WARNING:
GRAPHIC CONTENT

Team Claims to Make
5 Body Recoveries
a DAY – EVERY DAY!
We Investigate!

Samos Greece Dive Training
By Jerry Richert

We are Public Safety Divers
By Mary White
Greetings,

I honestly don’t know how to introduce this issue to you. In the past I have had a topic on my mind that steered the entirety of the issue I was working on. This intro is likely to ramble on, please indulge me for a bit. This issue is the most unconventional I have ever published.

A while back I came across a diver and a dive team who had some pretty unbelievable claims. They were absurd to say the least.

The specific person I focused on claimed to have helped recover 40,000 bodies. What a load … Either he is delusional or that was a misprint. And – that number supposedly happened over a 24 year span. Over the 8,760 days that represents, he is claiming to recover almost 5 bodies a DAY – 24/7!

I was suspicious of these claims, so I began investigating him. I discovered interviews and even film footage of him and his team in action. Slowly I began to realize there was more to the story. This was not a traditional dive team but they performed the same jobs we recognize as public safety diving.

The more I found out the more awestruck I became. This is an organized team. They are “trained” and devoted to their mission. And, like most of us, are either very underfunded or self-funded to the best of their circumstances. Reading about this team I had them in mind when I was developing a presentation I gave in November for the MidWest Public Safety Diving Association. (MWPSDA.org).

My topic was “Safety and Risk Assessment for Public Safety Dive Teams”. The day after the conference ended another Public Safety Diver lost his life in the Niagara River on a training dive. That was the third PSD fatality in 18 months and the second one in 2017.

I keep track of Public Safety Officer involved drownings. Most of us on a dive team are usually tasked with surface rescues as well. Some may not agree that military fatalities or those that occurred outside the USA should be in the count but it is my work and research and I count them.

When you look at the number of fatalities of Public Safety Officers, PSD included, I have documented 9 fatalities in 2017 and the year isn’t over.

- 01-07-2017 Thembisile Hani SA – Jerry Mogoe-FF Drowned Flood Rescue Attempt - Update
- 01-31-2017 Odisha India - Rakesh Behera - Military – River Training
- 05-05-2017 Cache Creek BC – Clayton Cassidy – FF Flood Creek Inspection – Culvert Accident
05-27-2017 Fryeburg, ME - Nathan Desjardins - LEO River Rescue Attempt

06-01-2017 Anderson Co SC- Devin Hodges LEO- Boat Accident Training

04-16-2017 Fort Hood TX - Lori Pohanka-Kalama – PSD Volunteer Trapped Under Dam Update

10-13-2017 Buffalo NY – Craig Lehner – LEO PSD Training- Current- UPDATED

These men and women died doing the job we do. They are us.

Was there a training issue, a medical event, an equipment issue or a simple mistake that caused these deaths? In some instances we know enough details to make a determination and in a few we can only speculate. But there is a man who runs a dive team who DARES TO CLAIM he and his team recover, on average, almost 140 bodies a month! And NONE of us has ever heard of him or his team.

Until now.

Flip back to the cover of this issue. There is an individual on the bridge, standing on the hand rail. If you look left and down, you will see another person about to enter the water.

They are the dive team. They are divers, they dive into the water to rescue when they can and recover the bodies that flow with the current of the canals they work.

If one of them dies, there will be no report. The society they live in is not like ours. The bodies they recover represent a fraction of the suicides by drowning that occur in their country.

Sometimes they get paid, sometimes they don’t. But when you wonder WHY they would do such an unimaginable job with NO gear, NO formal training and NO real logistical support – consider why YOU do the job.

It has taken months for me to wrap my head around this group of people – and they are not the only ones. There are more.

When you read about their living conditions, the despair of their poor and what these divers do – you should discover that their reasons for doing the job are the same as yours.

The story is so incredible, this issue is focused on them. They are us.

Feel blessed that you have what you have; that you have equipment, support and whatever else that protects you. When you read the pages that follow remember those who have died serving the public, doing what it is you do.

Dive Safe,
Mark Phillips
Editor / Publisher
PSDiver Magazine

If you would like to discuss this topic or any other join our Facebook group CLICK HERE TO JOIN
We Are Public Safety Divers
By Mary White

Public Safety Divers are people. They are men and women, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers; they are just like anyone you know. They come from every walk of life. All have full time jobs besides their work as Public Safety Divers. Some are paid for the work they do and some volunteer with local teams. Some of those teams are even non-profit groups made up of all volunteers. But all are there for the same reason.

There is a tough job that needs done and nobody else will, or can, do it. These are the people who answered a very personal call to help those in need, to assist their community and to keep their neighbors, friends, loved ones and even complete strangers safe. They often have to bring someone very bad news and they’ve chosen to do this work because something inside them drives them to give of themselves, they are Public Safety Divers.

The real life of Public Safety Diving is much different than you see on TV or in the movies. They don’t often jump from helicopters or off cliffs and you won’t see one diver in the water alone. Most of the time these folks are at home doing yard work when a call comes in and they have to go to work. A majority of the time the call comes in the middle of the night or during Christmas dinner or your daughter’s school play, and that call must be answered, you must leave your loved ones and skip that long overdue night out because the person in need of help can’t wait, their time is running out. That call is always answered so others may live.

We are viewed in many different lights, some good and some not very nice, but all come with the job and must be thought about carefully while performing this work. Bystanders on a scene want to know “why aren’t they moving faster”, family demands they “do more, work harder, bring in more people and equipment, and bring my baby home”.

The public will arm chair quarter back every move the media told them you made and they’ll do so in all their uneducated ignorance and on every social media site there is too.

Some may call us heroes and occasionally you may even have people thank you, but if you expect to receive either of those on an even semi-regular basis, to put it bluntly, you won’t.
We work in all weather, and depending on your area of the world that literally means ALL weather. Warm spring days, very hot and humid summers, wet fall weather when the air is turning cold and the bitter bite of winter with below zero temperatures and driving wind making wind chills that even a polar bear says “I don’t think so”.

