

Murder of NRI's mother solved, three arrested

Amarjit Kaur of Pedhan village was killed on Nov 21

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, DECEMBER 7 Solving sixth murder in three months, Patiala SSP Harcharan Singh Bhullar today claimed to have solved the murder of a woman who was done to death by her farmland tenant and his accomplices.

Addressing a press conference Bhullar said that their team cracked the murder of Amarjit Kaur at Pedhan village who was murdered on November 21. The three accused Gorakh Nath, alias Gora, Dimple Kumar, a resident of Pedhan village, and Pushpinderpal, a resident of Shamla village in Nabha, have been arrested.

A team comprising SP Investigation Dr Mehtab Singh, and CIA in-charge Shaminder Singh investigated the matter following which the three accused were arrested.

Giving further details of the incident, Bhullar said that on November 25 Harpreet, a resident of Pedhan village in Bhadson, who was residing in Canada since 2005 had filed a complaint stating that his mother Amarjit Kaur's death was reported on November 21. "After he reached the Pedhan village, he saw his mother's head injuries and demanded a postmortem. According to the postmortem, Amarjit Kaur was found to have seven head injuries following which a case pertaining to murder was



Two accused in the custody of the Patiala police on Tuesday.

registered against unknown persons", said Bhullar.

Initially Gorakh Nath (who used to plow the land of the deceased on contract basis) alleged that Amarjit Kaur's death was due to a head fall while fixing curtains. "Thorough investigation revealed that Amarjit Kaur was living alone in her house at Pedhan village. Her husband Baljinder Singh died in 2016 while Harpreet Singh was in Canada with his family since 2005", said Shaminder Singh. "Gorakh Nath had taken 21 acres of land on contract and

visited Amarjit Kaur's house frequently. He stole Amarjit Kaur's ATM card and had allegedly withdrawn around Rs 2.5 lakh from this ATM and knew that Amarjit Kaur would somehow trace them", said the SSP.

"Gorakh Nath along with his nephew Dimple Kumar and son-in-law Pushpinderpal killed Amarjit Kaur and burnt the bed sheets and other items with blood stains to destroy any evidence. Their further grilling will reveal the missing cash and the weapon used in the crime", said the police.

Bank staff stage protest against privatisation

PATIALA, DECEMBER 7

The United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), an umbrella body of nine unions, at its virtual meeting held on November 29 and 30 has called for two-day nationwide strike from December 16, opposing the move of the Central Government to privatise Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and resist the move of introduction and passage of the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021, in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament.

In a demonstration held today at Leela Bhawan Complex, SK Gautam, joint secretary, All India Bank Employees Association (AIBE), said that for the past 25 years, from the banner of UFBU we have been opposing the policies of banking reforms which are aimed at weakening PSBs. He said in February this year, when the government announced in the Budget that two PSBs would be privatised in addition to IDBI Bank, UFBU immediately met and gave the call for strike on March 15 and 16 which was a massive success due to the enlarged participation of bank employees and officers.

Yadvinder Gupta, president, SBIEU, Chandigarh Circle, said, "On the day of introduction of Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, there will be a demonstration before Parliament by the UFBU leaders, submission of online petition to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 14 and press meets in all state capitals on December 15 on the issue." — TNS

Passengers suffer as roadways contractual staff go on strike

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, DECEMBER 7

Commuters to neighbouring cities and states were left stranded as contractual staff of the PRTC and the Punjab Roadways began an indefinite protest over their demand of regularisation of jobs today. Over 3,300 contractual workers, including drivers, workshop workers and clerical staff, remained off the jobs. The workers said the announcement of the strike was made after the matter had earlier been raised with the Transport Minister.

They said, "The state government had given us assurances that our matter will be taken-up in the first Cabinet meeting led by Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi."

Harkesh Vikki, president of the contractual workers' union, said the workers associated with the PRTC and Punjab Roadways shut all work for the day. "We have decided not to get back to jobs in the wake of the state government's failure to regularise our services. We have met them numerous times but have only received assurances as the matter has not even been discussed in two Cabinet meetings yet," Harkesh said.

He said the workers held a strike throughout the state. Only five per cent buses driven by regular drivers of the



Employees of the PRTC and the Punjab Roadways stage a protest at bus stand; and (below) stranded passengers in Patiala on Tuesday. TRIBUNE PHOTOS: RAJESH SACHAR

PRTC and Punjab Roadways plied on the roads. "This includes more than 200 buses that run from Patiala bus stand remained off the roads. The PRTC which makes around Rs 1.75 crore daily in turnover has already suffered a loss of Rs 1.50 lakh with the day's protest. All long route buses, including those going to Jammu, Delhi, Haryana and plying on other routes were off road," he said.

