

PUNJAB

JANUARY - 2025

ADVANCE

TOWARDS 2025



ਇਨਕਲਾਬ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾਬਾਦ
ਸ਼ਹੀਦ-ਏ-ਆਜ਼ਮ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ
(1907-1931)

RANGLA PUNJAB

THE CANVAS OF HOPE, PAINTED WITH BRUSHSTROKES OF VISION



Parkash Purb of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji
(6 January)



Punjab Government

led by

Chief Minister

BHAGWANT SINGH MANN

greet^s one and all
on the joyous festival of

Christmas



Join Chief Minister
Bhagwant Singh Mann's
official WhatsApp channel



Punjab Advance

Contact:

Room No. 1, 5th Floor, Punjab Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh-160001

Phone Number: 0172-2740668,

Email Id: punmedia2018@gmail.com

C.E.O.	-	Vimal Kumar Setia (IAS)
Deputy Director	-	Manvinder Singh
Editor	-	Dr. Sukriti Bahuguna
Content Writer	-	Sandeep Kaur
Designer	-	Karan Kumar
Publisher	-	Information & Public Relations Department, Punjab

Disclaimer: The views expressed by the authors in the articles published in PUNJAB ADVANCE are their own. They do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Punjab Government or the organization they work for. Editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or expand the articles submitted. In case of any dispute, legal jurisdiction will lie in Chandigarh based courts. Published and Edited by Mr. Vimal Kumar Setia (IAS) on behalf of the Information and Public Relations Department, Punjab at Room No. 1, 5th Floor, Civil Sectt., Chandigarh.

JANUARY - 2025

Issue - 12 Volume - 1

ipr.punjab.gov.in

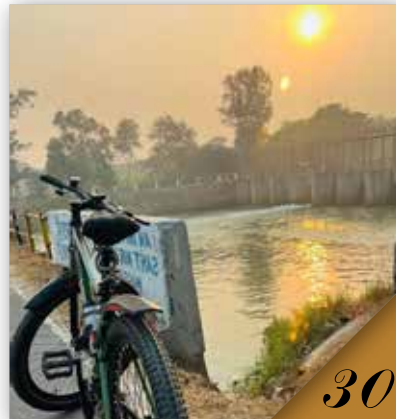
Punjab Advance



PUNJAB VISION 2025: A BEACON OF PROGRESS, GROWTH, AND PROSPERITY



TRANSFORMING PUNJAB: HEALTH AND EDUCATION TAKE CENTER STAGE



THE TRANSFORMATIVE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CYCLING



LINKEDIN: YOUR DIGITAL PASSPORT TO CAREER SUCCESS

- 12 Nishan-e-Inqilab: A Tribute to the Spirit of Revolution
- 15 Punjab Becomes Trailblazer in Sports Governance with Landmark Sports Promotion Act
- 16 Punjab’s Education Revolution: From Finland with Lessons for the Future
- 18 Punjab Leads the Nation in Honoring Armed Forces Heroes with Historic Initiatives
- 19 Abohar Transformed: CM Mann Dedicates Rs. 119.16 Crore Water and Sewerage Projects
- 20 Punjab Leads the Way: Massive Recruitment Drive and Welfare Boost for Persons with Disabilities
- 21 Punjab’s Investment Boom: `86,000 Crore and Counting Under CM Mann’s Leadership
- 22 Empowering Dreams: Punjab’s Commitment to SC Students’ Education
- 24 Punjab’s Tourism Renaissance: First Boutique Hotel, Heritage Celebrations, and More
- 28 Manifest Your Dreams: Unlocking the Power of Positive Intentions
- 34 Carved in Tradition: The Timeless Art of Woodcraft in Punjab
- 37 The Spark of Lohri: A Tale of Hope and Perseverance
- 38 Coffee: The Magic Drink That Fuels Creativity, Connection, and Culture
- 40 Rising with the Republic: Charting India’s Growth and Development
- 42 Winter’s Wellness Plate: Superfoods to Keep You Warm and Healthy
- 44 Embracing New Hopes and Infinite Possibilities in the New Year
- 50 This, Too, Will Pass



PUNJAB VISION 2025

A BEACON OF PROGRESS, GROWTH, AND PROSPERITY

Dr. Sukriti Bahuguna

As Punjab strides confidently toward 2025, the state's development narrative is a testimony to its commitment to holistic growth and citizen welfare. The year 2024 was pivotal, with the Punjab government laying the groundwork for transformative changes across key sectors, including healthcare, education, employment,

and infrastructure.

Healthcare Revolution: Towards a Healthier Punjab

The Punjab government has prioritized accessible and quality healthcare as a cornerstone of its development agenda. From bolstering infrastructure to integrating



technology, 2024 witnessed sweeping reforms in the state's healthcare landscape.

State-of-the-Art Medical Infrastructure

Punjab embarked on a mission to improve its healthcare infrastructure by initiating the construction of five new medical colleges in strategic locations, including Sangrur, Hoshiarpur, and Malerkotla. These institutions aim to address the shortage of healthcare professionals, particularly in rural areas, and are expected to add over 1,000 MBBS seats by 2025.

Additionally, the establishment of specialized cancer care units in collaboration with renowned institutions like Tata Memorial Hospital has strengthened Punjab's fight against life-threatening diseases. New district hospitals were also equipped with cutting-edge diagnostic tools to enhance early detection and treatment.

AI-Driven Healthcare Initiatives

Punjab became a trailblazer in adopting artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare. A groundbreaking pilot project launched in ten districts leveraged AI for tuberculosis detection via chest X-rays, significantly

improving diagnostic accuracy and efficiency. Plans are underway to expand this technology to cover other ailments such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Affordable Healthcare for All

The "Sarbat Sehat Bima Yojana," Punjab's flagship health insurance scheme, was expanded to include an additional 1.5 million families in 2024. This step has enabled access to cashless treatment for over 85% of the state's population. 881 "Aam Aadmi Clinics" are, providing free consultations and medicines to economically weaker sections.

Education Transformation: Empowering the Next Generation

Education remains the bedrock of Punjab's Vision 2024. In 2024, the government launched multiple initiatives to revolutionize the education system, focusing on inclusivity, digital learning, and skill development.

Schools of Eminence

The much-anticipated Schools of Eminence initiative took off in 2024, transforming 118 government schools into centers of excellence. These schools now boast smart classrooms,



upgraded labs, and mentorship programs to foster holistic development among students.

Skill-Based Education

Recognizing the importance of employability, the Punjab government partnered with global tech giants to introduce skill-based programs in government schools and colleges. Over 200,000 students enrolled in courses related to artificial intelligence, robotics, and coding. These programs aim to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements.

Inclusive Education

Punjab took a giant leap toward inclusivity by establishing the first-of-its-kind transgender schools in Ludhiana and Amritsar. These institutions offer tailored curricula and vocational training, ensuring that education is accessible to all, irrespective of gender identity.

Free Digital Access

The state distributed 1 million tablets to students from underprivileged backgrounds and set up 5,000 free Wi-Fi zones near schools and colleges. This initiative aims to bridge the digital divide and empower students with seamless access to online resources.

Employment Opportunities: Bridging Dreams with Reality

Creating jobs and fostering entrepreneurship have been integral to Punjab's developmental blueprint. In 2024, the government unveiled various schemes and programs aimed at boosting employment across sectors.

Sadak Surakhya Force: Paving the Way for Safer Roads in Punjab

Road safety in Punjab took a transformative turn in 2024 with the establishment and proactive measures of the Sadak Surakhya Force (SSF). Launched under the aegis of the Punjab Government, this specialized unit was designed to curb road accidents, enforce traffic regulations, and promote a culture of safe driving across the state. With SSF being in force Punjab has witnessed a decline of 47.65 % in death rate.

Key Achievements in 2024

1. Deployment of Specialized Units: The SSF was equipped with advanced technology, including speed cameras, breathalyzers, and AI-enabled traffic monitoring systems, to ensure efficient enforcement of traffic laws.

2. Awareness Campaigns: Public awareness initiatives were rolled out across urban and rural areas. The “Sadak Surakhya Abhiyaan” included workshops, school awareness programs, and mass media campaigns focusing on responsible driving, helmet and seatbelt usage, and the dangers of drunken driving.

3. Increased Patrols: Dedicated SSF personnel were deployed on accident-prone roads to ensure swift response during emergencies and monitor reckless driving.

4. Data-Driven Solutions: The government established a road safety audit team under the SSF to identify and rectify accident-prone zones. This data-driven approach led to the redesigning of over 100 hazardous road stretches in 2024.

5. Community Engagement: The force engaged with local communities, trucking associations, and taxi unions to emphasize shared responsibility for road safety.

Vision 2025: A Safer Punjab on Wheels

The Sadak Surakhya Force aims to make Punjab a model state in road safety by 2025. Key targets include:

1. 50% Reduction in Fatalities: By

implementing stricter enforcement and improved road infrastructure, SSF aims to significantly cut down road accident deaths.

2. Smart Traffic Management: Expansion of smart traffic systems in all major cities, ensuring smoother and safer vehicular movement.

3. Enhanced Infrastructure: Collaborating with the Public Works Department (PWD) to construct pedestrian-friendly footpaths, cycling tracks, and safer crossings.

4. Youth Engagement: Launching state-wide road safety clubs in schools and colleges to instill safe driving habits from a young age.

5. Real-Time Monitoring: Integrating SSF operations with Punjab’s emerging smart cities, enabling real-time monitoring and predictive traffic management through AI and IoT technologies.

Punjab’s Sadak Surakhya Force is a beacon of change, fostering a culture of safety and responsibility on the state’s roads. With its focused steps in 2024 and ambitious goals for 2025, Punjab is steadily moving towards a future where every journey is safer.





Industrial Growth

The Invest Punjab Summit held in Mumbai attracted investments worth ₹20,000 crores in industries like renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, and IT. These investments are expected to generate over 1 lakh jobs in the next two years, further solidifying Punjab's position as a business-friendly state.

Focus on Startups

The "Startup Punjab" initiative gained momentum in 2024, with the establishment of incubation centers in Mohali and Ludhiana. Over 500 startups received funding and mentorship, encouraging young entrepreneurs to innovate and create job opportunities.

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

To promote women-led businesses, the Punjab government introduced the "SheBiz Punjab" scheme, providing zero-interest loans of up to ₹5 lakh. This initiative has already benefited over 10,000 women entrepreneurs, enabling them to launch and scale their ventures.

Infrastructure Development: Paving the Way for Prosperity

A robust infrastructure is essential for sustainable development. The Punjab government has invested heavily in improving connectivity and urban development to align with its Vision 2025.

Road and Rail Connectivity

Under the "Punjab Smart Mobility Project," over 1,000 kilometers of roads were upgraded in 2024, reducing travel time and boosting trade. The state also partnered with Indian Railways to launch semi-high-speed trains connecting Amritsar, Ludhiana, and Chandigarh, enhancing intra-state connectivity.

Urban Renewal

The Smart City Mission in Amritsar and Ludhiana saw significant progress in 2024, with the introduction of intelligent traffic management systems, waste-to-energy plants, and green public spaces. These developments aim to improve the quality of life for urban residents.

Affordable Housing

The "Apni chhat Apna Ghar" scheme delivered 50,000 affordable homes to low-income families in 2024. Equipped with solar

panels and rainwater harvesting systems, these homes represent a perfect blend of affordability and sustainability.

Sustainable Development: A Greener Punjab

As part of its Vision 2025, the Punjab government has taken proactive steps to combat climate change and promote environmental sustainability.

Clean Energy Revolution

Punjab emerged as a leader in renewable energy by installing 500 MW of solar power capacity in 2024. Rooftop solar panels were made mandatory for all new government buildings, setting an example for eco-friendly infrastructure.

Afforestation Drive

Keeping in mind the need of an hr about environmental conservation, over 10 million trees were planted across the state, increasing green cover by 5%. This afforestation drive has significantly contributed to improving air quality and combating desertification.

Water Management

To address Punjab's water scarcity, the government launched an ambitious program to rejuvenate 50 rivers and ponds. Advanced

irrigation techniques, like drip irrigation, were also promoted among farmers to reduce water wastage.

Recruitment Drives

The Punjab government conducted one of its largest recruitment drives in 2024, filling around 50,000 vacancies in health, education, and police departments. These jobs not only provided financial stability to thousands of families but also strengthened public service delivery.