We must keep our safety in mind during all of this because how much help are we if we don’t get there or can’t perform our jobs because of “this”. Sometimes the weather is a factor and a dive must be called off until conditions improve because of the risk to diver’s safety.

You will hear that word a lot, learn it, remember it; it’s your number one word...SAFETY! We mitigate all these factors to the best of our ability and funding, but most times, circumstances and conditions are not ideal and we must work with what we have to perform the task at hand.

It isn’t a perfect world, if you don’t want to get cold, wet, dirty, bruised up and possibly bloody; you may want to rethink why you’re talking with us today. If you can accept that sometimes we must give a blood sample here and there to reach the best possible outcome, then come and sit with us so we can talk some more.

All of this is in an attempt to provide some insight to what you may encounter working in the world of Public Safety Diving. We share the disappointments because they are real and must be faced. We share our knowledge and training to best prepare you for the work that needs done using the equipment we have and doing it all safely so everyone comes home!

As a member of the dive team you will live some of your very worst moments with your teammates but you will also share some incredible moments of joy and laughter so deep you’re sides will hurt for days. You’re going to look and smell terrible together at times and then have to put on your Sunday best to go fundraise and meet with the public and answer all sorts of questions you didn’t think were even possible.

You will literally put your life in the hands of those teammates and them in yours. They have to know they can count on you to keep them going in the right direction and let them know of dangers when needed. And they have to be absolutely sure in their mind that you will not panic and lose it when they need you most, you are their lifeline and they will be yours.

Some of this may seem extreme, because it is! You can’t train enough for a job that can kill you in the blink of an eye.
Ego has no home on a Public Safety Dive team.

Being a Public Safety Diver is hard work and training for it is demanding, physically and mentally. If you have ever been through the military, fire academy or police academy some of it will be familiar.

Take all the training seriously no matter what background you have, the people training you are sharing their years of knowledge, some of which are hard-learned lessons. Do them a courtesy and listen. If you are new to this genre of diving, ask questions. We don’t know everything and we all started at the same point.

We train in the pool and in open water, we train with every piece of equipment we use and we train a lot. We train until what we do becomes a muscle memory to build confidence in yourself, your gear and your team.

You must know all the equipment and become competent to step into any role when needed and be confident you can do the task assigned. It’s not crazy, it’ll happen over time.

Most people come into public safety diving from the recreational diving world. That is where we start. But it doesn’t matter if you have years of time as a recreational diver or 100s of logged recreational dives – none of that experience properly prepares you for a zero visibility search and recovery.

Use your knowledge and experience to build on. Ask questions, take notes and don’t be afraid to ask for help.

You will train in black water. You will learn and develop new skills. You will learn how to deal with entanglements, to use new types of underwater equipment and techniques that could save your or a team members life.

Public safety diving is not a sport but it is a team function. You will learn how to work with your team, how to use the equipment available and all of the tips and tricks the team has learned.

You will learn how to improvise without sacrificing safety. You will learn crime scene documentation and collection, search patterns and rescue techniques and so much more.

You don’t have to be a diver to be on a PSD team, there are many roles that need filled. There are tenders, equipment operators, chaplains, boatmen and others depending on need.
You are going to be exposed to dangers in the water and on the land. Your courage may be tested and you will learn how to overcome or deal with panic and the variety of stress you will experience.

The dive scene will be full of cops, firefighters, tow vehicles, media, spectators and more. Conducting yourself professionally at all times is absolute and anything less is not tolerated.

You will be expected to attend training sessions as well as public events. Some PSD teams speak at schools and community centers; we talk with adults and children and we fundraise. You have to be willing to give more time than just that of training hours to make your team successful.

It can be intimidating and hard work, most times with long hours and no pay, but you are investing in yourself and your team and that is the entire reason that team is there; to serve the community.

We are ever changing and always training, we spend so time with the team; they become family. In the end, you must take a long hard look at yourself and why you want to be a part of the team. Then consider the amount of work and how hard it can be at times and decide if you are up for it, especially after a hard day at work.

Consider the conditions we work under, the weather and the 911 calls on a moment’s notice that may require you to leave your family during holidays or special events. Your family has a stake in this too. Allow them to be involved in your decision process, they are your best support system.

Think of the extra time we must spend fundraising, think of what it will take to keep the team moving forward and if you are willing to put that time in to make it all work.

Lastly, think of the amount of training we put in and that the costs are sometimes paid out of our own pockets. Can you handle the training commitment and the occasional expense? Are you physically up for that challenge? Are you willing to get a doctor to sign off on your medical waivers? Are you willing to be more honest with yourself than ever before to know if this is the right choice for you? This is a huge commitment, and we would love to work with you if you are willing to put forth effort to be part of our team.
If you can deal with our brand of crazy, we have an application for you to fill out.

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**Mary White**

Mary began diving recreationally in early 2009, and learned of Public Safety Diving from her instructor who was also a PSD and PSD instructor. Having a background as a Military Police Officer, Public Safety Diving appealed to Mary and she immersed herself in learning and training so she could continue her passion in serving her community. Mary joined a small, all volunteer, PSD team in her area in late 2009 and by 2011 had been elected Vice President to the team and began assisting in creating training and application standards for the team to gain dedicated and qualified individuals to serve the communities in need. By 2017 Mary had served as VP, Secretary, Treasurer and her longest role as Event Coordinator. In this role Mary was able to help in building relationships with multiple departments and develop training events so any agency could respond to a dive call out and know how to best help one another. Mary has written and obtained grants to fund her team and procure much needed new equipment for the safety of the team. Over the years, Mary has responded to and been a diver on every call her team has had. Mary has worked with agencies such as the FBI, State, County and local law enforcement, many fire departments and has been a strong supporter and safety diver for the Special Olympic Polar Plunges.

**Samos Greece Dive Training**

*By Jerry Richert*

My name is Jerry Richert and I am a firefighter and Corporate Trainer for Dive Rescue International. In November 2015, I was watching Sky News when I saw a story about a volunteer dive team in Samos, Greece. Due to their very close location to Turkey, they were receiving a large number of refugees fleeing war torn countries.

