

Centre must address the vaccine shortage

It needs to contract supplies from the next lot in the pipeline, top up the ₹35,000-crore allotment if needed

EVEN AS THE vaccine drive for those above 18 years kicked off on Saturday, amid complaints by several states they were short of vaccines, a spreadsheet detailing the quantities that would be available over the next six months is still missing. It was a slow start with the Union health ministry saying on Friday only some states would be initiating the third phase of the roll-out. Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray announced the state would start inoculating those in the 18-44 years age bracket, adding it would be a phased process due to the shortage of vaccines.

To be sure, the process will be streamlined over the coming weeks, but clarity on the supply pipeline would be helpful given the pace of the vaccinations has fallen sharply when it should be accelerating to fight the ferocity of the infection in the second wave. Going by the current availability scenario, based on the capacity guidance issued by the manufacturers, experts believe that at best about 50% of the population can be inoculated by the end of 2021, in the best-case scenario. This is worrying and probably inadequate to contain the spread of the infection and future 'surges'. As Dr Anthony Fauci, chief medical adviser to the Biden administration, pointed out in his interview to *The Indian Express* we need to contract more supplies and do it quickly. While India has negotiated supplies with Russia's RDIF for Sputnik V—the first batch of 1.5 lakh doses arrived on Saturday—it must explore all other options. The government had recently eased the rules on bridging trials for foreign vaccine-makers like Pfizer or a Johnson & Johnson, but there has been no update how talks with these companies are progressing. More purchase commitments needed to have been made earlier, but the government can still work to clinch supplies from the next lot—including those from CureVac, Inovio, Sanofi-Pasteur and the Clover Biopharma- GSK Dynavax combine. Waiting for local producers to ramp up capacity would not be advisable given the frightening intensity of the second wave and the pressure on the healthcare facilities and the medical fraternity. Even if it more expensive to import—significantly more—this is not the time to haggle. This is a national crisis and a critical minimum number of people must be inoculated in the next three months by end July. If the budget allocation of ₹35,000 crore falls short, it needs to be topped up. Several vaccines are in the works including Zydus Cadilla's ZYCoV-D and Biological E's Covid-19 vaccine BECOV2 and should local manufacturers seek financial support they should receive it. Citizens are entitled to a calendar for the supply pipeline, with regular updates which would give them confidence; many of those between 18-44 who wanted slots were unable to get one over the weekend.

Importantly, states should be financially supported—at least bridge funding to begin with—so that they have adequate resources to fund their purchases of vaccines. Ideally, the Centre should have procured these and distributed them to the states; that way, the disputes on the differential pricing could have been avoided. Also, the distribution of vaccines would perhaps have been more equitable with 'stronger' states not running away with the available supplies, thanks to their ability to negotiate with manufacturers. In fact, it may still not be too late to reverse the process. This is the time to stand by the states, not move away.



A second wave of the virus and another exodus

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

Amid the sustained surge in COVID-19 cases, migrant workers in the city, who had come back to the Capital a few months ago, are forced to return to their villages, yet again due to the pandemic-induced lockdown.

For most, the second phase of restrictions has meant a loss of livelihood for the second time within a year. When the Delhi government announced a one-week lockdown, many had hoped it would not get extended. But that was not to be.

Loss of work

With the national capital reeling under a shortage of beds, oxygen, medicines and the positivity rate continuing to be high, several migrant workers said they wanted to return to their hometowns while the trains were still running. Referring to last year's exodus, the workers said they did not want to endure the same experience if there was a complete shutdown.

Several migrant labourers are packing their bags home due to job loss, uncertain future, and fear of getting infected



Migrant workers waiting for transport to return to their hometowns in Bihar following the lockdown in Delhi. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Sheikh Ariful Ali, an embroider in Shahpur Jat, said: "Last year we were stuck in Delhi for the longest time without work. Ultimately, we had to pay around ₹3,200 per ticket for the special trains and return to our village in West Bengal. We do not want a repeat of the same situation. We are planning to leave by the first week of May. Just when

the work was picking up, we have to return again."

With a reduced workload and source of income, negotiating with landlords had also become difficult, said Mr. Ali. "Four of us stay in a room that costs ₹8,000. With no income currently, how are we supposed to sustain ourselves over here? The landlord has clearly

mentioned that we cannot keep the room if we do not pay. So for us, it is a better option to return at the moment," said Mr. Ali who is from the West Medinipur district.

