

Black Cats to go through brain teasers

By *Kamaljit Kaur Sandhu*

Induction to become a black cat commando in the National Security Guard (NSG) has just got tougher. The counterterror force with perhaps the best brawn amongst the security force, has taken steps to just get street-smart commandos. The Black Cat commando recently switched to the internationally acclaimed Vienna test system for what is already one of the country's toughest selection process.

The analysis yields information about applicants behavioural repertoire with psychological tests, focusing on fundamental characteristics such as courage, integrity, teamwork, besides inclusion of psychomotor, stress tolerance fine motor skills and cognitive personality test. Previously the commandos had to undergo **the DRDO approved Defence Institute of Psychological Research DIPR Military Psychology Test.**

The Special Police Group (SPG) has been undergoing the Vienna for at least 15 years. A senior officer of the NSG told Mail Today: "The test enables us to make a choice of better candidates. The commandos are required to be super fit, but with a sharp mind. They need to take split-second decisions which can be life-saving or threatening. So we look for qualities of determination, courage, stress management and many other such skills." The decision was taken by DG Sudhir Pratap Singh.

"The Vienna Test is considered best in the world, so we why not the best for our commandos. We already have two batches that have undergone the test. This will give us quality officers and jawans," Singh said. If the test of fire was not enough, the 90- day period of commando training sees 14 to 20 percent dropouts. The Vienna Test enables aides the leaders to find best brawns with more gray matter.



Leh defence lab is Panjab University research centre

By *Vishakha Chaman*

Chandigarh: The Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (Dihar), a Leh-based laboratory of the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO), has been recognised as the Panjab University research centre. It had applied for this status to be able to carry out pharmaceutical and zoological research. "This (the approval) will facilitate research projects between the university and this one-of-its-kind laboratory in the world. The two main areas for collaboration will be pharmaceutical sciences and zoology," PU research promotion cell director O P Katare confirmed here on Monday. Research scholars from the university can now use Dihar's resources and the institute's scientists can pursue doctorate at the university.

About the projects that the university wishes to work on with the laboratory in Leh, Katare said: "We were doing research on herbal products currently and looking for a right partner to collaborate on this project. Now that we have approved Dihar as our research centre, we can together study the rare herbs found only in the Ladakh environment. We are excited about this collaboration and plan to work on several projects."

He added that collaborative research to be undertaken now will provide both the PU and the DRDO laboratory with an opportunity. "It (the approval) will be followed by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and then the research projects can get on," he said.

The application from Dihar was discussed in a recent meeting of the research promotion cell, where experts discussed the possible areas of research. The research being done at the Leh laboratory is focused on exploiting high-altitude plant wealth for making herbal products and enhancing the productivity in vegetable cultivation.