Unfortunately, the refugees were being transported to Samos in rafts and boats that were overloaded and not designed to make the trip. As a result many died on the way.

https://youtu.be/GPRE2gwWoNw
A video I watched, followed this volunteer dive team going out and pulling the bodies of refugees off a boat that had sunk just off their shores. What I didn't know until later was that this dive team was comprised entirely of members of a local recreational dive club on the island.

There are no rescue or recovery dive teams on the island so these men and women stepped up to do something they were not trained to do.

When they made the dive on the sunken boat, they found eleven people had died: five women and six children, four of them babies and all trapped inside. This was their first experience with having to conduct this kind of diving and sadly, would not be the last.

As a public safety instructor, I know the kind of stress that can be experienced having to recover bodies of drowning victims. In all the years I have been doing this and among the numerous sad stories I have witnessed, I have never come across anything like what the Samos Divers did on their very first dive.

On the Sky News video, they mentioned they were volunteers and worked by donations. I immediately found their diving association website and sent an email asking what they needed. I soon received a response saying they needed dry diving suits and prayers.

I work for a large fire department and we had extra equipment we were no longer going to use. With permission from our administration, I put together a package that included equipment that we would use for situations like those in Samos: 10 Dry suits, 6 Full Face Masks, 6 Wireless Underwater Communications Units and Surface Communications Units.

With the help of friends, the fire department, Dive Rescue International and UPS, we were able to secure funding and a reduced rate to get all that equipment to Samos Greece. It arrived on Christmas Day 2015 which was not planned but very fitting!
A donor paid for me to go to Greece and meet the team. I was able to bring spare parts for their full face diving masks and dry suits and to teach a class on how to service and repair both.

The best part was the new friends I made and the mornings at the cafe talking with the people who made up this team of volunteers.

My time spent with Alexandros, the team leader and head of the Samos Diving Association, was unforgettable. Alexandros is a very knowledgeable and kind man who has done extensive work and research on how to best to keep his divers safe. He has also reached out for help in addressing the psychological impact this experience has had on the team.

It became very clear to me that the next logical step for Alexandros was for him to become a Public Safety Scuba Instructor and Recreational Instructor for his team and others on the island that may help him in the future.

I set up a Go Fund Me Page for Samos Greece Dive Training and if you check the updates on the page, you will find that we met our goal of $3000.00 dollars to send Alexandros to PADI Instructor training. He has passed his exams and completed 5 specialty courses and is now a PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer. We also met our next goal of an additional $4000.00 for new equipment, bringing our total raised so far to $7000.00.

Dynamics have changed on the island with the team, but the mission remains the same. Alexandros is planning to attain his Public Safety Diving Instructor certification. Training divers to this level will help with challenging missions they may face. He is also heavily involved with the education and preservation of the underwater environment of Samos. He coordinates underwater clean ups of the island coast, volunteers his time in the community and speaks at conferences.

There have been lots of exciting things going on behind the scenes with anonymous donors helping with the purchasing and donations of new equipment. I hope you will take the time to visit our page and see what’s been happening. We are each other’s keepers no matter the distance that separates us.

Thank You to everyone who has helped turn a chance encounter into something extraordinary.

Jerry Richert - Click to email or call 317-503-4306.
The Hidden Victims of India’s Suicide Belt


JUNE 27, 2014 BY MALLIKA KAUR

Farmers are killing themselves over debt in Punjab state - and leaving wives, daughters, and other women behind.

BAKHORA, India — A blue and white wooden sign marks the "stitching room" in the gurudwara, a Sikh congregation center, in the small village of Bakhora. The walls of the room are lined with hand-drawn posters illustrating steps to making a "ladies kameez," or tunic. Samples of colorful bags, belts, and toys are scattered all around. A quiet hum fills the room as some 20 women huddle over sewing machines, at work on long and short stitches — "neat, ‘til perfect," explains the instructor.

Preeti, one of the chattiest students, holds a sniffling child under her shawl as she sews.

"Why not come here? One would just be gossiping at home otherwise, sitting, doing nothing," Preeti explains. And here, she laughs, "we all get to gossip together." Four years ago, Preeti was brought to Bakhora, in India’s Punjab state, to marry her cousin after her father committed suicide in a nearby village. One of Punjab’s many destitute farmers, her father took his own life — ingesting the same pesticides he used on his fields — because he could no longer pay back his debts. A few months later, her mother died, "of heartbreak" says Preeti. She was orphaned along with her four sisters.

After her marriage, Preeti came to work at the sewing center, a vocational site established to support the women who are being left behind by the disquieting rate of suicide in India’s agrarian heartland.

PEDRO UGARTE/AFP/Getty Images

Since 1995, according to data compiled by India’s National Crime Records Bureau, more than 290,000 farmers have killed themselves in India. Yet other studies of suicide, which remains criminalized and highly stigmatized in India, suggest that the official figures may even underreport the problem. According to a 2011 report by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University School of Law, one Indian farmer commits suicides every 30 minutes. (By contrast, a 2012 report in the journal Lancet questioned whether the rates of suicide among farmers are actually higher than the national average.)
One way or the other, there is little doubt that India’s farmers are in trouble. Stagnant prices for produce, a lack of crop insurance and loan-forgiveness policies, and an unregulated lending market have left many farmers in insurmountable debt, fueling the disturbing suicide trend.

The problem is particularly acute in Punjab. The epicenter of India’s agriculture bounty, Punjab reportedly has the highest rate of farmer suicide among the country’s states. Baba Nanak Education Society, an NGO working in the region that helped found the Bakhora sewing center, reports that at least 44 families in Bakhora alone have experienced a debt-related suicide.

While suicide victims are overwhelmingly men, the surviving women are particularly vulnerable to problems after their husbands, fathers, or other male family members are gone. Female heads of households traditionally have little earning power or independence. In some cases, families have dealt with multiple suicides, and the dependents, unable to cope with the resulting economic burden, also resort to the ultimate step of desperation. Widows routinely face disinheritance and dislocation, or abuse at the hands of their in-laws, while children — especially girls — are affected by abrupt removal from schools, nutritional deficits, and at times even bonded labor.