S.K. Riyazul Hussain, another embroider from the same district, said around 800 people had already returned even as others are planning to do the same. "We stayed back in the first two weeks as there were some orders left. Now we are completely out of work. Because of restrictions on international flights, our products, which usually get exported, have also stopped. Wedding seasons were another big source of income for us. Now with the curtailed arrangement, we do not have work from there as well," said Mr. Hussain.

Stating that workers were at a loss, Mr. Hussain added, "Last year, with a complete shutdown, the situation was worse. Now, if it happens again, we will not have any options left with us. So it is best we leave now."

Prevailing uncertainty

Waiting at the Sarai Kale Khan terminal with his family of four, Akhilesh Kumar, a migrant worker from Bihar, said that two weeks of lockdown and the prevailing uncertainty had forced him to take the decision to return. "First we thought this lockdown will be for a week and then it got extended to another week. Now we do not know for how much longer it will continue. So it is best that we return to our village. Remaining here endlessly without work does not make sense. We have faced enough miseries last year and cannot afford it once again," said Mr. Kumar, who used to work as a daily wage at construction sites.

However, for some like Raju Yadav, a juice seller from Bihar's Danapur district, arriving at the decision has not been easy. "Last year, I had gone home after much distress. But this time I am in a fix as things are not really in great shape back home. It is not like the situation is better out there. Here, at least, I am somehow managing to scrape through the days. Additionally, if we go home, I will have to continue paying the rent. What is the point then? I am really in a fix and not sure what to do apart from hoping that restrictions will be lifted soon," said Mr. Yadav.

Bail granted to accused, court cites a day's delay in reporting minor's rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court has granted bail to a man arrested for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl, noting that there was a delay of one day in reporting the matter to the police and the probe was already complete in the case.

Additional Sessions Judge Raj Rani granted bail to accused Puran Singh Bisht on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 20,000 with one surety of the like amount, on contentions that he will permanently shift 15-20 kilometres away from the place where the victim is residing.

The applicant is in judicial custody since January 27, 2021 and charge sheet has already been filed. There is a delay of one day in reporting the matter to the police.

In view of the totality of the facts and circumstances of the

case, the applicant is admitted to bail on furnishing of bail bonds in a sum of Rs 20,000 with one surety in the like amount, the judge said.

Thirty-four-year-old Bisht was arrested on January 26 under Sections 376 (rape) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 4 (penetrative sexual assault) of the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act.

During the hearing on Bisht's bail application, the counsel for the accused submitted that his client and the family of the victim reside in the same building.

In 2019, the father of the victim took a loan of Rs 1.20 lakh from Bisht.

Applicant had requested several times to the father of the victim to return the same but he always delayed the repayment of the loan, Advocate Pra-

teek Mehta, representing Bisht, told the court.

According to Mehta, when the applicant demanded his money from the father of the girl on January 26, he started quarrelling and threatened him and falsely implicated the accused in the case.

The counsel further said that there are material contradictions in the statements of the girl recorded during the investigation, which falsified the version of the victim.

He also alluded to the statement of their landlord and submitted that she did not know anything about the incident.

Advocate Mehta requested the court to grant bail to his client as the chargesheet has already been filed and trial will take a long time due to restricted functioning of the courts.

Covid orphans: Child rights body issues a caution

HT Correspondent

htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Flooded by requests for adopting children who lost their parents to Covid-19, both online and offline, the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) has urged people not to fall for misinformation floating on social media, and advised interested families to follow the due legal process to initiate the adoption process.

Several children have lost their parents to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic -- fourth wave, as per the Delhi government -- in the national capital. Earlier this week, DCPCR appealed to people on social media to call on their helpline number and report cases where children need essential supplies, have lost their parent(s), or are struggling to support themselves due to the illness. Following this, the child rights body said requests for adopting children orphaned amid the pandemic have also started pouring in.

Commission chairperson Anurag Kundu tweeted on Saturday evening: "Do not believe anyone who says he/she can give you the child for adoption. They are either lying or misleading or simply involved in illegal practices. Do reach out to your lawyer friends for advice."

Kundu said he himself has received around 10 such requests in the last few days. "Besides, I see a lot of posts floating around about child adoption. People need to understand that they have to follow a legal process. Any adoption without it is illegal," he said.

