Though patent stills are now widely used, simple pot stills are even now used for making whisky in Ireland and Scotland and brandy in France.

The process of making liquor involves mashing, fermentation and distillation.

The British are now discarding whisky in favour of wine. There are wine bars in addition to the traditional pubs. People throw wine parties for which each guest is expected to bring a bottle of wine. They are even drinking Indian wine. For example, Omar Khayyam, an Indian champagne, has become very popular abroad.

To be concluded





During the Morch for Gandhi cap in Dera Baba Ghazi Khan Jail.

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 he see 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 Punjab 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."

In February, 1922, Lala Lajpat

by Roopinder Singh

The uncrowned king

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."

Hai; 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 Morch 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 Jail, 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.

Led by the Baba, the prisoners 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.

The enraged British authorities

While in jail, he was offered various inducements to change his stance and start wearing clothes. The British even tried the famous "divide and rule" tactics by allowing the wearing of the turbans, not Gandhi caps.

The Baba remained unfazed and unmoved. His sentence was increased several times for defying the ban. He was even incarcerated in the "condemned cell" where those who have been awarded the death sentence are kept, but he refused to bend or compromise.

An iron will and firm convictions marked out Baba Kharak Singh from the rest. While the Congress party accepted Dominion status as a first step towards the achievement of Independence in 1929, this man refused to compromise.

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 a 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

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.

not much improved as it should have under the national government. Our Prime Minister (Mr Nehru) is truly a great man worthy of the position that he holds, but I regret to observe that most of the things that he intends to do for the country's good and many a declaration of policy he makes are not fully implemented by those who are doing the day-to-day administration.

"Black marketing, corruption, jobbery (fraudulent official transactions), and several other vices

are rampant both in the administration as well as outside. I am afraid that if drastic steps are not taken immediately and if nothing substantial is done effectively to stem this vicious tide, our hard-won freedom will be of little use."

Baba Kharak Singh was describing the Indian scene of four decades ago. His advice still holds good, but just as it did not have much effect on those who were eulogising him then, it will have little impact on those who are in power now.



The Nihang Singh Babaji on Baba Kharak Singh Marg.

Photo by Roopinder Singh



Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru presenting Baba Kharak Singh with a silver replica of the National Flag at a public function held on June 6, 1949, to commemorate his birthday.

YES, why not another faith or a figment of imagination called Toyism. As it is, there is a wilderness of faiths, sects, ideologies and isms.

Man as an ingenious creature can devise toys for his mind and hands; whether these be in the realm of thought or three-dimensional solid realities. For each age, man has toys to fiddle with until he himself fiddles out of life.

Shakespeare compared world to a stage and divided the age of man into seven different ages. Of course, as an infant, being the first age, man cannot be pleased with anything less than a toy; whether it be a doll or a rattle that he can hold and shake it too make quite an assortment of sounds.

I do recall how about that age we used to fashion our own version of toys like the clay cart made of mud with a flat base, four wheels and two spokes. These clay carts have not changed in shape and functioning very much from the Mohenjodaro clay carts fashioned by children more than 5000 years back.

Then as school boys, we could make our own bows, arrows and catapults. These were made from the local material except for the rubber for catapults which mostly came from discarded cycle tubes.

Even games like the ball and the hockey stick were the products of local material that is

Of toys and toyism

by Man Mohan Singh

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 about this stage are "mistress's eyebrow" or for that matter toying with emotions of a myriad kinds like writing letters, long and tired filling with conventional cliches like "crying a river" in despair.

As bucking and strapped soldiers men in this age shift to medals and honours in the battlefield. 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 chests 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 defence of his convictions as well as in offence against hostile faiths and isms. This is when the mind rattles with ideas and passions, political or economic, religious or secular.

Later as one grows old, one finds vigour and passion, energy and enthusiasm ebbing away. What else is there to play with

except one's spectacles or maybe with one's artificial denture.

It is then that memories haunt one like the airy, ethereal, non-touchable toys. The best part of life is gone and maybe the best is not yet to be.

The last scene of all, to revert to Shakespeare, is the old age which he describes as the phase of "second childishness". With all the five senses weakening, one yet has toys to fiddle with. These are grandchildren in the second childishness.



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 childishness 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."

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.

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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 Ranveet 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, Apsara Utsavs 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 playing 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



superfluous. Sharif calls himself a **Suñ dhadi**. He distinguishes himself from the Sikh **dhadis** who

*Tu hai sharaa da pujari
eh hai ishq bimari
rahve vaaste mein tere aagey 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."

confine themselves to the religious sphere. Unlike them, his repertoire ranges from singing "Baba



Sharif Idu with Sonia and Rajiv Gandhi.

and earned his livelihood in Chandigarh by playing 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

Nanak da jass" to Heer and family planning songs.