Punjab and the nameless dead

http://bnespunjab.org/blog/?p=28
September 10, 2014. By Inderjit Singh Jaijee This entry was posted in Articles

SEPT 10 IS WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

On September 1, in District Jind just near the Padarth Khera Bridge over the Barwala Link, some 3 kms east of Khanauri, five bodies were spotted. They had floated down the Bhakra Canal — somehow going over the Khanauri barrage. As the horror of this sight was sinking in, a sixth body was spotted caught under the bridge. And then, out of the five bodies, a body was spotted near the canal bank — two dogs were dragging it out of the water. Passersby told us that bones and skulls are often found in the fields near this place — all that is left of the victims after the dogs have fed.

Who did those bodies belong to? Few are ever identified by name and village. By the time they reach Khanauri or the Barwala Link, wallets, clothes and shoes are gone. Submersion generally takes less than ten days to obliterate the features and erode the skin so that even marks such as tattoos are no longer visible. It is logical that most of the bodies belonged to people who lived in Ropar or Patiala districts because, of the Bhakra Canal’s 164 kms, only 5 kms fall in Haryana, 159 km fall in Punjab and of this 159, 157 kms pass through Ropar and Patiala district.
The very fact that these bodies are unidentified makes it imperative to care about them. One obvious reason we should care is ethical and compassionate. If the phrase, “human dignity” has any meaning at all, then no body should end up as a sodden corpse attracting only the attention of dogs. Indifference to such a situation demeans the living no less than the dead.

A less idealistic reason, we should care about these bodies involves the State as the upholder of law and justice. An effort must be made to not only establish the identity of the body but also the cause of death. Some may have died of accidental drowning, some may have committed suicide, and some might have been murdered and then thrown in the canal. These latter cry out to the State for justice.

The police aversion to filing missing person reports is well documented. A body fished out of the canal is no longer a missing person – they have been found. Every effort must be made to piece together the story of who they were and how they died. In doing so, it will also throw into sharp relief the difference between the number of unidentified persons whose whereabouts come to light and the number of persons whom the police record as missing. In other words, if 40 bodies turn up in the Bhakra Canal every month and the total number of missing person cases recorded monthly by the Ropar and Patiala police is less that ten, then something is wrong.

To the credit of the police, the department has recently taken corrective action on this front. A police officer has been posted at Khanauri to watch for bodies at the Khanauri head. An officer is on duty every day and maintains a register of detected bodies. For the past several months, the average number of bodies sighted has been between 35 and 40 per month. This is a good first step towards seriously addressing the ‘missing persons’ issue.

The watchful officer has noted around 35 to 40 per month – but some bodies float past Khanauri at night and remain unseen. Others may be submerged or may otherwise escape notice. Suppose that an additional 8 to 10 bodies go unnoticed (ie. About 20 per cent) – that would take the monthly average up to about 60.

Multiplying by 12, gives an annual number of not less than 700. This is a conservative estimate. Over a period of ten years, the figure would be 7,000. It may be recalled that the statewide rural suicide census conducted by Punjab universities for a ten-year period, mentioned close to 7,000 suicide deaths by all means (poison, hanging, drowning, etc.). Here we have 7000 deaths in ten years in just two districts from drowning alone. As per studies of rural suicides, death by drowning accounted for only about 5 per cent.
Recommendations

Ensure recovery
Bodies should not be allowed to float downstream into Haryana. The Haryana police do not care about a stolen car from Punjab, much less will they care about some unidentified body from Punjab. Every effort should be made to recover bodies from the Bhakra Canal at the Khanauri barrage.

This can be done by exercising close attention and facilitating the detection of the bodies.

Install underwater lighting
Install sieve nets just behind the off take to the Barwala Link that flows into Haryana to keep the bodies from passing into Haryana.

Appoint divers (Today a diver charges as much as Rs 20,000 to recover a body. A poor man cannot pay so much. Government should appoint divers.)

Set up a mortuary
Haryana has established a modern mortuary at Agroha about 60 kms downstream from Khanauri. Many of the bodies of drowned persons would be from Punjab. The Punjab government should set up a mortuary at Khanauri.

Follow forensic procedure
Established forensic procedure should be followed in the case of every body recovered - It should be photographed, fingerprinted and a DNA sample taken.

Exact cause of death should be established. A person may be murdered and then thrown in the canal.

Police records should be checked to try to match the recovered body with descriptions of missing persons. If the local police was not informed about a missing person whose description matches the recovered body, then police should seek to find out why they were given no such information.

Photographs of the recovered body should be published in widely circulated newspapers.

De-criminalise suicide.
Often families do not disclose suicide out of fear that they will be victimized by the police. Specifically, they fear extortion at the hands of the police and/or they fear that they will be compelled to take the body to a distant hospital for post mortem although they cannot afford to do so.

Other measures:
Residents of Khanauri have built a guest house and maintain it. The local gurdwara supplies food to people who come in search of their missing relatives. The government should contribute to this laudable local initiative.

Government should provide an ambulance to carry bodies. Earlier this year, the government sent an ancient
broken-down vehicle to Khanauri. When this vehicle proved to be past repair, the local MP provided an ambulance out of his MPLAD.

80 People Drown Every Day In India: Report
http://www.mid-day.com/articles/80-people-drown-every-day-in-india-report/16397163
Jul 24, 2015 | Indiaspend.org

It is reasonably well known that India has the world’s deadliest roads, with traffic accidents accounting for 53% of unnatural deaths in 2014.

What isn’t as well known is the second major cause of unnatural deaths: drowning (9%).

About 80 people drown every day, or more than 29,000 every year, IndiaSpend calculated from data for five years to 2014, released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

This confirms what is anecdotally evident in the media.

Drowning was followed by accidental fire (6%), falls (5%) and electrocution (3%), according to the NCRB, which collates and analyses statistics from state police forces. 1,008 people die every day around the world due to drowning, according to World Health Organisation’s Global Report on Drowning.

The report explained how drowning is overlooked and how governments and local communities need to integrate it with other public health agendas.