The Road Ahead: Punjab Vision 2025

As Punjab approaches 2025, the state stands as a shining example of progress and resilience. The achievements of 2024 have set the stage for a future where healthcare is accessible, education is inclusive, employment is abundant, and development is sustainable.

With its people at the heart of every initiative, Punjab is not just building infrastructure but also nurturing dreams and aspirations. The Vision 2025 is not merely a policy document but a promise—a promise to make Punjab (Rangla Punjab) a model state that blends tradition with modernity, progress with sustainability, and growth with equity.



Nishan-e-Inquilab: A Tribute to the Spirit of Revolution

Punmedia Bureau

Shaheed Bhagat Singh's towering 30-foot bronze statue of the martyr. During the inaugural ceremony, the Chief Minister emphasized that the bronze statue stands as a beacon of inspiration for the youth, symbolizing selfless service and Bhagat Singh's legacy should not be confined to his



unyielding patriotism.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann inaugurated the 'Nishan-e-Inquilab' Plaza, a monumental tribute to the life and philosophy of Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Located on the bustling Airport Road and built at a cost of ₹5 crore, this plaza is home to an awe-inspiring 30-foot

birth and martyrdom anniversaries but celebrated every day as a guide for building a better nation.

"This plaza will constantly remind our youth of Shaheed Bhagat Singh's unparalleled sacrifice and inspire them to serve the country with integrity and devotion," said Mann. He expressed hope that the plaza would become a lighthouse for travelers

from across the globe, showcasing the immense contributions of this great revolutionary.

Highlighting his government's initiatives, Mann proudly mentioned renaming the Mohali International Airport after Bhagat Singh, a feat previous governments had neglected. "Honoring such martyrs through institutions, airports, and universities is essential to preserve their glorious legacy," he remarked.

Mann reassured the public of his government's commitment to fulfilling Bhagat Singh's dreams by ensuring Punjab's prosperity and eradicating unemployment. He revealed that nearly 50,000 transparent job placements had already been made, setting the stage for the reverse migration of Punjabis back to their homeland.

Addressing the youth, Mann urged them to embody Bhagat Singh's ideals. "In an age when most young people ask for gifts from their parents, Bhagat Singh demanded freedom for his motherland," he said, underscoring the martyr's intellectual brilliance and unwavering concern for the welfare of the masses.

The Chief Minister lamented that corruption, nepotism, and poverty still plague the nation, leaving Bhagat Singh's dreams unfulfilled. He called on citizens to rise above caste, religion, and regional divides to transform India into a leading global power—a true homage to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for freedom.

Mann concluded by inviting the youth to take a solemn pledge: to follow in Bhagat Singh's footsteps and dedicate themselves to Punjab's

progress and the nation's service. "Shaheed Bhagat Singh was not just an individual; he was an institution. Let us rebuild Punjab's ancient glory by living his values every day," he said.

This bold and heartfelt initiative, 'Nishan-e-Inquilab,' stands tall as a testament to Punjab's reverence for its heroes and its vision for a brighter, united future.



Transforming Punjab: Health and Education Take Center Stage

Punmedia Bureau



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has reiterated his government's unwavering commitment to revamping the state's health and education sectors. During a visit to inspect a Sub-Divisional Hospital, Mann emphasized that his focus is not on fault-finding but on enhancing facilities to provide efficient, citizen-centric services.

"For the first time, Punjab has a Chief Minister personally visiting government hospitals and offices to ensure accountability and improvement," said Mann. He highlighted that significant reforms have been introduced over the past two years, particularly in healthcare. Modern equipment has been installed in government hospitals, and free medicines are now being provided to patients across the state.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed that every penny from the public exchequer is being judiciously spent on the state's development and welfare. "Punjab is witnessing a new era of growth and

progress, laying the foundation for a brighter future," he remarked.

In a major boost to medical education, Mann announced that the construction of new medical colleges in Mohali, Kapurthala, Sangrur, Hoshiarpur, and Malerkotla is underway at a rapid pace. These institutions aim to position Punjab as a leading hub for medical education in the country, providing quality education to aspiring doctors while improving healthcare access for residents.

To address staff shortages in hospitals, Mann assured that efforts are being made to recruit more doctors, nurses, and sanitation workers. "Our goal is to ensure world-class healthcare services for all Punjabis," he added, stressing that no effort would be spared in this mission.

Turning his attention to education, Mann expressed disappointment over the dilapidated condition of the renowned ITI in Budhlada. He directed officials to draft a comprehensive master plan within a week to revitalize the institution. "This ITI must offer world-class courses to equip students and youth with skills that open doors to self-employment and industrial opportunities," Mann said. He envisioned the creation of a talent pool tailored to meet the demands of Punjab's industrial sector.

"From modern hospitals to skill-enhancing education, Punjab is on the path to becoming a model state. With bold initiatives and a people-first approach, the government is building a stronger, healthier, and more educated Punjab for generations to come."

Punjab Becomes Trailblazer in Sports Governance

with Landmark Sports Promotion Act

Punmedia Bureau

In a historic move to transform the sports ecosystem, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann announced the enactment of The Punjab State (Development & Promotion of Sports) Act, 2024, making Punjab the first state in India to introduce such a comprehensive legal framework for sports governance.

Presiding over a key meeting of the Sports Department, the Chief Minister revealed that the Act is designed to adopt best national and international practices for sports development, ensuring fair selection processes, and fostering transparency in the functioning of sports associations.

Highlights of the Act

- **Streamlining Sports Associations:** The Act mandates the registration of one District Association per district for every sport, ensuring streamlined and fair representation at the state and national levels.
- **Mandatory Financial Accountability:** Sports associations are required to maintain accounts verified by a Chartered Accountant and publish an annual statement of expenditures and income by May 31 each year.
- **Digital Transparency:** All financial documents and accounts will be stored electronically and made accessible to the Director of Sports, Punjab.

Ensuring Fair Selection & Dispute Resolution

- A five-member selection committee, comprising a General Secretary, two senior coaches, and two eminent players, will oversee the fair selection of district and state teams.
 - Disputes will be resolved swiftly, with appeals being addressed within seven days by a Dispute Resolution Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner or Administrative Secretary.
- Safe Spaces for Athletes



To address harassment concerns, the Act includes the formation of:

- A District-Level Sexual Harassment Committee with three female and two male members, notified by the District Magistrate.
- A State-Level Sexual Harassment Committee, appointed by the Sports Department's Administrative Secretary. These committees can take suo-moto action when necessary.

Structured Sports Calendar

All associations must draft a detailed calendar of events—camps, leagues, and competitions—by March 31 annually. The Sports Department will finalize these calendars within 30 days to ensure a well-coordinated schedule.

Chief Minister Mann expressed confidence that this revolutionary policy would channel the energy of Punjab's youth toward sports, unlocking their potential and nurturing a culture of excellence. "This Act will ensure fairness, accountability, and opportunity for our players, paving the way for Punjab to become a sporting powerhouse," he said.

With this groundbreaking initiative, Punjab sets a precedent for the nation in building a robust and transparent sports framework.

Punjab's Education Revolution: From Finland with Lessons for the Future

Punmedia Bureau



education system with innovative techniques and global best practices,” he emphasized.

Learning from the Best

Recognizing Finland's globally acclaimed education model, the Punjab Government aimed to equip teachers with the skills to foster creativity, innovation, and leadership among students. The training program was designed to

A historic wave of educational transformation is sweeping through Punjab, driven by the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann. In an unprecedented initiative, 72 primary school teachers, including BPEOs, CHTs, HTs, and elementary educators, returned from a specialized training program in Finland, bringing back a wealth of knowledge and global teaching practices.

Welcoming them back, CM Mann extended a heartfelt invitation to these educators to become torchbearers of Punjab's education revolution. “This is not just a journey to another country; it's a leap towards reshaping the future of Punjab's

introduce advanced teaching methodologies, with a focus on engaging, practical, and student-centric approaches.

“Our teachers now possess a treasure trove of knowledge that will not only enhance their teaching but also inspire students to achieve their full potential,” said the Chief Minister. He expressed confidence that these educators would not only raise the standards of government schools but also enable their students to compete with the best in private institutions.

Voices of Transformation

The returning teachers spoke passionately

about their transformative experiences in Finland. Ludhiana's Manmeet Singh shared how the training opened doors to creative and entertaining teaching techniques, breaking away from traditional methods. Bathinda's Daljeet Singh praised the Finnish trainers for their dedication and noted that the global exposure boosted their confidence to implement innovative practices.



Amarinderpal Singh Dhillon from Talwara highlighted the training's emphasis on responsibility and practical learning. He believed this initiative would lay the groundwork for revolutionary changes in Punjab's education system. Meanwhile, Baljeet Kaur Parmar from Fatehgarh Sahib expressed how the experience empowered her to think boldly and embrace new challenges in the teaching profession.

A Vision for the Future

Chief Minister Mann stressed that education is the backbone of any society, and his government remains committed to continuous reforms. "Every child, regardless of their background, deserves access to high-quality education," he said. The initiative is part of a larger effort to reinvigorate the state's education system, ensuring that students not only excel academically but also contribute to Punjab's socio-economic development.

He added, "This training will enable our teachers to nurture students into confident and capable individuals who can thrive in any field." He urged educators to share their newly acquired skills with peers and students alike, ensuring a ripple effect of progress across the state.

A New Era of Learning

The educators' feedback revealed the profound impact of Finland's education practices. Manpreet Singh of Ludhiana noted the importance of

integrating hands-on learning with theoretical concepts, while Patiala's Aanchal Singla admired Finland's practical and engaging curriculum. Teachers like Nirmaljit Kaur of Tarn Taran highlighted the significance of time management and ethical values, vowing to instill these in their students.

Adding to this, SCERT Director Amaninder Kaur Brar emphasized the importance of experiential learning, advocating for access to resources like carpentry tools and science equipment in schools. "Education must move beyond books," she asserted, stressing the need for practical exposure to complement theoretical learning.

Towards a Brighter Tomorrow

Chief Minister Mann concluded by underscoring the government's commitment to supporting teachers in implementing their newfound knowledge. "This marks the beginning of a golden chapter in Punjab's educational history," he said, envisioning a future where Punjab becomes a frontrunner in educational excellence.

The Finland-trained educators, armed with innovative teaching strategies, are ready to sow the seeds of knowledge that will grow into towering trees of wisdom, benefiting not just students but society as a whole. With such transformative initiatives, Punjab is poised to shine as a beacon of educational progress, setting an inspiring example for the entire nation.

Punjab Leads the Nation in Honoring Armed Forces Heroes with Historic Initiatives

Punmedia Bureau

In a groundbreaking move, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has approved an ex-gratia worth Rs 21.50 crore for 86 Armed Forces personnel who have suffered physical casualties while serving the nation. This initiative cements Punjab's position as the first state in India to offer



Rs 25 lakh as ex-gratia to soldiers for non-fatal casualties.

During a high-level meeting at his official residence, CM Mann emphasized the importance of recognizing the sacrifices of the Armed Forces. "This ex-gratia is a testament to our gratitude for the brave men and women who risk their lives for the nation. Earlier, no such provision existed, but Punjab is now leading the way," he said.

Unmatched Financial Support for Armed Forces Families

CM Mann highlighted Punjab's comprehensive support system for soldiers and their families:

- **Rs 1 Crore for Martyrs:** Families of soldiers who make the ultimate sacrifice receive Rs 1 crore as a mark of respect.
- **Rs 25 Lakh for Physical Casualties:** Punjab's ex-gratia amount for physically injured soldiers surpasses the provisions in 70% of other Indian states. "This initiative reflects Punjab's deep respect for the unity, integrity, and sovereignty that our soldiers uphold," Mann added.

Revitalizing Sainik School Kapurthala

The Chief Minister also underscored the

state's commitment to rejuvenating the historic Sainik School in Kapurthala. Spanning 190 acres, this architectural gem is a cornerstone of military education in Punjab. CM Mann has flagged its maintenance and modernization needs with the Ministry of Defence to ensure the school continues to

inspire future generations.

War Memorials in Every District

Taking another monumental step, the Chief Minister announced the construction of War Memorials in every district across Punjab.

- **State-of-the-Art Design:** Each memorial will be built on a 1-1.5 acre plot and serve as a fitting tribute to Punjab's war heroes.
- **Approved Designs:** CM Mann has already given in-principle approval for the designs, which will honor the valor and sacrifice of soldiers who have defended the nation.