Singing Heer — Hazura Singh's version, not Waris Shah's — he portrays Heer's entreaties to the Qazi poignantly:

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SIX MONTHS ENDED ON 30.9.91	CORRESPONDING SIX MONTHS IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR	PREVIOUS YEAR ENDED 31.3.91 (AUDITED)	
1. Net Sales	8221	5875	12011
2. Other Income	258	186	418
3. Total expenditure	6784	5080	10229
4. Interest	373	178	353
5. Gross Profit after interest but before depreciation	1322	803	1847
6. Depreciation	290	204	399
7. Provision for Taxation	350	150	456
8. Net Profit	682	449	992
9. Earning per share (EPS) (in Rs.) (Annualised)	44.90	29.56	32.66
10. Paid up Equity Capital	304	304	304
11. Reserves			4191

NOTES:
1. Figures of half year ending 30.9.91 also include working of its new Spinning unit at Baddi which commenced partial production in March, 1991.
2. This statement has been placed before the board at its meeting held on 5th December, 1991.

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

Jatin's collection

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 from the Writers Workshop way back in 1972.



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 twinkling-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.

Talking about his working pattern, he once told me: "Usually, I like working on a single figure. During the last 10 years, now and then, two figures together have periodically emerged unintentionally. Recently I became conscious of it as a series. I suppose I have become personally more and more concerned about human relationships, especially man-woman predicaments, as they are

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.

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.

Mystery of mathematics—VIII

Units & dimensions

A POINT has no length, width and height. A line has length. Square 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 fly 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.



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 out-

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.

being confined to the plane.

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
999999x999999=999998000001

Amar, Akbar, Anthony

There are three men, Amar, Akbar and Anthony, each of whom is engaged in two occupations. Each one has two of the following occupations: driver, advocate, poet, painter, gardener, and barber.

From the following facts find in what two occupations each man is engaged:

1. The driver offended the poet by laughing at its 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.

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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 Ghanaiya 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 Sewa 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

Guru Gobind Singh. 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 Henry Dunant."

Members of the mission met the 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 Ghanaiya 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.

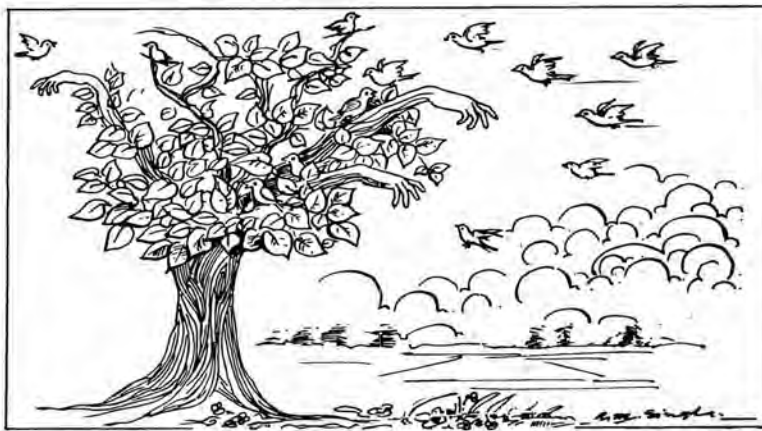
The concept of sustainable development (development without destruction) gained momentum following Stockholm conference in 1972. The Government of Sing-

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, warringin, 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-



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

Eco-notes by S.K. Sharma

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 pigeon, 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, mynabs 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 Leisure 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.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਬੁਰੇ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਸਾ ਮਨਿ ਨ ਹਰਾਇ ॥
ਦੇਹੀ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਲਗਾਈ ਪਲੈ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਾਇ ॥

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 Bishma 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 the 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 HANDAE, all the sufferings of the world and mutual animosity will come to an end and there will be, all around, 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 Sheikh 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 Sheikh 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 Gurmurb 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 pro-

claiming 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 "Flat Iron Building," the first skyscraper in the city of skyscrapers.

Most of the males don western attires, 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).

Floats bearing the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and a to-the-scale replica of the Harmandir 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 Harmandir 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 gidda 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 Harmandir Sahib on the Baisakhi and Diwali days, centuries ago, here also on

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.

Breed and perish

REMEMBER the days we used to sing Hindi ham chhaalees 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 chaurasae 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



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-

There is a lot more to Goa than sea beaches and feni. 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 of it than we do today. As it is, it has evolved a colonialism of its own. In everyone of its five star hotels,



THIS ABOVE ALL...

Khushwant Singh

ortion of Catholics) have shown better results than less literate Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. We simply cannot afford to breed at this rate and time has come to impose family planning norms on people who remain criminally irresponsible towards the welfare of our future generations. We should do it in a purely democratic manner by passing laws to curb the number of children a couple can have: two and no more. If Parliament is unwilling or unable to introduce such legislation, there is nothing to stop state legislatures taking the lead. Perhaps Kerala and Goa will show us the way and Chief Ministers like Laloo Prasad Yadav, father of nine children, to follow their example.

I am not convinced that more than half of us can now read and write. If the test is the ability to sign one's name it is a gross exaggeration to describe one who can do

over 90 per cent of the clientele is European, American or Japanese. 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 Mangesh, 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

Listeners will also hear the first of a special series of stories from the classic book of anecdotes "Hitopadesh".

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