Globally, drowning is the third-leading cause of unintentional injury death, accounting for 7% of all injury-related deaths.

“Drowning is the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion or immersion in liquid; outcomes are classified as death, morbidity and no morbidity,” according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) definition.

55% rise in injuries to drowning survivors
Apart from deaths, many who survive drowning are injured, those numbers rising 55% over the last five years, from 738 in 2010 to 1,144 in 2014.

Most deaths were reported in the age group of 18-45 years; it accounted for nearly 53% of all drowning-related deaths in 2014.
Globally, more than half of those who drown are below 25 years.

As many as 7,882 in the 18-30 age group died and 7,835 in the 30-45 age group in 2014.

**Children below 14 are particularly at risk**

Earlier this week, Vikhyat Deshpande, a four-year-old boy cycling around a pool unattended fell in and died in a Bangalore apartment complex.

Children below 14 years with 4,054 drowning deaths represent a significant risk.

Nearly 90% of drowning deaths among children aged 1-12 years involved water in a pot, well or pond, a study in the rural community of Kaniyambadi in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, found.

The NCRB has now added a new classification, “accidental falls into waterbody”, under drowning in the 2014 report. Drowning was previously categorised under “boat capsize and other cases”. (An Indiaspend.org story)

As many as 11,884 people have died falling into water-bodies in 2014—accounting for nearly 40% of all drownings nationwide—while 669 were reported injured.

Maharashtra tops the list with 4,822 drowning deaths in 2014, followed by Madhya Pradesh (4,299), Karnataka (2,162), Gujarat (2,116) and Tamil Nadu (1,899). These five states account for 51% of drownings across India.

**A popular form of suicide**

Drowning is also one of the top-five means to commit suicide. Hanging (42%) is the most prominent means of committing suicide, followed by poison (26%), self-immolation (7%) and drowning (6%).

Over the last five years, 39,423 suicides by drowning were reported. Maharashtra topped the list, reporting 1,276 suicides by drowning in 2014.

**Drowning, a global public-health threat**

Drowning is a neglected public health threat not just in India but across the world, claiming over 90% lives in...
low- and middle-income countries, according to the Global Report on Drowning.

Drowning accounts for 43% of all deaths of children between one and four years in Bangladesh. It is the leading cause of unintentional injury death among children aged one to three years in Australia. In the United States, drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury deaths among children aged between one and 14 years.

Drowning accounts for 75% of deaths in floods, which are becoming frequent as the world warms.

The use of alcohol around water is also an important risk factor for drowning in many countries, especially for adolescents and adults, according to the Global Report on Drowning.

(Chaitanya Mallapur is a policy analyst with IndiaSpend.)

Mystery shrouds floating dead bodies in Punjab Canal, NHRC takes notice
April 15, 2016  By Satinder Bains

CHANDIGARH: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken notice of the large number of unidentified dead bodies found floating in the Bhakra Canal leading to Rajasthan, a branch of which splits into Haryana at Khanauri barrage in Sangrur district of Punjab. It is estimated that about 500 dead bodies from various districts of Punjab flow with the water and detected at Khanauri every month.

Inderjit Singh Jaijee, a human rights activist who has brought the matter into light and released a video footage of dead bodies floating in the Bhakra Canal, many unidentified dead bodies being thrown back to canal, dogs dragging the bodies near the bak and feeding on them in the presence of police. Jaijee said that an inhuman treatment was given to the dead and police was allowing many dead bodies pass into Rajasthan feeder and canal splitting into Haryana.

The NHRC March 13 had directed the Punjab Government file a report on dead bodies within four weeks on a complaint by Jaijee. Meanwhile Jaijee on April 14, 2016 submitted video evidence of the dead bodies seen floating every day in the Bhakra Canal. He contested that during last 10 years, over 6000 dead bodies were detected in Canal and police has not kept a record of them.

Jaijee who runs a NGO movement against state repression alleged that 60 percent of dead bodies are of debt ridden farmers who commit suicide and their heads are never counted. He said that rest of the dead bodies are unknown and police take no action to
preserve their identity proof, DNA or photographs. He said that the footage of mutilated dead bodies floating in the canal and dogs feeding on them was shot by a diver engaged in the job.

Jaijee who earlier obtained directions from Punjab and High Court to count the dead bodies flowing into Khanauri barrage had later approached the NHRC about recovery of large number of dead bodies and inhumane treatment with the dead. Punjab and Haryana High Court had directed Punjab Government to install under water lights and camera at headworks but district administration of Sangrur took no action on it. He said that many dead bodies are allowed to pass through the barrage during night and are not counted.

Jaijee said that a police post is located just 100 yards away from the Khanauri barrage but policemen hardly help the family members of missing persons who come there to look for dead bodies. Now the local villagers have constructed a guest house there where family members can stay and wait for dead bodies to reach the spot.

He said that police is not registering any FIR which creates problems in identification of dead persons and payment of insurance claims and compensation to the kin of deceased.

Jaijee however raised the question that why police was not identifying the dead bodies and make it public who are the dead persons.

He said that during days of militancy it was common sight that police was throwing dead bodies into the canal after torturing and killing the youth. He said that there was no militancy now in Punjab.

Jaijee said that Punjab Government was suppressing the facts to hide the number of farmers committing suicides in Punjab and trying to give an impression to outside world that all is well in the state. He said that farmers were passing through distress and SAD BJP government and the previous Congress governments had never extended helping hand to the farmers.
an impression to outside world that all is well in the state.

He said that farmers were passing through distress and SAD-BJP government and the previous Congress governments had never extended helping hand to the farmers. He accused Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal and former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh for extending lip service to farmers.

Jaijee said that in Haryana, the state government pays Rs.2000 per month old age and widow pension while in Punjab till a month ago amount of pension was only Rs.250 per month. He said that only last month pension is doubled to Rs.500 per month which is meager amount. He said that state government has set no mechanism to count the number of farmers committing suicides. In last 42 days 31 farmers had committed suicides but it is on record while there is no record of unidentified dead bodies flowing into Canal.