Setting a National Benchmark

By spearheading initiatives like these, Punjab is setting a benchmark for other states in recognizing and supporting the Armed Forces. "Our government will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with our soldiers and their families. Their sacrifices are the foundation of our nation's strength," Mann said.

These historic measures reaffirm Punjab's legacy of valor and pride, ensuring its brave sons and daughters receive the honor and support they rightfully deserve.

Abohar Transformed: CM Mann Dedicates Rs. 119.16 Crore Water and Sewerage Projects

Punmedia Bureau

Abohar, December 5 – In a landmark move aimed at revolutionizing urban infrastructure, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann inaugurated state-of-the-art water supply and sewerage projects in Abohar. Developed at a total cost of Rs. 119.16 crore, these initiatives promise to uplift the lives of the city's 1.5 lakh residents by delivering reliable civic amenities.

Modern Solutions for Urban Challenges

The Rs. 27.06 crore Water Supply Project introduces an advanced, automated system with a capacity of 3.50 MGD (Million Gallons per Day), ensuring uninterrupted supply of clean canal water to every household in the city. In its first phase, the project is set to cater to 100% of Abohar's population, addressing long-standing issues of water scarcity and quality.

Similarly, the Rs. 92.10 crore Sewerage Project will provide 100% coverage across Abohar, bringing modern sanitation facilities to the border city. These projects not only resolve immediate civic issues but also lay a strong foundation for sustainable urban growth.

A Commitment to Quality Urban Living

Speaking at the inauguration, CM Mann emphasized the Punjab government's commitment to ensuring quality civic amenities for every resident. "Abohar is now poised to become a model city in the region," he said. "These projects represent our dedication to building a Punjab where every town enjoys modern infrastructure and services."

Catalyst for Regional Growth

The Chief Minister further envisioned these



projects as a transformative force for the border district. "This is not just about water and sewerage; this is about growth, prosperity, and dignity for the people of Abohar," he remarked. Mann expressed confidence that the new infrastructure will attract investments, enhance living standards, and inspire similar initiatives across Punjab.

A Model for Other Cities

This ambitious development marks another milestone in CM Mann's vision to ensure equitable urban growth across the state. Abohar, a key border city, is set to serve as a shining example of how comprehensive infrastructure projects can elevate communities.

With these transformative projects, Punjab takes a significant step toward becoming a state where every citizen has access to essential services and a dignified quality of life.

Punjab Leads the Way: Massive Recruitment Drive and Welfare Boost for Persons with Disabilities

Punmedia Bureau

In a significant step towards creating an inclusive society, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann announced a major recruitment drive to fill 1,754 backlog vacancies for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) across various government departments. This initiative, coupled with several welfare measures, reaffirms the state's commitment to empowering this vital segment of society.

Chairing a review meeting with the Social Justice and Child Welfare Department, CM Mann emphasized the need for swift action. "These vacancies—1,754 for direct recruitment and 556 for promotions—will be filled without delay to ensure representation and dignity for PwDs in the workforce," he stated.

Empowering Rights: Amending Disability Act Rules

The Chief Minister also approved amendments to the rules under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. "This amendment will further safeguard the rights of PwDs, ensuring their holistic development and equal opportunities," Mann said. He lauded the resilience of PwDs, calling them "the real heroes of society" who excel despite numerous challenges.

Inclusive Welfare Schemes in Full Swing

Punjab has undertaken a range of initiatives to uplift PwDs:

- **Free Bus Travel:** Dependents of visually impaired individuals will soon enjoy free travel, with official notification underway.
- **Fare Concessions:** A 50% concession for

PwDs traveling on Punjab Roadways and PRTC buses has already benefited 7.5 lakh commuters, with Rs 2.19 crore spent during 2023-24.

- **Pension Support:** 2.65 lakh disabled persons are covered under the State Pension Scheme, with Rs 278.17 crore disbursed in 2024-25.

- **Educational Incentives:** To promote education among disabled children, Rs 3.37 crore has been awarded as scholarships to 12,607 students.

- **Accessible Infrastructure:** Rs 23.16 crore has been allocated under the SIPDA scheme, making 144 government buildings accessible for PwDs.

Promoting Economic Independence

To ensure financial stability for PwDs, the government facilitated:

- **Loans worth Rs 1.31 crore** at concessional interest rates for 105 PwDs over the past two years.

- **Booth allocations for 21 PwDs** through Milkfed, Markfed, and other organizations.

A Vision for Dignity and Equality

CM Mann reiterated his government's unwavering dedication to enhancing the lives of PwDs. "From accessible infrastructure to economic support, we are determined to leave no stone unturned for their welfare," he affirmed.

This trailblazing effort by Punjab not only highlights the state's inclusive vision but also sets a benchmark for other states to follow, ensuring that every citizen, regardless of ability, can live a life of dignity, pride, and opportunity.

Punjab's Investment Boom: ₹86,000 Crore and Counting Under CM Mann's Leadership

Punmedia Bureau

In an era of rapid economic transformation, Punjab is making bold strides as a preferred destination for investors worldwide. With a massive ₹86,541 crore worth of investments secured in just two-and-a-half years under Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's leadership, the state is scripting a new chapter of industrial growth and economic prosperity.

Tarunpreet Singh Sond, Punjab's Industry and Commerce Minister, proudly announced these developments, crediting the state's investor-friendly policies and proactive governance for the surge. "We are not just inviting investments; we are building a vibrant industrial ecosystem," said Sond, urging entrepreneurs and industrialists to be a part of Punjab's success story.

The Numbers That Speak Success

Since March 2022, Punjab has received over 5,300 investment proposals, translating into ₹86,541 crore in committed investments. These ventures have already created nearly 3,92,540 employment opportunities, solidifying Punjab's reputation as a hub of industrial activity.

Some marquee investments during this period include:

- Tata Steel Limited: ₹2,600 crore
- Sanathan Polycoat Private Limited: ₹1,600 crore
- Ambuja Cements Limited: ₹1,400 crore
- Ruchira Papers Limited: ₹1,137 crore
- Topan Specialty Films Limited: ₹787 crore
- Nestle India Limited: ₹583 crore

These projects reflect Punjab's ability to attract a diverse range of industries, from steel and cement to specialty films and food processing.

Ease of Doing Business: A Game-Changer

Punjab's business-friendly environment is a cornerstone of its industrial appeal. The state

government has introduced innovative measures to simplify procedures for entrepreneurs. Small and medium enterprises can now start operations with a simple affidavit, completing documentation within three years—a move that has garnered praise from business leaders.

The "Invest Punjab" portal, ranked first among 28 states, has become the state's digital backbone for industrial facilitation. With nearly 58,000 new small and medium enterprises registered on the platform, it is a testament to the efficiency of Punjab's industrial policies.

Collaborative Growth: Listening to Industry Voices

Sond emphasized the government's commitment to collaborative growth, holding extensive consultations with business groups, industrial associations, and chambers of commerce. "We value the insights of our industry stakeholders. Their suggestions are integral to shaping policies that are both inclusive and forward-looking," he said.

The Road Ahead

With its peaceful environment, industry-friendly policies, and robust infrastructure, Punjab is positioned to become a global industrial hub. Sond's assurance of full governmental support to entrepreneurs and industrialists further underscores the state's commitment to fostering growth.

As Punjab continues to attract record-breaking investments, it is not just transforming its industrial landscape but also creating countless opportunities for its people. Under the dynamic leadership of CM Bhagwant Singh Mann and Industry Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sond, Punjab is truly on its way to becoming a beacon of industrial and economic excellence.

Empowering Dreams: Punjab's Commitment to SC Students' Education

Punmedia Bureau

Punjab is scripting a new chapter in educational equity and empowerment under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann. With a renewed focus on uplifting Scheduled Caste (SC) students, the state government has made monumental strides in ensuring access to education through the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme.

Dr. Baljit Kaur, the Cabinet Minister for Social Justice, Empowerment, and Minorities, shared these developments in a press conference at Punjab Bhawan, Chandigarh. She highlighted the government's unwavering commitment to turning education into a powerful tool for social transformation.

Building the Path to Opportunity

In a significant move, Rs. 92 crore has been disbursed under the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for the financial year 2024-25, with Rs. 59.34 crore already allocated to 256 institutions. The scheme has also earmarked Rs. 245 crore for the academic year, a testament to the state's commitment to SC students' welfare.

"The Punjab Government is dedicated to ensuring no student abandons their education due to financial constraints," stated Dr. Kaur.

Additionally, the government cleared outstanding dues from 2017-2020 by releasing Rs. 366 crore during the financial year 2023-24. Out of this, Rs. 283.62 crore was disbursed to 1008 institutions, with assurances to settle the remaining payments promptly.

A History of Neglect and a Promising Future

Dr. Kaur did not shy away from addressing past missteps. She criticized the negligence of previous governments, which failed to disburse Central and state funds under the scholarship scheme. This left many SC students unable to access their degrees

as colleges withheld them over unpaid dues.

However, since the Mann government took charge, it has worked tirelessly to rectify these injustices. "We are leaving no stone unturned to ensure Scheduled Caste students face no disruptions in their education," she said.

The minister also urged the Central Government to release its pending 60% share of the scholarship funds, emphasizing the critical need for timely support.

Transforming Lives Through Education

The scholarship program has seen nearly 2.31 lakh new registrations for the academic year 2024-25, reflecting the growing trust in the government's commitment. The funds are not just a means of financial aid but a stepping stone for SC students to realize their dreams.

"Education is the most powerful tool for social transformation," Dr. Kaur emphasized, adding that the government is exploring additional schemes to support SC students, not only financially but holistically. These initiatives aim to ensure access to quality education, skill development, and employment opportunities.

Beyond Financial Assistance

The Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme is not merely a policy; it is a promise. A promise to nurture talent, alleviate financial burdens, and open doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain closed.

A Vision for the Future

Under the stewardship of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, the Punjab Government is committed to building a society where education is accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic status. The state's proactive measures under the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme are a shining example of this vision in action.

Revolutionizing Healthcare in Punjab: Dr. Balbir Singh Charts a Patient-Centric Path

Punmedia Bureau

In a decisive step towards enhancing healthcare delivery, Punjab Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Balbir Singh has instructed civil surgeons across the state to ensure the uninterrupted availability of essential medicines at all government healthcare facilities. This move aims to eliminate barriers to access and strengthen public trust in the state's healthcare system.

Presiding over a Conference-cum-Training Workshop for civil surgeons, Dr. Balbir Singh reviewed their performance and stressed the importance of compassionate care. "Doctors and hospital staff must treat patients and attendants with humility to build confidence in government health institutions," he stated.

The Health Minister highlighted the Punjab Government's commitment under Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's leadership to allocate sufficient funds for improving healthcare infrastructure and services.

Empowering the Workforce

Dr. Singh emphasized the need for practical training for nursing students, including monitoring blood pressure, H.B. levels, and conducting eye check-ups. Their skills would also be utilized to assist patients and attendants in hospitals. Additionally, students from schools and colleges will receive first aid training to equip them to respond effectively to accidents or emergencies.

In preparation for the next monsoon season, nursing students will also be trained as breeding checkers to identify mosquito larvae, a critical step in combating dengue.

Recognizing Excellence and Addressing Challenges

The Health Minister commended high-performing districts and urged others to improve their healthcare standards. He also announced



that dedicated health officials and employees will be honored for their commitment.

Chairman of the Punjab Health Systems Corporation (PHSC), Raman Bahl, emphasized maintaining cleanliness and proper upkeep of healthcare facilities, noting that a clean environment is essential for quality patient care.

Administrative Secretary of Health and Family Welfare, Kumar Rahul, revealed that a patient feedback survey had been conducted to evaluate healthcare quality. Based on the survey's findings, Punjab Development Commission member Anurag Kundu presented a detailed analysis, identifying areas needing improvement. Dr. Singh directed civil surgeons to address these shortcomings promptly.

Key Officials in Attendance

The workshop was attended by several senior officials, including Secretary Health Dr. Abhinav Trikha, Managing Director PHSC Varinder Kumar, Mission Director NHM Ghanshyam Thori, and Director Health and Family Welfare Punjab Dr. Hitinder Kaur, among others.

Dr. Balbir Singh's proactive approach underscores the Punjab Government's commitment to delivering quality, patient-focused healthcare while fostering a culture of excellence and compassion in the state's medical institutions.