Explaining the standard process of adoption, Kundu said that when a child is orphaned, abandoned, surrendered or the parents are unable to support him/her, the child is produced -- by anyone -- before the concerned Child Welfare Committee (CWC). "The committee, in

the interim period, sends the child to a children's home, fit facility or Special Adoption Agency (if the child is below six years) and the Committee then passes order conducting a social investigation report by social worker, child welfare officer or child welfare police officer to check the background of the child and his family in a structured format. It's called a social investigation report. Once it's established that the parents are either unwilling to support, or simply unable to, or the child has turned orphaned and nobody is coming forward, the committee declares the child legally free for adoption, following the procedure laid down in JJ Act, 2015, and Model Rule, 2016, as well as adoption regulations. Then the CWC directs the appropriate authority in CCI (child care institution) and DCPO (district child protection officer) to complete medical examination report and registers the child on the Central Adoption Resource Authority as per procedures and upload all relevant documents required. No child can be adopted without following this process," he said, adding that any other route is illegal and punishable under law.

Kundu also flagged some posts on Twitter by people claiming that few children who lost their parents to Covid-19 were adopted within hours of them seeking help on social media. He also tagged Delhi Police while flagging another such post inviting people to adopt two girls whose parents allegedly succumbed to the virus.

"We are encouraging people who are approaching us to follow the legal process. Besides, they should not take any decision in the heat of the moment. It's a lifelong decision which needs to be taken after due consideration," he added.

A Delhi police spokesperson decline to comment.

CAPITAL'S OXYGEN CRISIS

It has become 'daily fire-fight', say Delhi hospitals as SOS calls continue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, May 2

SOME HOSPITALS IN Delhi on Sunday said it has become a 'daily fire-fight' for them to save lives of Covid-19 patients in the absence of continuous supply of medical oxygen, with one healthcare facility even 'crying out' to the government to shift out its patients.

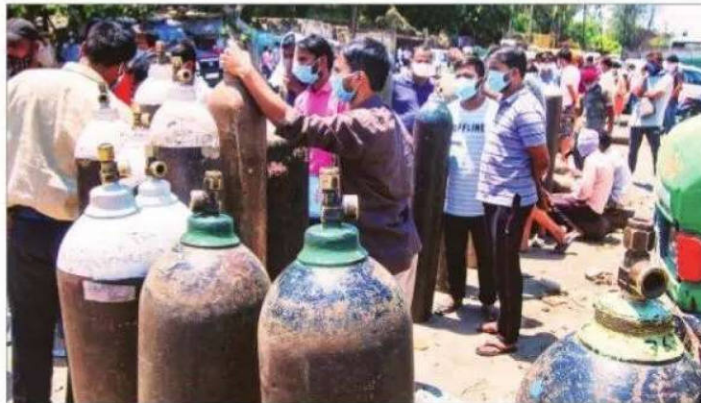
The current wave of the coronavirus has put huge pressure on the city's health system, with hospitals facing shortage of oxygen and equipment to treat Covid-19 patients besides beds.

As many healthcare facilities continue to face crises, Lt Governor Anil Baijal directed top officers of the Delhi government to prepare a detailed action plan to address the shortage of the life-saving gas.

The national capital reported 407 Covid-19 fatalities and 20,394 cases with a positivity rate of 28.33% on Sunday, according to a bulletin issued by the Delhi health department.

This is the second consecutive day the capital has recorded over 400 fatalities due to the deadly virus.

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba at a meeting on



expressed anguish over issues related to availability of oxygen in the national capital and emphasised the need to ramp up the city's medical infrastructure.

He has asked the Delhi government to make all out efforts to lift their allocated oxygen, using all the means at their disposal, and also to ensure that the oxygen available to them is distributed rationally and in a transparent manner, so that there is no diversion or leakage, according to a statement said.

During the day, some hos-

pitals sent out desperate SOS calls to authorities to replenish their dwindling stocks.

Madhukar Rainbow Children's Hospital in Malviya Nagar on Sunday sounded an alarm about their depleting stocks around noon, saying 50 people, including four newborns, were "at risk".

An official of the hospital said in the afternoon there are around 80 patients, including those suffering from Covid-19, at the hospital. It also has 15 newborns, he said.

"There are 50 people,

including four newborns, on oxygen support. They are at risk," the official said.

The hospital does not have a liquid oxygen storage tank and depends on oxygen cylinders from a private vendor.

"It has become a daily fire-fight in the absence of a continuous supply. We require around 125 oxygen cylinders a day," the official said.

The hospital said it received 20 oxygen cylinders around 1:30 pm with the help of government authorities.

Aakash Healthcare in

Dwarka appealed to government authorities to shift patients to other facilities "so that they can be saved".