The Human rights activist said that number of farmers committing suicide in Punjab is more than Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra but present government is not ready to reveal the real picture for political considerations and paints a rosy picture before the nation. He said that mystery of dead bodies must be revealed. He hoped NHRC would give justice to the dead.

Bodies in Bhakra canal: 2 months on, NHRC awaits Punjab’s reply
Apr 18, 2016  HT Correspondent  Hindustan Times

The constant flow of human bodies into the Bhakra irrigation canal near the Khanauri barrage in Patiala district has put the Punjab government in a fix before National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

Two months on, the state is yet to reply to a notice of motion on these corpses that could be of murder, suicide, or accident victims. Four-to-five bodies are fished everyday by a team of divers doing this job for years now, searching the missing people for families. In September 2015, after human right organization Movement Against State Repression (MASR) brought the matter to its notice, the NHRC wrote to the Punjab chief secretary to ask for a reply within four weeks.
As the MASR raised the matter again on Friday at a press conference here — even screening a video of how stray dogs feast over the bodies that float up to the canal embankments — state chief secretary Sarvesh Kaushal said in a quick reaction: “I have sensitised the additional chief secretary, home, and the DGP (director general of police) for follow-up action and remedial measures.”

“I have ordered the deputy commissioner, SSP (senior superintendent of police), civil surgeon, and the superintending engineer (canals) to inspect the point near Khanauri within three days and propose a mechanism for the retrieval of the bodies,” said Kaushal. The chief secretary said he would be able to clarify only later on whether or not the state had yet replied to the NHRC notice, since the matter pertained to the home department.

Kaushal accepted that the proposed installation of floodlights and cameras under the Khanauri barrage waters had not yet started. MASR convener Inderjit Singh Jaijee accused the police of shirking its duty. “If police come into action, many families will get back the bodies of their missing members,” said Jaijee, “but on the contrary, cops have instructed the divers not to retrieve the unclaimed corpses.”

The footage shown at the press conference featured divers who were putting the bodies back into the canal after identification. A Russian channel had filmed dogs in the act of dragging bodies out of the shallow waters.

**Timeline**

2011: MASR moves the Punjab and Haryana high court for directions to the Punjab government on the matter

2012: The high court orders installation of floodlights and cameras under the barrage waters

2014: Police start keeping a record of the bodies recovered daily

September 2015: MASR moves National Human Rights Commission against non-compliance of the high court orders

February 2016: NHRC writes to Punjab chief secretary to seek explanation.
Sangrur Mystery: Dead Bodies Continue to Wash Up at Khanauri Barrage
April 26, 2016 By Sikh24 Editors

SANGRUR, Punjab—Over the past 5 years, every day, multiple dead bodies have been continuously recovered from the Bhakra Canal at the Khanauri barrage. The Punjab Government is yet to determine the cause of death of these bodies. The video footage from March 2015 shows several of these dead bodies being recovered from the barrage in a single day.

Inderjit Singh Jaijee, a well-respected author from Punjab opinionated, “Since only a very short portion of the Bhakra canal is in Sangrur district and the maximum length is in the districts of Ropar, Fatehgarh Sahib and Patiala, it can safely be asserted that the overwhelming majority of the bodies in the canal would have come from Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib and Ropar.”

“If we know for certain that not less than 400 bodies were observed in the Bhakra canal at Khanauri in a single year, we know that the number of suicide deaths in the upstream districts would vastly exceed 300 for ten years.

In ten years the number of bodies would be 4,000. Not all would be suicide victims; some would be the victims of accidents and murders. It is our estimate that three-fourths of these bodies are suicide victims (3000) but even if one assumes that only half of the bodies were suicide victims that is still 2,000 persons.”

Jaijee, convener of the Movement Against State Repression, has been at the forefront of seeking Government action to take corrective measures. He states that despite the issue being of grave importance, no concrete step has been taken to curb the number of suicides.

The matter is not new, it was first brought to the attention of the Punjab & Haryana High Court in 2011. As per directions of the High Court, lights were to be installed at the barrage, however the matter has been taken rather lightly by the authorities as no cameras or lights have been installed. So far, the Police Post at Khanauri has been making a daily…
register with a count of dead bodies that are recovered. However, till this date, no action has been taken to identify these bodies.

Having failed at getting attention of the Punjab Government, the MASR filed a case before the National Human Rights Commission in November 2015. The Commission asked the Punjab Government to submit a report detailing actions taken to recover and identity these dead bodies.

However, months later, NHRC is still awaiting a response.

The Unexplained Deaths at Bhakra Canal

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/damanvir-kaur/the-unexplained-deaths-at_b_9791744.html

By Damanvir Kaur  April 2016 - The Tribune

For the past five years, divers in the state of Punjab, India have been routinely retrieving four to five deceased bodies from the Khanauri barrage of the Bhakra Canal, located in the district of Patiala (Hindustan Times, 2016). Despite the alarming number of bodies already retrieved, they continue to appear and often identification and cause of death are not determined.

Inderjit Singh Jaijee, from the organization Movement Against State Repression (MASR), has led the charge in bringing awareness to this issue. In a letter addressed to the Punjab Government, Jaijee urged government officials to take immediate action in recovering all the bodies in the Bhakra Canal as well as adjoining canals in Sangrur, Fatehgarh Sahib, and Ropar. He also stated that it is imperative the government work towards identifying the bodies and causes of death (MASR, 2015).

In 2012, the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the installation of underwater lights at the barrage. In his letter to the government, Jaijee stated that as of last year, the lights had not been installed (MASR, 2015).

In a video posted on the news website Sikh24.com, footage taken by the divers shows the brutal reality concerning the deaths at the canal. Disturbingly, bodies can be seen floating, entangled in debris and badly decomposed. According to Sikh24, the bodies, once recorded in the ongoing count, are often left in the canal and as the video painfully shows, devoured by dogs.

Jaijee and others have stated that one reason for these deaths may be farmer suicide. In a report published by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) at New York University School of Law in 2012, it is estimated that more than a quarter of a million Indian farmers have committed suicide since the mid-1990s (CHRGJ, 2012).
This staggering statistic is especially true in the Indian state of Punjab. Overwhelmed by crushing debt and failing crops, resulting from the government enforced green revolution that has devastated the agricultural landscape of Punjab, farmers are often left helpless and unable to recover (NPR, 2009).