Punjab's Tourism Renaissance: First Boutique Hotel, Heritage Celebrations, and More

Punmedia Bureau

Punjab is stepping into a new era of tourism and cultural promotion under Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's leadership. From unveiling the state's first boutique hotel to commemorating the 350th martyrdom of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, the initiatives promise to put Punjab firmly on the global tourism map.

A Landmark in Luxury: Boutique Hotel at Quilla Mubarak

Punjab's first boutique hotel, located at the iconic Quilla Mubarak in Patiala, is set to open its doors after Lohri. Built on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, the hotel is poised to redefine luxury and elegance.

"This aesthetically designed hotel will become a favorite destination for weddings and other grand events," said CM Mann during a meeting with the Tourism and Cultural Promotion Department. He emphasized its potential to elevate Patiala as a major tourist destination, offering visitors a royal experience infused with the warmth of Punjab's hospitality.

Remembering Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji: 350th Martyrdom Commemorations

Marking the 350th martyrdom anniversary of the ninth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, Punjab will host a series of state-wide events. The government aims to ensure the comprehensive development



celebrated and preserved, the government plans to organize annual heritage festivals. The Tourism and Cultural Department has been tasked with drafting a comprehensive calendar of events. “These festivals will perpetuate the state’s glorious traditions for future generations,” said CM Mann, urging grand-scale celebrations to highlight Punjab’s unique legacy.

A Modern Approach to Tourism: Ultra-Modern Convention Centers

In a forward-thinking move, the Chief Minister approved the development of ultra-modern convention centers in major cities like Amritsar, Ludhiana, and New Chandigarh. These centers, modeled after Delhi’s Pragati Maidan, will house arenas, hotels, and shopping complexes. “Such facilities will attract international artists and events, giving a significant boost to Punjab’s tourism sector,” said Mann.

Developing Scenic Destinations: Ranjit Sagar Dam and Beyond

Further plans are underway to develop scenic areas around Ranjit Sagar Dam, Shahpur Kandi Dam, and Kandi regions into premier tourist destinations. “These locations have immense potential to attract global tourists, and efforts will be made to unlock their full potential,” said Mann, envisioning them as hubs for eco-tourism and adventure enthusiasts.

A Bright Future for Punjab Tourism

With these initiatives, Punjab is set to emerge as a beacon of culture, heritage, and modern tourism. From luxury accommodations to grand festivals and scenic retreats, the state is gearing up to welcome the world while preserving its soul.

of sites associated with Guru Sahib’s legacy. “Guru Teg Bahadur Ji’s unparalleled sacrifice for the protection of religious freedom and human rights is a beacon of inspiration,” stated CM Mann. He called upon the Tourism Department to curate detailed programs that pay tribute to the Guru’s values of tolerance, justice, and sacrifice.

Rangla Punjab Festival: Celebrating the Spirit of Punjab

In February, Punjab will host the Rangla Punjab Festival, a vibrant showcase of the state’s rich cultural heritage and scenic destinations. The event aims to position Punjab as a globally preferred tourist destination. “This festival will highlight Punjab’s glorious legacy and untapped tourism potential, opening new avenues for economic growth and employment,” said Mann. He expressed optimism that the festival would attract global attention, boosting the state’s economy while celebrating its vibrant culture.

Preserving Heritage: Annual Festivals on the Horizon

To ensure that Punjab’s cultural heritage is



HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY: 26 JANUARY





Manifest Your Dreams: Unlocking the Power of Positive Intentions

Punmedia Bureau

Imagine a life where your deepest desires, biggest dreams, and boldest aspirations come to fruition—not by chance, but through the power of your thoughts and intentions. This isn't just wishful thinking; it's the art and science of manifestation.

Manifestation, the practice of consciously creating your reality, has gained global attention, blending ancient wisdom with modern psychology. But what exactly is manifestation, and how can you harness its power to shape the life you've always envisioned?

Understanding Manifestation: More Than Just Positive Thinking

At its core, manifestation is the process of bringing your thoughts, feelings, and intentions into alignment with your goals. While it's often mistaken for mere wishful thinking, true manifestation requires clarity, focus, action, and belief.

The idea is simple: what you focus on expands. Your mind is like a magnet, attracting experiences, opportunities, and even challenges that match your dominant energy and thoughts. This is why both optimism and self-doubt can become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The Science Behind Manifestation

Though it might sound mystical, manifestation has roots in neuroscience and psychology. Studies show that our brain's reticular activating system (RAS) plays a crucial role in filtering information



based on what we deem important. When you set a clear goal, your RAS starts noticing opportunities, connections, and ideas that align with it.

Moreover, visualization, a key component of manifestation, activates the same brain regions involved in performing the actual task. This is why athletes often

visualize winning games or breaking records—it primes their minds for success.

Coupled with the Law of Attraction, which suggests that like attracts like, manifestation becomes a powerful tool to align your inner world with your outer reality.

Steps to Manifest Your Dreams

1. Clarity is Key

You can't manifest what you don't understand. Start by getting crystal clear about what you want. Is it a fulfilling career, better relationships, financial abundance, or inner peace? Write it down, be specific, and focus on the details.

Instead of saying, "I want to be successful," try, "I want to achieve a leadership role in my field, earning X amount annually, and making a meaningful impact." The clearer your vision, the easier it is for the universe—and your own efforts—to align.

2. Visualize Your Desired Reality

Visualization is the heart of manifestation. Close your eyes and picture your goals as though they've already happened. How does it feel? What do you

see, hear, or even smell? This exercise bridges the gap between your present self and your desired future.

For example, if you're manifesting a dream home, imagine walking through its rooms, feeling the textures, and basking in the sense of accomplishment. This vivid imagery strengthens your belief and focus.

3. Feel the Emotions

Manifestation isn't just about thinking; it's about feeling. Emotions are powerful indicators of your energy. When you embody the feelings of joy, gratitude, and excitement associated with achieving your dreams, you raise your vibrational frequency, making you more receptive to opportunities.

4. Set Intentions, Not Deadlines

While it's great to set timelines, avoid attaching rigid deadlines to your manifestations. Instead, trust in divine timing. The universe often has a way of delivering your desires in ways you couldn't have imagined, and at the perfect moment.

5. Take Inspired Action

Manifestation is a partnership between belief and effort. Dreams alone won't create reality; you need to act on them. Whether it's networking, learning a new skill, or stepping out of your comfort zone, each action brings you closer to your goals.

The key is to stay motivated and trust that even small steps will lead to significant progress.

6. Practice Gratitude

Gratitude amplifies the energy of abundance. By appreciating what you already have, you signal to the universe that you're ready for more blessings. Keep a gratitude journal, and make it a habit to reflect on the positives in your life daily.

7. Overcome Limiting Beliefs

Often, it's not the universe but our own doubts and fears that block manifestations. Replace thoughts like "I'm not good enough" with empowering affirmations like "I am capable, worthy, and deserving of success."

Challenge your limiting beliefs, and reprogram your mind with positivity and self-love.

Real-Life Examples of Manifestation

The power of manifestation isn't just theoretical;

countless success stories highlight its impact. Oprah Winfrey credits visualization and intention for her success, while Jim Carrey famously wrote himself a \$10 million check for "acting services rendered" and achieved it years later.

Even ordinary individuals have manifested extraordinary outcomes, from landing dream jobs to finding soulmates, by aligning their energy with their desires.

Common Misconceptions About Manifestation

- **It's Not Magic:** Manifestation doesn't replace hard work or effort. It complements them by sharpening focus and opening doors.
- **You Won't Manifest Everything Instantly:** Patience and persistence are key. Trust that your desires are on their way, even if the process takes time.
- **It's Not About Avoiding Negativity:** Manifestation doesn't mean denying challenges. Instead, it's about reframing obstacles as opportunities and staying resilient.

Manifestation in Daily Life

To integrate manifestation into your routine:


1. **Morning Affirmations:** Start your day by affirming your goals and expressing gratitude.
2. **Vision Board:** Create a visual representation of your dreams to keep them at the forefront of your mind.
3. **Meditation:** Use mindfulness to connect with your intentions and clear mental clutter.
4. **Journaling:** Reflect on your progress, emotions, and gratitude regularly.

Conclusion: Manifestation is Your Superpower

The power of manifestation lies within you—waiting to be harnessed. By aligning your thoughts, feelings, and actions, you can transform your dreams into reality.

The journey requires faith, effort, and consistency, but the rewards are life-changing. So, dream boldly, manifest fiercely, and remember: you are the creator of your destiny. Whatever you seek is already seeking you.

This year, step into your power, trust the process, and watch as your manifestations unfold in beautiful, unexpected ways. The life you've imagined is closer than you think—it begins with belief.



Pedal Your Way to Wellness: The Transformative Health Benefits of Cycling

Punmedia Bureau

In a world dominated by fast-paced routines and sedentary lifestyles, cycling emerges as a refreshing, simple, and highly effective way to improve both physical and mental health. With its roots in childhood memories of freedom and exploration, cycling is not only a nostalgic pastime but also a holistic exercise that offers a myriad of health benefits. Whether you're navigating busy urban streets, cruising through serene countryside paths, or simply spinning on a stationary bike, cycling provides an invigorating route to wellness.

A Low-Impact Exercise for All Ages

One of the most attractive features of cycling is its accessibility. Unlike high-impact exercises such as running or intense aerobics, cycling is gentle on the joints, making it an excellent option for people of all ages and fitness levels. Whether you're a teenager building stamina, an adult managing weight, or a senior looking to maintain mobility, cycling can be tailored to meet your needs.

Because it involves smooth, repetitive motions, cycling reduces the risk of strain and injury, especially for individuals with joint issues or arthritis. The low-impact nature of this exercise allows for consistent, long-term participation, which is key to reaping its health benefits.

Physical Health Benefits of Cycling

1. Boosts Cardiovascular Health

Cycling is a cardio workout that strengthens the heart, improves circulation, and reduces the

risk of heart diseases. When you cycle, your heart rate increases, promoting better oxygen and nutrient flow to your muscles and tissues. Studies have shown that regular cycling can lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, and reduce the risk of stroke.

2. Enhances Muscular Strength and Endurance

While cycling is primarily a leg workout, it engages multiple muscle groups. Your quadriceps, hamstrings, calves, and glutes work together to power the pedals, while your core muscles provide balance and stability. Over time, cycling helps build muscular strength and endurance, improving overall functionality and performance.

3. Supports Weight Management

Cycling is a calorie-burning powerhouse. Depending on your weight and cycling intensity, you can burn between 400 to 1,000 calories per hour. As a result, regular cycling can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Additionally, it boosts metabolism, meaning you'll continue to burn calories even after your ride.

4. Improves Joint Mobility

Cycling involves a controlled, repetitive motion that enhances joint mobility, particularly in the knees, hips, and ankles. This makes it an excellent exercise for individuals recovering from injuries or surgeries, as well as those looking to prevent stiffness and joint degeneration.

5. Increases Lung Capacity

Cycling encourages deep, rhythmic breathing,

which can improve lung function and increase your lung capacity over time. This benefit is especially significant for individuals with respiratory conditions like asthma, as cycling promotes efficient oxygen exchange.

6. Strengthens the Immune System

Moderate-intensity cycling has been found to boost the immune system by activating white blood cells and improving the circulation of immune cells. This enhanced immunity helps the body fight off infections and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Mental Health Benefits of Cycling

1. Reduces Stress and Anxiety

Cycling is a proven stress buster. The rhythmic motion of pedaling, combined with the fresh air and scenic surroundings of an outdoor ride, has a calming effect on the mind. Regular cycling reduces cortisol (the stress hormone) levels, helping you feel more relaxed and focused.

2. Boosts Mood and Happiness

Physical activity stimulates the release of endorphins and serotonin, the “feel-good” hormones that enhance mood and combat depression. Cycling, with its combination of exercise and connection to nature, provides a double dose of happiness.

3. Improves Cognitive Function

Cycling increases blood flow to the brain, improving cognitive functions such as memory, problem-solving, and concentration. Studies have shown that individuals who engage in regular physical activity, like cycling, have a lower risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions such as

Alzheimer’s disease.