"CRY FOR HELP: Received only 5 #oxygen cylinders after running around the entire day, not more than 60 mins left to save lives of more than 250 patients," a tweet posted from the hospital's handle read.

Dr Deepali Gupta from Triton Hospital in Kalkaji said they have been struggling to arrange oxygen for their neonatal intensive care unit.

"We have been scrambling for oxygen for over a week. A major tragedy may occur if a continuous supply is not ensured soon," she said. AAP leader Raghav Chadha said the government has issued 5 D-type cylinders to the hospital from the Rajghat Response Point.

"Hospital officials are on their way to collect it. Sincerely hope that oxygen supply chains of hospitals get restored quickly for this fire-fighting is unsustainable," he tweeted.

Sitaram Bharti Institute of Science and Research also took to social media seeking help from authorities.

"Forty-five Covid patients admitted. Need liquid oxygen supply by 5 PM. Help!!" it tweeted. It could not be ascer-

Delhi gets 120 MT LMO

DELHI ON Sunday received its 2nd 'Oxygen Express' carrying 120 MT of LMO and the third train has already begun its journey from Angul to Delhi, carrying 30.86 MT LMO. More 'Oxygen Express' trains to Haryana and Delhi carrying 61.46 MT LMO are on their way.

So far, Indian Railways has delivered more than 1,094 MT LMO in 74 tankers to various states -- Maharashtra (174 MT), Uttar Pradesh (430.51 MT), Madhya Pradesh (156.96 MT), Delhi (190 MT), Haryana (79 MT) and Telangana (63.6 MT) -- across the country.

— FE BUREAU

tained if the facility received a refill.

The Hakim Abdul Hamid Centenary Hospital, where 110 patients are admitted, sounded an alarm about their depleting oxygen stock around 2 pm.

Hearse Reality: Couple Provide Covid Funeral Services 24x7

Shradha.Chettri
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The phones of Namrata Mamak Singh and Daljit Sean Singh ring at all hours these days, even as late at 3am. The Singhs run a funeral company and the recent weeks have been stressful. Every day, their Antim Yatra hearse makes 8-10 rounds from the hospitals to the cremation grounds, sometimes even from spots where patients have died on the way to hospitals.

Uniquely, before any body is taken to the cremation ground, the hearse carries it to the residence of the deceased and hails for a while there. Daljit explained, "It is believed that a person's soul remains where he has lived. So a lot of people request us to go to the house for a while." Since Covid norms frequently prevent families from meeting their lo-

BEACONS OF HOPE

In the midst of crushing despair and grief, there are also stories of selflessness, kindness and courage that restore one's faith in humanity and inspire us to dream of a better tomorrow. If you know of any such individuals or organisations who are serving as Beacons of Hope, please share their story with us on www101BeaconsOfHope.com. Let's light a spark and help dispel the dark.

ved ones for the last time, this rite provides some consolation.

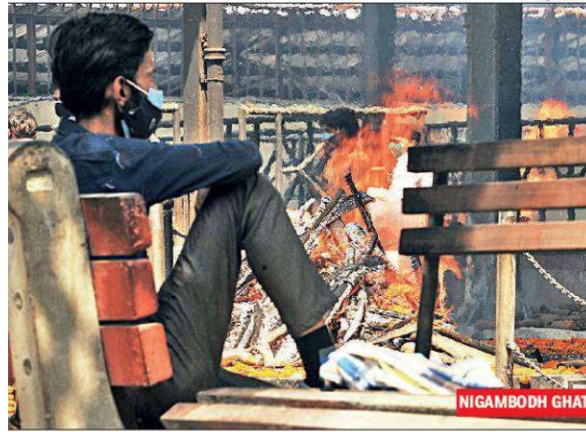
Namrata juggles to coordinate transport with the grieving families, the ambulance drivers, the priests at funeral grounds and her Antim Yatra

team members. "Our hearses, each with some helpers, are constantly taking bodies and kin for the last rites. At the crematoriums, there is often a long wait, so our team waits with the families," she said.

The Singhs also serve non-Covid bereavements, but for those who have died due to the coronavirus, the Antim Yatra team members mandatorily dress up in PPE suits. Faith of the deceased is not a criterion, but 98% of the funerals Antim Yatra has assisted in has been of Hindus.

"We have seen in the past one week how bad our infrastructure is," said Daljit. "We have just three electric crematoria. The wood-burning ones are overwhelmed. With the cremation facilities divided for Covid and non-Covid bodies, there are additional problems."