In February 2016, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) wrote to the Punjab Government, ordering officials to provide an explanation to whether these deceased bodies were due to suicide, homicide, or accidental. Two months later, the government is yet to reply (Hindustan Times, 2016).

Last week, Punjab Government officials visited the Khanauri barrage, stating an effort would be made to identify bodies and inform family members, preserve unclaimed bodies at a hospital for a duration of time, and ensure an availability of divers near the canal.

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Why is a Gory Video of Unidentified Corpses Strewn Around a Punjab Canal Making Rounds?
http://www.sikh24.com/2016/05/03/why-is-a-gory-video-of-unidentified-corpses-strewn-around-a-punjab-canal-making-rounds/#.WgX_gvkrKUk
May 3, 2016 By Mallika Kaur

The Movement Against State Repression (MASR), led by Mr. Inderjit Singh Jaijee, has released literally raw footage: a 23:51 minute video showing human bodies strewn in the water or its banks, alongside garbage, and being pulled apart by packs of wild dogs. Mr. Jaijee has brought this mystery to the attention of the Punjab Government, Central Government, Punjab & Haryana High Court, National Human Rights Commission, and now everyone with an internet connection.

Mallika Kaur speaks with Mr. Jaijee, human rights activist and co-author of ‘Death and Debt in Rural India,’ to find out what lies beneath the bodies, and remains of bodies, caught downstream the Bhakra Beas mainline canal.

Q: You’ve released a gory video of dignity being stripped from the dead, of human beings even reduced to meat that these dogs seem quite accustomed to. What drove the decision to release this video?

Jaijee: Look, when we were telling them, citing figures, even from government’s own documents, people perhaps were not getting it. When you show the actual picture, people are more likely to believe it, we hope. The government is not admitting this horror. Now see it for yourself. Bodies taken out, thrown back in. This, in presence of police. So it is deliberate: to perpetuate the mystery and misery around these bodies. Look, when I say police, I mean government.

Q: What can people do about this?

J: People can ask some obvious questions and make sure bodies don’t just keep piling up spreading disease and reinforcing despair.

Q: Some questions then. Your contention is that we might be only watching this on video now, but its been happening for years?

J: At least for 6-7 years when it came to our attention that dead bodies floating downstream the Bhakra Beas mainline canal are piling at Khanauri village. We went to the local police station. The police station is located only...
about 100 yards from the canal head where the bodies come, and they denied there were any bodies piling up. We pointed them out to the police, but they didn’t pay any attention. That was policy. But we kept going back there because the number of bodies was increasing. And then, in the meanwhile, the local citizens of Khanauri had even set up a rest house for the relatives coming to look for these bodies.

**Q: How did these relatives know to come looking here?**

**J:** Word spreads among tragedy-affected desperate families. And the fact the rest house was created shows we aren’t talking about 1 or 2 bodies. A rest house with 4 or 5 rooms was set up. And the Gurdwara provides langar to all the travellers.

**Q: Who build this rest house for the relatives?**

**J:** The Khanauri Mandi citizens. And the free food from the Khanauri Gurdwara. As for the government, we asked them to set up a mortuary ...nothing happened. The government paid no attention. After a lot of noise, they did put an ambulance 3 years ago, but it was a broken down affair...you don’t see that coming to pick the bodies in the videos.

**Q: Civil society showed such initiative in a time people are cynical about civil society. Where is Khanauri, and why did Khanuri Mandi folks mobilize?**

**J:** Yes, humanity amongst the ordinary person is alive. So, to be clear, Khanauri is village within Punjab, on the Haryana border. See, this canal, one branch goes through Punjab and enters Haryana at Tohana, through a smaller canal. It is shallower. Bodies get blocked about three kilometers down this branch, at a one place. They are easier to detect here, its not at all that they all come from here. So since Khanauri is where they are piling up...citizens there are witnessing this horror and the tragedy of searching family members.

The Khanauri Mandi citizens also organized to a petition to the High Court about 5 years ago. The High Court gave orders to add underwater lights, and various other gadgets. Now, 5 years have passed and government has done nothing.

**Q: What have you done to petition government action?**
J: So in 2011 the Khanauri situation was brought to the attention of the Punjab & Haryana High Court and the next year it ordered the state to take corrective measures. Nothing happens. Police does post someone in 2014 to stand there and take note of the number of bodies seen floating through, but he has orders not to make any attempt at retrieving or identifying bodies. In 2015, we approach the National Human Rights Commission. Result? A diligent policeman, at least recording the numbers, is removed from his post! Then, we write to the NHRC about that decision against a junior man in uniform. And soon we hear that he has been reinstated. On the larger matter, the NHRC’s ask of an Action Taken report from the government has been met with silence. As the three months are coming to a close, we decided to release these videos, so people can wake up to see what putrid callousness we are campaigning against.

Q: In the videos, there are people handling these bodies, who seem to be retrieving these bodies too?

J: Divers are employed there. Private, locally employed. They look at a person and see. If the person looks rich, they will ask for Rs. 30,000 and if a person doesn’t look so rich, they ask for 10,000 or even 5,000. But people coming are so poor they can’t pay. So even if divers find a body, can’t identify it, they just throw it back into the canal. And for a good portion of time, the police has instructed divers to do just that.

There is nobody hired by the government to retrieve bodies. We had asked the government to employ divers. We had asked the government to put underwater lights, we had asked the government to put nets. But like I said, dead silence.

Q: So the dead have been carried downstream...

J: Yes, however far up the canal is coming from. So the families coming looking, some are from Ropar, some come from Patiala, some come from ...it enters Sangrur area only 3-4 kilometers above. The rest is within Patiala. So districts Patiala, Sirhind, Ropar, Fatehgarh Sahib...maybe parts of Ludhiana.