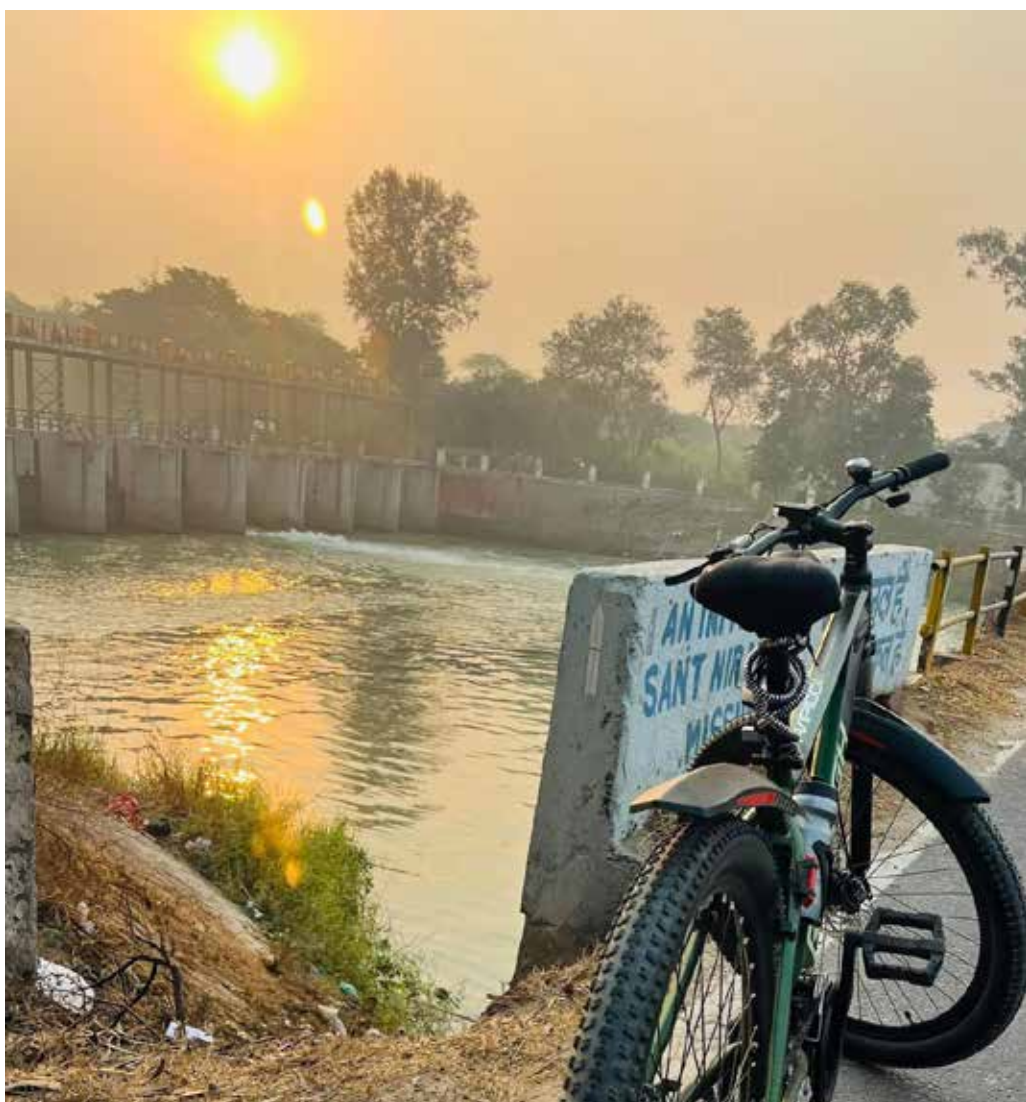
4. Promotes Better Sleep

A good cycling session tires your body in a healthy way, promoting deeper and more restorative sleep. It also helps regulate your circadian rhythm, ensuring that you fall asleep faster and wake up feeling refreshed.

Cycling as a Sustainable Lifestyle Choice

Beyond its health benefits, cycling is an environmentally friendly mode of transportation. By choosing a bike over a car for short trips, you reduce your carbon footprint, decrease air pollution, and contribute to a cleaner, greener planet.

Additionally, cycling promotes a sense of community and social connection. Group rides, cycling clubs, and events like marathons provide



opportunities to meet like-minded people, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and mutual support.

Getting Started: Tips for Safe and Effective Cycling

If you're new to cycling or looking to restart your journey, here are a few tips to help you get started

elbow pads for added protection, and always equip your bike with lights and a bell.

3. Start Slow and Build Gradually

If you're a beginner, start with short, low-intensity rides and gradually increase your duration and intensity. This approach helps your body adapt to the exercise and prevents burnout



and make the most of your cycling experience:

1. Choose the Right Bike

Selecting the right bike for your needs is crucial. Road bikes are ideal for smooth city rides and long-distance travel, while mountain bikes are perfect for off-road adventures. Hybrid bikes offer versatility, and electric bikes provide extra assistance if needed. Make sure your bike is the correct size and properly adjusted for your comfort and safety.

2. Invest in Safety Gear

Safety should always be a priority. A well-fitted helmet is a must to protect your head in case of an accident. Additionally, wear bright, reflective clothing to ensure visibility, especially during early morning or evening rides. Don't forget knee and

or injury. Setting achievable goals can keep you motivated and help track your progress.

4. Follow Traffic Rules

When cycling on roads, obey traffic signals and stay in designated bike lanes wherever possible. Use hand signals to indicate turns and maintain awareness of your surroundings to avoid accidents.

5. Maintain Your Bike

A well-maintained bike ensures a smooth and enjoyable ride. Regularly check the brakes, tires, and chain, and keep your bike clean and lubricated. Schedule professional servicing if needed, especially for long-distance rides.

6. Stay Hydrated and Fuel Your Body

Cycling can be physically demanding, so staying hydrated is essential. Carry a water bottle and take

small sips throughout your ride. If you're cycling for extended periods, pack light snacks like energy bars or fruits to keep your energy levels up.

Cycling for Every Lifestyle

1. Commuting to Work

Cycling to work is an excellent way to combine exercise with daily errands. It saves time, reduces transportation costs, and allows you to start your day with an invigorating workout. Many cities now have bike-sharing programs, making cycling accessible even for those without a personal bike.

2. Family and Leisure Rides

Cycling can be a fun, bonding activity for families. Weekend rides through parks or nature trails allow everyone, from kids to grandparents, to stay active while enjoying quality time together.

3. Competitive and Recreational Cycling

For fitness enthusiasts and adventure seekers, cycling offers opportunities for competitive races, endurance challenges, and mountain biking. These activities test your stamina and strength while allowing you to explore new terrains.

The Environmental Impact of Cycling

Cycling isn't just a personal health choice; it's a contribution to environmental sustainability. Each time you choose a bike over a car, you reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower air pollution. Urban areas benefit from fewer traffic jams, quieter streets, and improved air quality when more people cycle regularly.

Governments and urban planners are increasingly recognizing these benefits, leading to the development of cycling-friendly infrastructure like dedicated bike lanes and secure parking facilities. By embracing cycling, individuals can play an active role in fostering a greener future.

The Psychological Joy of Cycling

There's an undeniable sense of freedom that comes with cycling. The wind against your face, the rhythmic motion of pedaling, and the connection to your surroundings make every ride a meditative experience. Whether you're cycling alone for introspection or with a group for camaraderie, the act of pedaling brings a unique sense of joy and fulfillment.

Cycling also encourages mindfulness. Unlike driving a car or taking public transport, cycling allows you to immerse yourself in your environment. The sights, sounds, and smells of your surroundings can turn even a routine ride into a delightful sensory experience.

Incorporating Cycling into Your Routine

Integrating cycling into your daily life doesn't have to be complicated. Here are a few ideas:

- **Short Commutes:** Replace short car or bus journeys with cycling.
- **Fitness Goals:** Use cycling as a warm-up or cool-down exercise during gym sessions.
- **Weekend Exploration:** Plan weekend rides to nearby parks, trails, or landmarks.
- **Errands and Shopping:** Use a bike with a basket or pannier to run errands or pick up groceries.

Cycling's Role in Preventive Healthcare

Doctors and healthcare professionals often recommend cycling as part of preventive healthcare plans. Its combination of aerobic and anaerobic benefits helps manage conditions like obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and even mild depression. By incorporating cycling into your lifestyle, you take proactive steps toward long-term wellness.

Conclusion: Pedal to a Healthier You

Cycling is more than just a mode of transportation or a recreational activity—it's a lifestyle choice that can transform your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. From building muscle strength and boosting cardiovascular health to reducing stress and fostering environmental sustainability, the benefits of cycling are truly unparalleled.

No matter your age or fitness level, cycling offers a fun, flexible, and accessible path to wellness. So dust off that old bike or invest in a new one, strap on your helmet, and hit the road. With every pedal stroke, you're not just moving forward—you're embarking on a journey toward a healthier, happier, and more sustainable life.

Indeed, the world looks better from the saddle of a bike—so why not start pedaling today?

Carved in Tradition: The Timeless Art of Woodcraft in Punjab

Dr. Sukriti Bahuguna

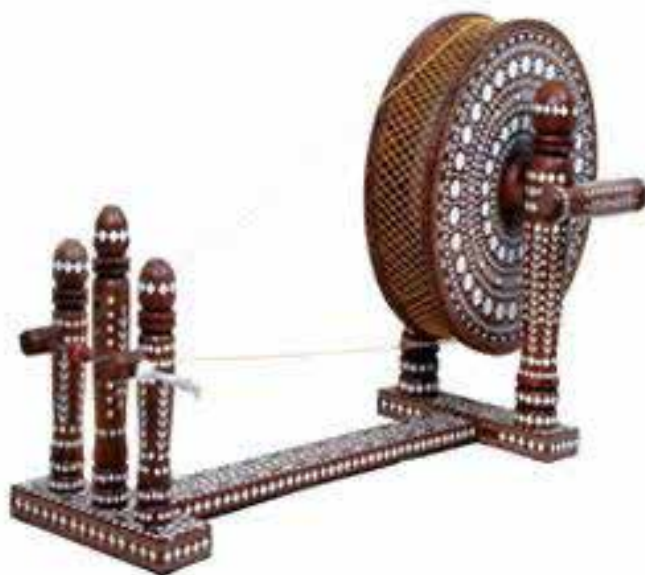
Punjab, the land of vibrant traditions and rich heritage, holds a treasure trove of artistic wonders that reflect its cultural ethos. Among these, the intricate and exquisite art of woodcraft stands out as a testament to the region's enduring craftsmanship. Passed down through generations, the woodcraft of Punjab marries utility with aesthetics, creating pieces that are not just functional but also carry an artistic legacy. From intricately carved furniture to symbolic decorations, this traditional craft has adapted over centuries, yet its roots remain firmly anchored in Punjab's cultural soil.

Origins of Woodcraft in Punjab

The origins of woodcraft in Punjab can be traced back to ancient times when artisans skillfully worked with locally available wood to produce items of both utility and beauty. Historical texts and archaeological finds suggest that wooden carvings adorned temples, havelis (traditional mansions),

and even tools used in agriculture. Over time, the craft evolved, incorporating influences from Mughal, Persian, and Sikh architectural styles, resulting in a unique fusion that is distinctively Punjabi.

The fertile plains of Punjab provided ample access to high-quality wood, especially from trees such as shisham (Indian rosewood), deodar, and teak. These woods, known for their durability and fine grain, became the preferred medium for craftsmen. With their skilled hands, Punjabi artisans transformed these raw materials into



objects of wonder.

Symbolism and Cultural Significance

Woodcraft in Punjab is more than just a utilitarian endeavor; it is deeply imbued with symbolism and cultural meaning. Many of the motifs used in carvings—such as peacocks, lotuses, and vines—carry spiritual or auspicious connotations. For instance, peacocks often symbolize beauty and

prosperity, while lotuses signify purity and enlightenment. These motifs can be seen in the intricately carved doors, windows, and furniture that adorn traditional Punjabi homes.

One of the most iconic examples of woodcraft is the Takht Sahib—the wooden throne-like structures found in gurdwaras (Sikh temples). These intricately carved thrones hold immense religious and cultural significance, serving as the seat for the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of Sikhism.

The Crafting Process: A Symphony of Skills

The process of creating woodcraft is an intricate dance of artistry and skill. It begins with the careful selection of wood, which is often seasoned to ensure durability and resistance to pests. Artisans then sketch designs, often drawing inspiration from traditional patterns or specific client requests.