Namrata added, "Families of patients who die at home or



are suspected of Covid and die on the way to hospital suffer the most. They call us to find out what to do. We are actually as clueless. Without a death certificate, cremation grounds do not allow entry. We, therefore, often ask them to call a doctor who can certify the death or dial the police 100 line. The cops can help if the entire family is Covid-positive."

The couple say the priests have the worst of the situation, often because they don't wear masks or PPE suits. "When we last spoke to the panditji at Lodhi crematorium, he told us he was at the mercy of god. Then he contracted Covid and went back home in Sitapur with his health worsening," said Namrata.

Asked how they themselves remained safe, the Singh couple both shrugged. "These are testing times for everyone, so one has to put one's best foot forward to help them," smiled Daljit.

NIGAMBODH GHAT

MIGRANTS IN THE CITY LIVING IN FEAR & HOPE

With the national capital under another lockdown, thousands of migrants have left the city for their native places. However, some are staying back in the hope that the people's and government's assistance will help them survive this crisis, reports **Siddhanta Mishra**

SHEIKH Ariful is distraught. With the national capital under a lockdown again to curb the surge in coronavirus cases, he is staring at an uncertain future. The memories of last year's lockdown still haunt him.

"My father died due to the national lockdown last year. This year, I do not know what will happen," says Ariful, who works as an artisan in Delhi's Shahpur Jat area.

Many of the city's migrants decided to head back to their home towns after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced a week-long lockdown on April 13. Thousands flocked to the train and bus stations to catch a train or bus. However, several—like Ariful—decided to stay.

Ariful who survived the first week of lockdown on two kilograms of potatoes and few kgs of rice, says that he understands the dilemma faced by the governments but believes this should have been planned ahead.

"If there is no lockdown, the cases will continue to rise. However, in a lockdown, the poor suffer as their livelihood stops. I understand the difficulties. The choice is not easy to make and the government does not have anything else to offer. Financial assistance will be helpful, provided we get it in time," he adds. Ariful works for a saree embroidery outlet on ₹15,000 a month, a major portion of which he sends back to his family in Midnapur, West Bengal.

Among those who have not left Delhi, some have professional commitments or want to avoid frequent travel during the pandemic. There are also several who can't afford the train or bus fare. A few of them believe the situation will improve soon.

While a group of his colleagues have already returned to their native villages in Bihar's Araria, Mohammad Tanveer Alam, 29, is staying in Delhi. He is worried about his family—a wife and two sons—back in the village, but could not go back to be with them during the pandemic due to his professional obligations.

Alam, a foreman in the toy manufacturing unit in Sadar Bazaar, says he decided not to accompany his fellow workers going back to their places as his employer assured him all help during the lockdown.

"Only a few of us are left here in Delhi. Bhai (employer) requested me to stay so that the manufacturing unit could continue functioning. He has given assurance that he will take care of our needs including food or whatever. The employer needed

someone for round the clock monitoring of the production. He trusts me. Hence, he wanted me here to look after the place," says Alam who has been working in the national capital for more than 16 years.

In Delhi, several industrial units have adequate provisions for the residential accommodations of workers. Alam is employed in one such unit. This way, he has an advantage. He doesn't need to travel every day.

"We stay on the premises. So, it is easier for us to manage during the lockdown. Enough raw materials were in stock, so we are working as per our convenience. There is no pressure from the employer also. I don't need to be worried about rent or other expenses but I miss my family," Alam adds.

He may go to meet his family on the occasion of Eid next month if the Covid situation improves.

"In a way, if (not travelling to the native village) is good for me. The lockdown has already caused a huge monetary loss. If I continue to work,

cash, his professional contacts supported him. "I didn't experience much hassle last time. So, I decided not to go back this time too. I know that I will manage. I am hopeful that lockdown will not last long. If we go back to our village it becomes difficult to return soon, which disturbs our business," he explains.

Munshir said that in case lockdown is extended, he might get help from his relatives or family.

"There are others also who haven't gone back. All of them believe that this lockdown will not continue for long and things will be normalised soon. If the situation deteriorates, we always have the option to borrow money from relatives and friends. Why should we waste time, energy, and money on frequent travel? It also results in business losses," he says.

"One of my prime concerns is who will take care of my manufacturing unit in my absence," he adds.

"It is not possible for me to shut my unit. If I don't complete my orders, the buyers will go to another manu-

facturer. Nobody will wait for you. Once you lose an opportunity, it is difficult to get back the buyers. There is already very tough competition in our field. Margin is very low so that we heavily rely on bulk production. If production falls, profit plummets. Given the scenario, continuous production matters."