Commuters remained stranded on city and state highways. They were forced to turn to private vehicles, which were more costly. Workers said thousands of commuters travel by buses from Patiala city alone.



Harpreet Kaur Babla, wife of Davinder Singh Babla and Congress candidate from Ward No. 10, campaigns in Sector 29, Chandigarh, on Tuesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: RAVI KUMAR

Focus on issues related to city: Cong coordinator



CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 7

Rajendra Rana, Congress coordinator for the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation elections, asked 35 candidates to focus more on issues related to city rather than criticism only. He gave tips to the candidates to give impetus to his campaign with full vigour at the Sector 35 party office today. Abhishek Dutt, second election coordinator, Congress president Subhash Chawla and others were also present. Poll strategy was also finalised in the meeting. Both election coordinators also gave victory mantras to the candidates.

In the meeting, Rana said during the tenure of the BJP, Chandigarh had slipped from the first three places to 66th

place in the cleanliness rankings, which was a matter of concern. "Increasing prices of petrol, diesel and LPG are taking a toll on the common man. During the BJP rule, house tax, electricity bill, water bill and other taxes were continuously increased," he said.

Cong candidate meets former Haryana CM

Congress candidate from Ward No. 2 Harmohinder Singh Lucky on Tuesday met former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda and sought his blessings and support. Hooda assured Lucky of his support and promised to campaign for the party in the MC elections. He said the BJP had failed everywhere, be it Chandigarh or Haryana. Hooda appealed to city voters to defeat the BJP in the forthcoming elections. — TNS

Students protest Nagaland killings

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, DECEMBER 7

Students of Punjabi University held a protest on the university campus over the killing of civilians during an anti-insurgency operation in Nagaland. Students alleged that religious minorities were being targeted in the country.

Students associated with the Punjab Radical Students' Union said they organised the protest on the anniversary of demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Rashpinder Singh Jimmi of the union said the Babri Masjid was demolished in 1992 by right wing parties.

He said, "Right wing parties are targeting minorities, including Muslims, Chris-



Punjabi University students hold a protest against the Nagaland killings, in Patiala on Tuesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: RAJESH SACHAR

tians and Sikhs. Even Kashmiri and Naga people are also being targeted in the same manner. The killing of civilians in Nagaland is also an

example of the same. The right wing parties are playing religious card and are also working for big corporate houses."

NHM workers intensify agitation after union call

OUR CORRESPONDENT

FATEHGARH SAHIB, DEC 7

On a call of the state union, the striking health workers working under the National Health Mission (NHM) intensified their protest in support of their demand to regularise their services. They took out a protest march and disrupted the traffic on Sirhind-Chandigarh road causing great inconvenience to commuters. They raised slogans against the government and burnt an effigy of the state government.

Addressing the protesters, union district president Harpal Singh said they had

been serving the department for more than 14 years, but their services had not been regularised. Moreover, they were getting low salaries. He said neighbouring states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu had changed the rules and regularised the services of NHM workers.

He said during the Covid-19 epidemic they performed their services with complete fidelity and many workers died during that period. He demanded that before regularisation, they should be given full salary and other facilities on the lines of regular employees.

NGO wins award for child welfare

PATIALA, DECEMBER 7

A local NGO, Society for Welfare of the Handicapped, has been awarded by President Ram Nath Kovind for providing services in childcare and education of special children. District officials said it was a laudable effort by the NGO that it registered its name among the top NGOs working for needs of special children.

Gurbhajan Singh Gill of the NGO received the award on December 3 along with a cash prize of Rs 2 lakh. He said the NGO had been awarded by the President in 2015 as well. Gill said, "The society came into existence in 1967. Four organisations are working under the society's umbrella in which over 400 students are being provided special care and education." — TNS

Friends turn rivals on civic body poll pitch

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SAD president, said, "He is an outsider in our ward. He lives in Sector 29. If he is elected, people will have to go there for even small works such as getting his signature." Replying to him, Shakti, said, "How small Chandigarh is? And according to his analogy, other than him, everyone is outsider in his ward. We do not believe in 'insider' and 'outsider' talks. We will talk on development and vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

The BJP leader also criticised his party's ex-alliance leader. "For the past 15 years, his (Hard-eep) family has been ruling in this ward. People say he is unapproachable and no development has happened during his tenure. We will ensure all works are carried out."