The carving process involves a series of meticulous steps. Tools such as chisels, gouges, and mallets are used to shape and carve the wood. The detailing, which often features floral patterns, geometric designs, or mythological scenes, requires precision and patience. Once the carving is complete, the wood is polished, stained, or painted to enhance its appearance and protect it from wear.

The use of natural dyes and finishes adds to the authenticity of these pieces. In some cases, woodcraft is further embellished with inlay work using ivory, brass, or mother-of-pearl, adding a touch of opulence.

Signature Pieces of Punjabi Woodcraft

1. Traditional Furniture

Punjabi furniture is a blend of robustness and artistry. Traditional wooden beds, known as manjis, feature intricately carved headboards and frames.



Similarly, wooden chests, cupboards, and almirahs are adorned with floral and geometric patterns, making them both functional and decorative.

2. Phulkari-Inspired Designs

Phulkari, the traditional embroidery of Punjab, has inspired patterns in woodcraft as well. These designs, characterized by intricate floral and geometric motifs, are often incorporated into furniture and decorative items.

3. Wooden Jharokhas (Balconies)

Jharokhas, or overhanging balconies, are a striking feature of traditional Punjabi architecture. Made from wood, these balconies are intricately carved with patterns that reflect both Mughal and Sikh influences.

4. Toys and Miniatures

In addition to large-scale works, Punjabi artisans also excel in crafting wooden toys and miniatures. From miniature bullock carts to carved animal figurines, these pieces are a nostalgic nod to rural life and childhood memories.

5. Carved Panels and Ceilings

Decorative wooden panels and ceilings, often found in old havelis and temples, showcase the pinnacle of Punjabi woodcraft. These masterpieces feature detailed carvings of mythological stories, floral patterns, and calligraphy.

The Role of Woodcraft in Punjab's Economy

For centuries, woodcraft has been a significant contributor to Punjab's economy. Artisans, often working in small family-run workshops, have preserved the craft despite the challenges of modernization. Cities like Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, and Jalandhar have emerged as hubs of woodcraft, attracting buyers from across the globe.

Hoshiarpur, in particular, is renowned for its inlay work, where delicate pieces of ivory or brass are embedded into wooden surfaces to create stunning designs. This labor-intensive technique has earned Hoshiarpur a special place on the map of Indian craftsmanship.

The export market for Punjabi woodcraft has also grown over the years, with demand for traditional furniture, decorative items, and architectural elements in countries such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Challenges and Resilience

Despite its rich heritage, the woodcraft industry in Punjab faces several challenges. The availability of quality wood has declined due to deforestation and environmental concerns. Additionally, the advent of machine-made furniture and changing consumer preferences have posed a threat to the survival of traditional artisans.

However, the resilience of Punjabi craftsmen is evident in their ability to adapt. Many have embraced modern tools and techniques to increase efficiency while preserving the essence of their art. Government initiatives and NGOs have also stepped in to provide training, financial support, and market access, ensuring that this ancient craft continues to thrive.

Woodcraft in Modern Punjab

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional crafts, including woodcraft. Designers and architects are increasingly incorporating handcrafted wooden elements into modern interiors, blending tradition with contemporary aesthetics.

The trend of eco-friendly and sustainable living has further boosted the demand for handcrafted wooden products, as they are seen as an alternative to mass-produced, non-biodegradable items. Artisans are also experimenting with new designs and collaborations, creating pieces that appeal to a global audience while staying true to their roots.

Preserving the Legacy

The preservation of Punjab's woodcraft tradition requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders. Awareness campaigns, exhibitions, and craft fairs can play a vital role in promoting this art form and connecting artisans with buyers. Educational institutions can also contribute by including traditional crafts in their curricula, inspiring the younger generation to take pride in their heritage.

Moreover, the use of digital platforms has opened up new avenues for artisans to showcase and sell their work. Online marketplaces, social media, and e-commerce platforms have made it easier for buyers to access authentic Punjabi woodcraft, providing artisans with a sustainable source of income.

Conclusion

The woodcraft of Punjab is a living testament to the region's artistic spirit and cultural richness. Each piece, whether a delicately carved jharokha or an intricately designed chest, tells a story of tradition, creativity, and skill.

As the world moves towards modernization, the challenge lies in striking a balance between preserving this ancient craft and adapting to contemporary demands. With sustained efforts and a renewed appreciation for handmade art, Punjab's woodcraft tradition can continue to flourish, inspiring generations to come.

Indeed, every carved detail, every polished surface, and every intricate motif speaks volumes about the timeless beauty of this craft—truly "carved in tradition."



The Spark of Lohri: A Tale of Hope and Perseverance

On a frosty winter evening, the small village of Nooripur prepared for Lohri, the festival of warmth and hope. Fields of golden wheat stood tall in the outskirts, awaiting the harvest. Villagers bustled about, gathering dried wood and twigs for the bonfire that would blaze in the heart of the village that night. Among them was little Meera, a 12-year-old girl known for her curious mind and radiant smile.

But this year, Meera's smile was dimmed by worry. Her father, a humble farmer, had been battling a difficult season. Unpredictable rains and a poor yield had left the family struggling. Meera had overheard her parents whispering about loans, debts, and an uncertain future. As much as her mother tried to shield her, Meera could see the worry lines on her father's weathered face.

Lohri was always a time of joy, but this year it seemed like a shadow of its former self. "How can we celebrate when there is so much to worry about?" Meera wondered aloud to her grandmother.

Her grandmother, wise and full of stories, smiled gently. "Lohri is not just about celebrating the harvest, child. It is a festival of hope. When we light the bonfire, we burn away our fears, doubts, and troubles. It's a reminder that even in the darkest winters, there's a promise of spring," she said, placing a comforting hand on Meera's shoulder.

The words stirred something in Meera, though she wasn't entirely sure what.

As the evening set in, the village square came alive. Drummers played the dhol, and villagers danced the bhangra, their spirits high despite the challenges they faced. The massive bonfire, adorned with sugarcane stalks, rewari, and popcorn, was ready to be lit. But just as the village elder raised the torch, a sudden gust of wind extinguished the flames.

A murmur spread through the crowd. "A sign of

bad luck," whispered someone.

But Meera, with her grandmother's words still fresh in her heart, stepped forward. Her small voice cut through the murmurs. "This is not bad luck. This is a chance for us to show that hope doesn't falter. Let me try again."

The elder hesitated but handed her the torch. Meera held it high and turned to the crowd. "Lohri is a festival of resilience. It's about believing in the light, even when the wind tries to blow it out. Let us light this fire together, not just with flames, but with our hope, courage, and unity."

Her words struck a chord. The villagers, one by one, stepped forward, shielding Meera and the torch from the wind. Together, they reignited the bonfire. As the flames roared to life, cheers erupted. The fire cracked and sparkled, casting a golden glow over the faces of the villagers.

That night, as the villagers sang and danced around the bonfire, Meera's father came to her, his eyes glistening. "You've reminded us of something important today," he said, his voice thick with emotion. "No matter how harsh the winter, we must keep our hope alive. The harvest will come, and better days will follow."

As the flames of the bonfire reached for the sky, Meera looked up at the stars, her heart warm with the realization that hope, when shared, burns brighter than any challenge life throws your way.

The next morning, the sun rose over Nooripur, and with it, a renewed sense of purpose. The villagers, inspired by the spirit of Lohri, worked harder, supported one another, and faced the days ahead with unshakable resolve.

And just as her grandmother had promised, spring eventually arrived, bringing with it a bountiful harvest. The lessons of that Lohri stayed with Meera and her village forever—a reminder that even in the darkest winters, hope is the spark that lights the way forward.

Coffee: The Magic Drink That Fuels Creativity, Connection, and Culture

Punmedia Bureau

Few beverages have captured the human imagination quite like coffee. A simple blend of water and roasted beans, it holds the power to invigorate mornings, spark creativity, and weave connections across cultures and borders. From its humble origins in Ethiopian highlands to becoming a global



phenomenon, coffee transcends the label of a mere drink—it's a lifestyle, an inspiration, and, for many, a daily ritual.

In this article, we explore why coffee earns its reputation as a “magic drink,” how it fuels our creative minds, and its profound cultural significance in shaping human connection.

The Chemistry of Creativity: Why Coffee Works

Coffee owes much of its magical reputation to caffeine, a natural stimulant that boosts focus, energy, and alertness. But the magic goes beyond mere wakefulness. Studies have shown that caffeine stimulates the brain's prefrontal cortex, enhancing functions like attention, decision-making, and creative problem-solving.

When you sip coffee, your brain releases dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and motivation. This explains why brainstorming with a cup of coffee in hand often feels like an electric surge of ideas. In fact, some of history's greatest minds—including Voltaire,

Beethoven, and J.K. Rowling—credited coffee as their creative muse.

The Morning Ritual: A Gateway to Productivity

For many, coffee is synonymous with mornings—a comforting anchor to begin the day. The ritual itself can be magical: the sound of coffee beans grinding,

the hiss of an espresso machine, and the aroma wafting through the air. This sensory experience primes the brain, signaling that it's time to switch gears from relaxation to action.

The magic lies in how coffee creates a moment of focus amidst life's chaos. Whether you're a student preparing for exams, an artist chasing inspiration, or a professional tackling deadlines, that first cup of coffee sets the tone for the day ahead.

Coffeehouses: The Birthplace of Creativity and Connection

Beyond its effects on the individual, coffee has a storied history of bringing people together. Coffeehouses have long served as intellectual hubs, fostering conversation, collaboration, and even revolution.

The 17th-century European coffeehouses, often called “penny universities,” were hotbeds of discussion where philosophers, writers, and merchants exchanged ideas over steaming cups

of coffee. Some even credit coffeehouses with fueling the Enlightenment, as they provided a space for critical thinking and debate.

Today, coffee shops continue this tradition. From budding entrepreneurs brainstorming startups to students collaborating on group projects, these spaces are modern arenas of creativity and innovation.

The Cultural Magic of Coffee

What makes coffee truly magical is its ability to transcend cultures, uniting people from different walks of life. In Italy, the espresso is a symbol of efficiency and elegance; in Turkey, coffee preparation and presentation are deeply intertwined with hospitality and tradition. Meanwhile, Scandinavian countries celebrate coffee breaks—or fika—as sacred rituals for connecting with colleagues and loved ones.

The cultural magic of coffee extends to its role in ceremonies and storytelling. In Ethiopia, the coffee ceremony is a revered tradition, where the act of brewing and sharing coffee is a gesture of respect and friendship. Similarly, in the Arab world, coffee is offered as a sign of generosity and warmth.

The Science Behind Coffee's Magic

While the experience of coffee feels mystical, the science behind it is equally fascinating. Coffee contains over a thousand compounds, many of which contribute to its taste, aroma, and health benefits. Antioxidants, for example, help combat inflammation, while moderate coffee consumption has been linked to improved mood, reduced risk of depression, and even enhanced longevity.

But perhaps the most magical aspect of coffee is its versatility. Whether you prefer a robust French press, a creamy latte, or an exotic cold brew, there's a coffee style to suit every palate.

Coffee and the Creative Mind

The link between coffee and creativity is more than anecdotal. In moments of creative block, coffee acts as a gentle push, encouraging the brain to think outside the box. This effect is partly due to its ability to reduce adenosine, a neurotransmitter that makes you feel tired, while simultaneously enhancing the production of adrenaline and serotonin.

Artists, writers, and innovators have long turned to coffee as their secret weapon. Even in the tech world, coffee-fueled hackathons have become a norm, where developers and designers rely on their favorite brews to power through marathon coding sessions.

The Social Magic of Coffee

Coffee's role in human connection cannot be overstated. A coffee date isn't just a meeting; it's an opportunity to bond. From casual chats with friends to first dates and business negotiations, coffee often serves as the silent mediator, fostering warmth and openness.

Moreover, coffee communities—whether online or in-person—have become a global phenomenon. Baristas perfecting latte art, enthusiasts swapping brewing tips, and coffee farmers sharing their stories are all part of this vibrant ecosystem.

Sustainability and the Future of Coffee

As magical as coffee is, its production faces challenges due to climate change and unsustainable practices. Yet, efforts to make coffee cultivation more ethical and eco-friendly are growing. From fair trade certifications to innovative farming techniques, the coffee community is taking steps to ensure that this magic drink continues to thrive.

As consumers, our choices matter. Supporting local roasters, choosing organic or fair-trade coffee, and reducing waste through reusable cups are small but meaningful ways to contribute to coffee's sustainable future.