While the regular work just had started a few months ago after a year of lockdown, migrant labourers are facing an uncertain future again.

Ashok Kumar, a migrant worker from Etawah district in Uttar Pradesh, says, "We were healing from the wounds, scars and the trauma that we went through last year but corona has hit us once again. I will not blame the government as the lockdown was important but the lives of thousands of migrant workers like me were destroyed."

"After going through the trauma last year, I left my wife and children back in the village. The experience last year was very horrible. We had to walk 100 miles on foot with small children. Thankfully, the government and NGOs helped us with food and water on our way back home. But

this year, I did not go back village as the lockdown was for only six days. If it is not extended we can get back to our work. I rejoined in October when the markets were partially opened. The salaries have already been cut, now if I go back, the expenses will increase and I can lose the job. So, I along with fellow workers will wait. We may return if the lockdown is extended."

The 44-year-old works in a cloth selling shop in Sarojini Nagar Market and lives in Sangam Vihar. He earns ₹10,000 per month and pays ₹2000 for rent.

Another migrant Manish Kumar says he did not leave the city last year as his owner and landlord exempted his rent for four months due to lockdown. But this year he is planning to go if the lockdown is extended.

"Last year, both governments, people and many organisations helped us with food and ration. My family depends upon me and I am the sole earner. Our lives depend on daily earnings. Last year, the government pushed landlords to not take rent but this year no such support has been given. There's no food or ration. My family is running on savings and ration we had. I can do any work to support my family but no one is calling. We will have to return if lockdown extends," says Manish, 28, who lives in Pillarji Gaoon with his wife and one-year-old.

"When the last lockdown was announced I didn't go back home. This time too, I am not going. We can't run away every time. Such a situation may come in future as well. I need to earn for my family. The earnings have gone down but I am sure it will be better in some days," says 45-year-old Ram Prasad.

"Last time, I went back and came back after around 4 months. A friend of mine stayed in Delhi and earned more money. I realised lockdown or not, demand for vegetables won't go down. People will continue to buy. My only concern is if I fall sick and get Covid who will help me. I saw in newspapers how people are dying outside hospitals. I don't want such fate," says 22-year-old Pintu from Ara in Bihar.

Delhi government has set up a team of senior officials who have been tasked with providing all help to the workers. AAP government has also announced that it will provide ₹5,000 as financial assistance to workers in this time of duress.

(With inputs from Parvez Sultan, Gayatri Mani and Sonrita Ghosh)



(From the top) Migrants wait for transport for their native places; A traveller takes a different route to board the bus; Social distancing goes for a toss as people flock to railway stations and bus stands to flee Delhi after the lockdown announcement | **PARVEEN NEGI**

Cremation grounds run out of space in Rohtak district

RAVINDER SAINI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, MAY 2

Crematoriums for non-Covid victims in the city are overburdened following a sharp rise in the number of cremations in the past week.

The two main crematoriums — Ram Bagh and Gohana Road cremation ground — have recorded more than four-fold increase in the bodies being brought here for last rites. The bodies are also being disposed of on the ground following non-availability of funeral platforms. It is suspected that the increase might be linked to the Covid pandemic.

In view of the rising numbers, the crematorium managements have asked the bereaved families to collect the ashes the next day to ensure the cremation of other bodies on time. Earlier, the ashes were collected 3-4 days after cremation.

"Before the pandemic, 100



The Ram Bagh crematorium has seen four-fold rise in bodies.

OVER 100 BODIES DISPOSED OF IN 1 WEEK

“Before the pandemic, 100 bodies on average were cremated in a month but the situation changed in the past week. Over 100 bodies were disposed of in the past week. Surendra Batra, RAM BAGH CREMATORIUM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE VICE-PRES

bodies on average were cremated in a month but the situation changed in the

past week. Over 100 bodies were disposed of in the past week,” said Surendra Batra,

vice-president, Ram Bagh Crematorium Management Committee.

Batra informed that a slight rise in the number of cremations was also witnessed during the first wave of Covid last year, but this time, the increase was four-fold, leaving everyone surprised. The bereaved families now have to seek time for performing the last rites of their loved ones in view of the rush, he added.

A doctor on the condition of anonymity said elective surgeries had been stopped in the PGIMS and a cap had also been imposed on the number of OPD patients in view of the pandemic. “The situation has put everyone, especially poor ones, in a tight spot who are unable to afford costly treatment at private hospitals. Hence, they are compelled to remain at home without proper treatment,” he added.