Shakti, who is the sitting councillor from another ward (Sector 29, Industrial Area-I), which has been reserved for a woman candidate now, has been fielded from ward number 30 (Sectors 41, Badheri and Buterla) by the party.

CBI court frames charges against 5 accused

₹9-CRORE BANK FRAUD

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 7

Inderjeet Singh, Special Judicial Magistrate, CBI, Chandigarh, has framed charges against five accused in an alleged ₹9-crore fraud case with Canara Bank.

The charges have been framed against Vikas Walia, Vernika Walia, Anil Kumar, Ashwani Kumar and Ved Parkash Gupta for the commission of offence punishable under Section 120-B read with Sections 420, 467, 468 and 471. The accused pleaded not guilty and claimed trial.

Meanwhile, the CBI court has deferred the

hearing in the case for December 10 for framing of charges against the remaining accused - Vishal Mehta, Madhu Verma and Shobhit Verma.

The CBI had registered an FIR on the basis of a complaint filed by the General Manager, Canara Bank, Chandigarh, on December 27, 2018, in the alleged fraud case.

It was alleged in the chargesheet that Vikas Walia and Vernika Walia approached Canara Bank for loan facility concealing facts. The bank considered the request and sanctioned cash credit limit facility to the extent of ₹15 crore in 2014.

During investigation, the CBI found that the accused

had misused the loan amount disbursing its 50 per cent among sister companies. It was alleged their only intention was to defraud the bank and misappropriate the funds. The accused did not use the credit facility for business-related purposes. The facility was misused by them for transferring the amount into their own sister concern.

The CBI alleged that the act of defrauding was done by them at the time of availing of credit facility allegedly in connivance of the valuer, who managed to show the inflated valuation of the properties offered as collateral security to the complainant bank.

While opposing the discharge applications of the

two accused, Narender Singh, public prosecutor of the CBI, argued that the documentary evidence reflects that the beneficiary accounts were opened by these accused. A huge amount was transferred into the accounts opened by the accused from the account opened by accused Vikas Walia. These facts reflect the criminal conspiracy of the accused to cheat the bank.

The court said at this stage of framing of charges it was only required to take into consideration whether a prima facie case was made out or not on the basis of the material produced before the court by the prosecution/ investigating agency.



Five arrested for firing outside club in UT

Chandigarh: Virender Singh and four unknown persons manhandled Tamzara Club members in the Industrial Area here and fired gunshots on the night of December 5. Later, the suspects - Virender (36), a resident of Sector 7, Panchkula; Virender Mahrishi (33) and Rajat Sukuja (23), residents of Ambala; Jai Deep Rana (24), a resident of Yamunanagar; and Aman Rana (23), a resident of Ambala, were arrested. On a complaint of Tamzara Club assistant manager Pinkal, a case under Sections 307, 336, 323, 147, 148, 149 and 506 of the IPC and Sections 25, 27, 54 and 59 of the Arms Act has been registered at the Industrial Area police station. TNS

1 arrested for bid to snatch mobile phone

Chandigarh: The police arrested Virender, alias Golu, a resident of Sector 28, while snatching a mobile phone from a girl near a park in Sector 26 on Monday. A case under Sections 379A and 511 of the IPC has been registered at the Sector 26 police station. TNS

Guv urges people to follow legacy of Guru Teg Bahadur

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 7

Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Banwarilal Purohit exhorted people to follow the ideals of secularism, humanism, compassion, tolerance and the spirit of self-sacrifice as preached and practiced by Hindi-Ki-

Chadar, Guru Teg Bahadur. Paying tributes to the ninth Guru on the eve of his martyrdom day, the Punjab Governor, in a message, said Guru Teg Bahadur undertook the supreme sacrifice for the protection of the most fundamental of human rights. His Shaheedi Diwas was a solemn occasion to

perpetuate the ethos of peace, harmony and national integration as propagated by Guru Teg Bahadur.

Purohit said: "Guru Teg Bahadur's saga of supreme sacrifice is not only unique but also unparalleled in the history of mankind that symbolised the crusade against

tyranny and oppression".

The Governor said: "Let us observe this day with fervour, rededicate ourselves to serve society and let us stand up for ourselves and mankind and spread the message of peace and universal brotherhood. This will be a real homage to Guru Teg Bahadur".