Conclusion: Coffee's Enduring Spell

Coffee is more than a drink; it's an experience, a ritual, and a bridge between worlds. Its magic lies in its ability to awaken our senses, fuel our creativity, and connect us to one another.

As you take your next sip of coffee, pause for a moment to appreciate the journey behind it—the farmers who nurtured the beans, the barista who crafted your brew, and the centuries of tradition that shaped this magical drink. Because in every cup lies the power to inspire, connect, and transform.

Coffee truly is a magic drink, and its spell shows no sign of fading.

Rising with the Republic: Charting India's Growth and Development



Every year, January 26 marks a monumental day in Indian history—Republic Day. It is a day to honor the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, which established India as a sovereign, democratic republic. Beyond the celebratory parades and patriotic fervor, Republic Day serves as an opportunity to reflect on India's remarkable journey as a nation and its strides toward growth and development.

The Birth of the Republic

The drafting committee, led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, crafted a constitution that balanced tradition and modernity, ensuring inclusivity while paving the way for growth. Over the past seven decades, this foundational document has empowered India to evolve into one of the world's

most vibrant democracies.

Economic Milestones: A Journey of Resilience and Growth

India began its economic journey with a predominantly agrarian economy. Today, it stands as the fifth-largest economy globally. This transformation has been driven by key reforms, visionary policies, and the resilience of its people.

1. Green Revolution

In the 1960s, India faced severe food shortages. The Green Revolution, spearheaded by M.S. Swaminathan, turned the tide, making India self-sufficient in food production. It laid the foundation for modern agricultural practices, helping millions rise above poverty.

2. Economic Liberalization of 1991

The landmark liberalization reforms in 1991 opened India's doors to global markets, dismantled trade barriers, and encouraged foreign investment. This period saw a rapid expansion in industries, particularly IT and services, catapulting India onto the global economic stage.

3. Start-Up Ecosystem

India has emerged as one of the world's largest start-up ecosystems, with over 100 unicorns to date. Initiatives like "Start-Up India" and "Make in India" have created an environment where innovation thrives, attracting young entrepreneurs and global investors.

Infrastructure Development: Building the Future

India's development is evident in its infrastructure. From highways to smart cities, the country is redefining urban and rural spaces.

1. Transport Revolution

Projects like the Golden Quadrilateral, dedicated freight corridors, and expressways such as the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway have revolutionized connectivity, reducing travel time and boosting economic activities. India's metro systems in cities

like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru are examples of efficient urban transport.

2. Digital Infrastructure

The Digital India campaign has brought internet connectivity to rural areas, empowering citizens with access to education, healthcare, and financial services. India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is now a global benchmark for digital payments.

3. Green Energy Initiatives

India is rapidly transitioning to renewable energy. As one of the leaders in solar power, initiatives like the International Solar Alliance and extensive wind energy projects are steering the nation toward sustainable growth.

Social and Educational Progress

India's growth is not limited to its economy; the nation has achieved significant milestones in education and social equity.

1. Universal Education

The Right to Education Act and initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aim to provide quality education to every child. The establishment of premier institutions like the IITs, IIMs, and AIIMS has placed India among the top global knowledge hubs.

2. Women's Empowerment

From the inclusion of women in armed forces combat roles to programs like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, India has made significant strides in gender equality. Women are now leaders in politics, business, sports, and science, contributing to the nation's progress.

3. Healthcare Advances

India's healthcare system has seen transformative changes, from eradicating polio to rolling out the world's largest COVID-19 vaccination drive. Schemes like Ayushman Bharat have provided affordable healthcare to millions, reflecting the nation's commitment to welfare.

Science, Technology, and Space Exploration

India's achievements in science and technology are a testament to its innovation and determination.

1. ISRO's Triumphs

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has propelled India into the space race with missions like Chandrayaan, Mangalyaan, and the recent Aditya-L1 solar observation mission. ISRO's

cost-effective space missions have garnered global recognition.

2. Technological Revolution

India has embraced the digital revolution with advances in artificial intelligence, robotics, and biotechnology. The establishment of tech parks and research centers has positioned the country as a global IT hub.

Strengthening Democracy

India's democratic framework has been the backbone of its growth. The regular conduct of elections, the strengthening of federalism, and active participation in governance by its citizens reflect a mature democracy.

The rise of digital media has also transformed governance, bringing transparency and accountability. Platforms like MyGov and initiatives like e-Governance have empowered citizens to directly engage with policymakers.

India on the Global Stage

As a republic, India's foreign policy has evolved to reflect its aspirations as a global power.

1. Strategic Alliances

India's role in organizations like BRICS, the G20, and the Quad underscores its growing influence. Hosting the G20 Summit in 2023 showcased India's commitment to global development.

2. Soft Power

India's rich culture, Bollywood, yoga, and cuisine have garnered global admiration. Initiatives like International Yoga Day and cultural exchanges have further enhanced its soft power.

3. Humanitarian Efforts

From sending aid to disaster-stricken nations to leading global efforts during the pandemic, India has demonstrated its commitment to global welfare.

Conclusion

India's Republic Day is not just a celebration of its past but a pledge to build a brighter future. From economic reforms to technological advancements, from inclusive social policies to global leadership, India has come a long way.

As we unfurl the tricolor on this Republic Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the principles enshrined in our Constitution and work collectively to realize the dream of a developed, equitable, and sustainable India.

Winter's Wellness Plate: Superfoods to Keep You Warm and Healthy

Punmedia Bureau

As the frost bites and the chill deepens, winter brings a unique set of challenges for the body. Lower immunity, dry skin, and sluggish energy levels are common concerns during this season. Fortunately, nature offers an array of superfoods tailor-made for the cold months. These nutrient-packed delights not only warm you up but also strengthen your immune system and keep you feeling vibrant throughout winter. Let's dive into some of the most beneficial winter superfoods and how they can make this season a little cozier and healthier.

1. Leafy Greens: A Winter Must-Have

Winter is the prime season for nutrient-rich leafy greens such as spinach, mustard greens (sarson), and fenugreek (methi). These vegetables are loaded with iron, calcium, and vitamins A, C, and K. Mustard greens, a staple in many winter dishes, particularly in Indian households, are excellent for keeping your bones strong and boosting your immunity. Spinach is versatile and can be added to soups, curries, and even smoothies. Regular consumption of these greens can enhance digestion, improve metabolism, and keep your skin glowing during the harsh winter months.

2. Citrus Fruits: Immunity in Every Bite

Citrus fruits like oranges, lemons, and grapefruits are nature's powerhouse of vitamin C. This essential nutrient is crucial for strengthening your immune system, especially when you're



exposed to seasonal colds and flu. A glass of freshly squeezed orange juice or a bowl of grapefruit is an easy way to incorporate these tangy fruits into your diet. They also help in collagen production, keeping your skin hydrated and youthful despite the dry winter air.

3. Root Vegetables: Comfort and Nutrition

Winter is the season for root vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, beets, and radishes. These vegetables are rich in beta-carotene, which supports eye health, and fiber, which promotes digestion. Sweet potatoes are particularly comforting, offering a natural sweetness that pairs well with both savory and sweet dishes.

Roasted root vegetables drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with herbs make for a warming, nutrient-rich side dish.

4. Warming Spices: Ginger and Turmeric

Ginger and turmeric are essential ingredients in winter diets, thanks to their anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties. A cup of ginger tea can ease a sore throat and improve circulation, while turmeric, with its active compound curcumin, helps combat inflammation and joint pain. Golden milk, made with turmeric and warm milk, is a traditional remedy to fight cold and keep your body warm.

5. Nuts and Seeds: Tiny Powerhouses

Almonds, walnuts, flaxseeds, and chia seeds are ideal for winter snacking. Packed with healthy

fats, protein, and omega-3 fatty acids, these foods provide long-lasting energy and improve heart health. A handful of nuts or a sprinkle of chia seeds in your morning oatmeal can keep you energized and full for hours. Walnuts, in particular, are excellent for brain health and combating winter fatigue.

6. Jaggery and Honey: Sweet and Soothing

Natural sweeteners like jaggery and honey are a staple in winter diets. Jaggery is rich in iron and can help combat anemia, while honey has antibacterial properties that soothe sore throats. Both are warming foods and can be used in a variety of ways, from sweetening tea to being paired with sesame seeds (til) in traditional winter desserts like gajak and ladoos.

7. Seasonal Superstars: Berries and Pomegranates

Winter is the season for antioxidant-rich berries and pomegranates. These fruits are not only delicious but also help fight free radicals, boosting your overall health. Pomegranate seeds add a pop of flavor and nutrition to salads, while berries make an excellent snack or topping for yogurt.

The Benefits of a Winter Superfood Diet

Incorporating these superfoods into your winter meals has multiple benefits. They provide the warmth and energy your body needs to combat the cold while enhancing your immune system. Additionally, these foods are excellent for skin health, ensuring your complexion stays radiant despite the dry weather. Many winter superfoods also improve digestion and keep your metabolism active, preventing the sluggishness that often accompanies the season.

Conclusion

Winter doesn't have to be a season of discomfort. By filling your plate with these nutrient-dense superfoods, you can stay warm, healthy, and energetic throughout the colder months. Whether it's a comforting bowl of saag, a steaming cup of turmeric latte, or a handful of nuts on the go, winter superfoods are the key to making this season a time of nourishment and wellness. So, embrace the season with hearty, wholesome meals and let winter's wellness plate work its magic!



TEST YOUR IQ

1. Who was the first Indian Governor-General of independent India?
2. The Tropic of Cancer does not pass through which of the following states in India?
3. Which Indian city recently topped the Global Smart City Index 2024?
4. Under which Article of the Indian Constitution is the "Right to Freedom of Religion" guaranteed?
5. What is the chemical symbol for the element Gold?
6. Which country has won the most FIFA World Cup titles as of 2024?
7. What does GST stand for in the Indian taxation system?
8. Which of the following is the largest freshwater lake in the world by surface area?
9. Who authored the famous book The Discovery of India?
10. Which of the following is known as the "Father of the Computer"?

Answers

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. C. Rajagopalachari | 2. Odisha |
| 3. Hyderabad | 4. Article 25 |
| 5. Au | 6. Brazil |
| 7. Goods and Services Tax | 8. Lake Superior |
| 9. Jawaharlal Nehru | 10. Charles Babbage |

A Fresh Chapter: Embracing New Hopes and Infinite Possibilities in the New Year

Punmedia Bureau

The dawn of a new year is much more than a flip of the calendar—it’s an invitation to dream, a chance to reset, and an opportunity to turn aspirations into achievements. As the clock strikes midnight and the world bursts into celebrations, we are reminded of the infinite possibilities that lie ahead. It’s a moment to reflect, recalibrate, and reignite our inner spark, as each new year brings with it the promise of new beginnings.

The Power of Reflection

Every ending carries lessons, and every beginning brings hope. As the old year fades into memories, it’s crucial to pause and reflect on the journey—our triumphs, challenges, and growth. Reflection is a powerful tool that allows us to understand where we’ve been and where we wish to go. What worked? What didn’t? These questions are not about self-criticism but self-awareness, guiding us toward a more fulfilling path.

Resolutions vs. Intentions

New Year’s resolutions often have a reputation for being short-lived. The gyms get crowded in January, only to quiet down by February. Why? Because resolutions are often driven by external pressures rather than intrinsic motivation. This year, consider setting intentions instead. Unlike resolutions, intentions are flexible, rooted in values, and focused on the journey rather than the destination.

For example, instead of resolving to “lose 10 kg,” set an intention to “prioritize health and wellness.” This subtle shift allows room for growth, learning, and persistence, even when the journey isn’t linear.

A Year of Possibilities

The beauty of the new year lies in its untapped potential. It’s a blank slate, waiting for you to paint your masterpiece. Whether it’s starting a new career, pursuing a hobby, mending relationships,



or simply striving for inner peace, the new year is your ally. The possibilities are endless, limited only by the scope of your imagination and determination.

Visualize your goals. Write them down. Break them into smaller, actionable steps. And most importantly, believe in your ability to achieve them. The key is to dream big but start small, for even the tallest mountains are climbed one step at a time.

Embracing Change

Change is often daunting, but it's also the cornerstone of growth. The new year is a reminder that change is inevitable and should be embraced, not feared. Whether it's adopting a new habit, letting go of toxic patterns, or stepping out of your comfort zone, each act of change contributes to your evolution.

Remember, growth often lies on the other side of discomfort. Push yourself to take that first step, however small it may seem. The courage to begin is often the most significant victory.

The Role of Gratitude

Amid the excitement of new goals, it's essential to acknowledge the power of gratitude. Gratitude shifts our focus from what we lack to what we have, fostering a mindset of abundance. Start the year by expressing appreciation—for loved ones, opportunities, lessons, and even the challenges that have shaped you.

Gratitude is more than a feel-good practice; it's a scientifically proven way to enhance well-being, resilience, and overall happiness. Consider keeping a gratitude journal or simply pausing each day to reflect on one thing you're thankful for.

Spreading Hope and Kindness

As we focus on our individual aspirations, let's not forget our shared responsibility to uplift those around us. The new year is a chance to spread kindness, extend support, and inspire hope. Whether it's through volunteering, lending a listening ear, or simply sharing a smile, small acts of kindness can create ripples of positivity that transcend our immediate circles.

The world thrives on collective hope and compassion. By uplifting others, we not only contribute to a better world but also enrich our own lives with purpose and connection.

Nurturing Resilience

Life is unpredictable, and the new year will undoubtedly come with its share of challenges. The key to navigating these is resilience—the ability to adapt, recover, and keep moving forward. Resilience is not about avoiding difficulties but facing them with courage and creativity.

Build resilience by cultivating a growth mindset, seeking support when needed, and maintaining a sense of humor even in tough times. Remember, every setback is a setup for a comeback, and every obstacle is an opportunity in disguise.

The Joy of Being Present

While it's essential to plan for the future, the new year also reminds us to savor the present. The moments we cherish most are often the simplest—laughter with loved ones, a quiet walk in nature, the satisfaction of a job well done.

Mindfulness helps us anchor ourselves in the present, appreciating life's beauty as it unfolds. Practice mindfulness by meditating, journaling, or simply taking a few moments each day to breathe deeply and observe your surroundings.

Conclusion: Your Story, Your Year

As the first rays of the new year light up the horizon, remember that you are the author of your story. The past chapters may have been filled with twists and turns, but the pen is in your hands, and the next pages are unwritten.

Approach this new year with courage, curiosity, and compassion. Dream boldly, act decisively, and love fiercely. Embrace the uncertainties, celebrate the victories, and learn from the setbacks. For in the tapestry of life, every thread—bright or dark—contributes to the masterpiece.

Here's to a year of hope, growth, and boundless possibilities. May 2025 be the year you discover your truest potential and live it with joy and purpose. The journey is yours—make it extraordinary.



LinkedIn: Your Digital Passport to Career Success

Punmedia Bureau

In today's ever-evolving professional landscape, the power of networking has transcended physical boundaries. Platforms like LinkedIn are no longer just tools for seasoned professionals but have emerged as game-changers for the younger generation—especially students and early-career professionals. Whether you're an aspiring entrepreneur, a job seeker, or simply looking to grow in your career, LinkedIn acts as your digital passport to opportunities across the globe.

But how can young people truly leverage LinkedIn to propel their career growth? Let's explore.

Why LinkedIn Matters for the Younger Generation

For many young individuals, LinkedIn might feel like a corporate playground, tailored for

CEOs and HR professionals. However, it's much more than that. LinkedIn serves as:

- **A Digital Resume:** A platform to highlight your skills, internships, certifications, and achievements.
- **A Global Network:** Connect with professionals, mentors, and peers worldwide.
- **A Knowledge Hub:** Learn industry insights, follow thought leaders, and stay updated on trends.
- **A Job Marketplace:** Access thousands of opportunities directly aligned with your goals.

For younger generations—who are already well-versed with digital platforms—using LinkedIn is a natural progression to build a professional brand, even before stepping into the workforce.

Building a Powerful LinkedIn Profile: Your

First Impression

Think of your LinkedIn profile as your professional storefront. A recruiter, mentor, or business contact will often judge you based on how you present yourself here. Here are a few tips to stand out:

a) **Professional Headline and Photo**
Your headline should highlight who you are and what you bring to the table. For example, instead of “Student at XYZ College,” write: “Aspiring Marketing Specialist | Skilled in Digital Strategy and Content Creation.”

Choose a clean, professional headshot—it’s your first impression!

b) **Craft a Compelling ‘About’ Section**
Use this section to tell your story. Highlight your educational background, internships, key skills, and your career aspirations. Make it personal, engaging, and focused.

c) **Showcase Your Skills, Experiences, and Certifications**

- **Add Relevant Skills:** Tailor these to your career goals. For instance, if you’re interested in data analytics, include skills like Python, SQL, and Tableau.

- **Highlight Internships or Volunteering:** No experience is too small—list projects, contributions, and outcomes achieved.

- **Show Certifications:** Courses from platforms like Coursera, Udemy, or LinkedIn Learning add credibility to your profile.

d) **Recommendations and Endorsements**
Request recommendations from professors, internship mentors, or colleagues. These testimonials add a layer of trust and validation.

Networking Like a Pro: Building Genuine Connections

The power of LinkedIn lies in its ability to connect you with people who can influence your career. But this isn’t about “adding random contacts.” It’s about building genuine, valuable relationships.

a) **Start with Your Inner Circle**

Connect with classmates, alumni, professors, and internship mentors. These connections often open doors to opportunities through referrals or collaborations.

b) **Follow Industry Leaders and Companies**

Follow professionals and organizations that inspire you. Engage with their posts by liking, commenting, and sharing thoughtful insights.

c) **Send Personalized Connection Requests**

Always include a short, personalized note when reaching out. For instance: “Hi [Name], I admire your work in [field] and would love to learn more about your career journey. Let’s connect!”

d) **Join Groups and Communities**

LinkedIn Groups are goldmines for knowledge sharing, networking, and opportunities. Be active—ask questions, share insights, and build visibility.

Leveraging LinkedIn for Career Growth

Once your profile is strong and your network is growing, it’s time to unlock LinkedIn’s full potential for career growth:

a) **Find Job Opportunities**

- Use the Jobs section to search for internships, entry-level positions, and remote roles.

- Turn on Job Alerts so you never miss relevant openings.

- Research companies, review employee profiles, and identify recruiters to reach out to.

b) **Build Your Personal Brand**

Your personal brand on LinkedIn sets you apart. Here’s how to establish it:

- **Share Valuable Content:** Post about your internship experiences, projects, or reflections on industry trends. Share what you’re learning!

- **Engage with Thought Leaders:** Comment meaningfully on posts by professionals you admire.

- **Publish Articles:** Writing thought-provoking articles or reflections can showcase your skills and passion to a wider audience.

c) Find Mentors

Seeking guidance from experienced professionals is invaluable. Many industry leaders are open to mentoring

young talent.

Approach them respectfully and express your desire to learn.

d) Showcase

Projects and

Portfolios

LinkedIn lets

you share

presentations,

portfolios, and

case studies.

Whether it's a

college project or

freelance work, let

recruiters see what

you're capable of.

Standing Out in the Age of Competition

The job market today is incredibly competitive. Here's how LinkedIn can help you stand out:

- **Be Active and Consistent:** Regular activity—posting, sharing, and commenting—keeps you visible in your network.

- **Showcase Soft Skills:** Recruiters look for communication, teamwork, and leadership qualities. Use LinkedIn to demonstrate these through your experiences.

- **Research and Adapt:** Study successful profiles in your field and adapt strategies that work for them. Remember, being authentic is key. Don't compare yourself to others; focus on showcasing

your unique strengths and potential.

LinkedIn: More Than Just Jobs

Beyond job searches, LinkedIn helps young individuals grow holistically:

- **Skill Development:** LinkedIn Learning offers courses to upskill in emerging fields.

- **Career Clarity:** Explore

professionals' journeys and gain insights into possible career paths.

- **Building Confidence:**

Sharing your thoughts and achievements builds confidence in presenting yourself professionally.

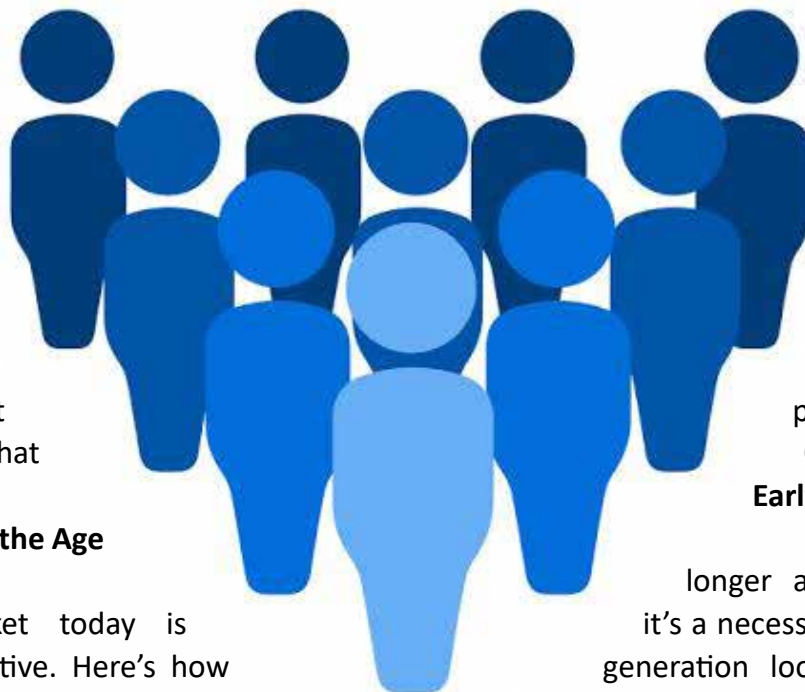
Conclusion: Start Early, Stay Consistent

LinkedIn is no longer an optional tool—it's a necessity for the younger generation looking to thrive in a competitive world. By building

a strong profile, growing a genuine network, and showcasing your skills, you can unlock opportunities you never thought possible.

So, whether you're a college student or a young professional, don't wait to embrace LinkedIn. The earlier you start, the stronger your digital presence will become. Treat LinkedIn as your career growth companion, and watch as it opens doors to learning, growth, and success.

Your dream opportunity might just be a connection—or a post—away.





- How do you like the magazine?
- What do you like about the magazine?
- What are your suggestions to make it more readable?

Suggestion: _____

Please post your reply to the following address:

Punmedia, Room No. 1, 5th Floor,
Punjab Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh-160001

or you can email us at: punmagazine2020@gmail.com



This, Too, Will Pass

This, too, will pass.
O heart, say it over and over,
Out of your deepest sorrow,
out of your deepest grief,
No hurt can last forever--
Perhaps tomorrow will bring relief.

This, too, will pass.
It will spend itself--
Its fury will die as the wind dies down
with the setting sun;
Assuaged and calm, you will rest again,
Forgetting a thing that is done.

Repeat it again and again,
O heart, for your comfort;
This, too, will pass
as surely as passed before
The old forgotten pain, and the other sorrows
That once you bore.

As certain as stars at night,
or dawn after darkness,
Inherent as the lift of the blowing grass,
Whatever your despair or your frustration--
This, too, will pass.

Grace Noll Crowell

The Government of Punjab is now on **Social Media**

The Government of Punjab has made forays into the world of social media in an endeavour to facilitate a vibrant two-way communication between the State Government and the people of Punjab.

Join our online community on Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress and YouTube for regular real-time updates on latest events, news, policies, schemes and initiatives for a factual account on 'Everything Punjab'.

Connect with #PunjabGovtIndia and like/comment/share on the official pages at:



[Facebook.com/PunjabGovtIndia](https://www.facebook.com/PunjabGovtIndia)



x.com/pbgovtindia



[Punjabgovtindia.wordpress.com](https://punjabgovtindia.wordpress.com)



[Youtube.com/c/PunjabGovtIndia](https://www.youtube.com/c/PunjabGovtIndia)

You can also e-mail us at pbgovt.socialmedia@gmail.com for any queries and/or suggestions.

You can also download the monthly e-magazines for Punjab Advance (English), Vikas Jagriti (Punjabi), Vikas Jagriti (Hindi) &

For the detailed information of account and State Development Initiatives/ Schemes visit at: ipr.punjab.gov.in

Your insights are valuable to us. You can revert with your comments on the magazines at feedbackpunmedia@gmail.com

We are looking forward to hear from you.