Q: You have been championing this issue. And your work is around rural debt-related suicides, which you began exposing in the early 1990s. But how do you connect these bodies tragically piling up in Khanauri to debt?
J: We don’t say they are all debt-related suicides. Even police at Khanuari have noted 35-40 bodies every month, regularly. This is the bodies that are actually seen. Now who are these unidentified bodies? Usually if it is a case of murder, police is active, villagers are active, and report it to the police station near their village. If it is an accident on a canal, the press is also active. A scooter fell down, a car fell down. That is big news, villagers, they run and see that. So the unidentified bodies can’t largely be that. Of people jumping in the canal voluntarily. Even that can be some other angle, some heartbreak, some other desperation. Families come looking. But, who are the people whose deaths are still not largely reported? Our experience points to suicide victims, driven by debt.

Q: So, by this process of elimination of the reasons...you are making the claim that these bodies are missing people who have taken their lives due to debt?

J: See, we have village Balran in Sangrur. It had 90 suicides. There are however also 15 missing in that area, post-militancy mind you. Not even counting the deaths of that period. Every village we survey for debt-suicides has missing people, who are not recorded anywhere. Our estimate is many, maybe most, bodies in the canals are of such missing people. For instance, a person from a university team who came surveying, was telling me the other day that he had come to Khanauri earlier too when a family he was talking to mentioned they suspected their debt-ridden man had ended his life in the canal.

Q: You mentioned debt-suicides are not largely reported?

J: Yes, it has changed over the decades that we have been doing this work, but villagers still do not shout out debt suicides. Initially, if a family reported a suicide, it was a declaration that they are very poor. If they had children to marry, they wouldn’t find matches for them, etcetera. And their prestige in the village would sink. Initially they hid the suicides quite fiercely. I remember families that we went to who got very hostile with us. How dare you say this? Our chap would never do that! They tried to keep the image of being well-to-do, farmers or laborers. And then whether suicide is still a crime or not, whether the law has changed or not, isn’t clear to people. What is clear, through their life’s experience, is the amount of harassment that has followed many suicides, including jail for abetment. The government’s failure to recognize that Punjab has suicides for so many decades has shrouded the issue in shame.

Q: Why has there been such a resistance to recognizing suicides in Punjab?

J: Look, it’s very simple. Economically, from virtually on the top, Punjab has sunk towards the bottom. If the most agriculturally progressive state has sunk, that means agriculture has failed across the country. So the government just doesn’t accept these facts in full. Even though, per capita, Punjab has the highest rural suicide rate in the country. I can’t be clearer: the highest. We have written on this so many times. Yet, each Punjab
government downplays the suicides...which is why it seems to us part of a larger agenda in New Delhi to downplay agrarian distress across the country. The Government of India knows this is an all-India problem. Admit it in Punjab, and it's clear as day.

This is reminiscent of the militancy period. Pre-militancy in fact. With agrarian distress rising across India, Punjab had taken the lead. Rasta Roko, and then they started blocking Punjab’s food grain going outside... when the government had no way to escape, they converted it into a religio-political movement, and clamped down. Well-planned diversionary tactics. I'm not saying people were not raising real demands. People were fed up, they did want change, they wanted more federalism. The same calls came from Jyoti Basu, Biju Patnaik, from Karnataka, from Andhra, but the attack on Punjab and 2% Sikhs was disproportionate. It was painted as all about unity of India, keeping Punjab in India.

Anyway, Punjab feeds India. Now, with an all-India problem, what will they do? They are now trying to push divides on religious basis more ferociously, instead of talking about the poor and hungry and those feeding them, or dying trying.

Q: So let’s come to who is dying now. There is often talk about this being a Jatt caste problem, from their misplaced pride and machismo, highlighted in some recent movies as well. Can you comment on this?

J: If it were a caste thing, then how do you explain rural suicides of labor? That is exceeding suicides of farmers now? So it isn't that. Now, maybe a village that had 30% landowners once, has 10% landowners: balance have become laborers. So you have landlords, laborers, and landlords-cum-laborers. Remember, in an agrarian economy, the entire village lives on farming. Whether the grocer, the cloth merchant, transporter, the local halwaii, everyone. Farmer has always been 30-40% and then the laborers working with him, because it is still largely manual farming. And I am not taking about the belt that has more industry, like Ludhiana, or other avenues of work. I am talking about the large belt of Punjab that still has traditional agrarian society, which is being strangulated, man, woman, child.

Q: Suicides are largely by males, it is gendered. What happens with the women?

J: They rise to the occasion. They try to head households, but still with debt hanging on the family’s head. In a society where women have largely not been allowed roles of leadership, despite this being the land of Baba Nanak, they then have to fight for their rights. We have also partnered with Building Bridges India and
developed stitching centers and other support for women particularly.

And mind you, not everyone can go against the immense odds. We also have stories where children are abandoned, and the widow, who cannot feed them or preserve her dignity, or prevent them from becoming child labor, goes away. Then we have the elderly raising these orphans. Young girls remain particularly vulnerable.

**Q: And this is the same for those working ancillary to farmers, they are also committing suicide?**

**J:** Definitely. The entire village is suffering. All segments of the village are sinking. Money comes in through farmers, in a farming society. If he is not bringing in money, everyone shrinks. So even the shopkeeper, he is not getting buyers. We have cases of these shopkeepers committing suicides, even multiple suicides: taking their wives and children with them.

With land ceiling laws — mind you there is no parallel ceiling on urban lands or industrialists — with the division of land with each generation, you have farmers with very small land holdings. And on top of that, there are laws controlling the price of crops. Earlier, it was by market demand. But now on paddy and wheat, which Punjab has been forced into growing, while cotton and sugarcane and cash crops have by policy been encouraged to the west and elsewhere, there is a price control. So we have controlled price, limited cultivation area, and a depleting water table, where is the farmer going to earn from? And for those dependent on his purchase power, it also spells doom. Suicide is a reality of life here, and that is why people quietly turn into these corpses in Khanauri.

**Q: So the gore at Khanauri is well known by local residents, local knowledge, local researchers... how about those further away?**

**J:** Secondary investigating bodies of the universities, who do not necessarily have knowledge about the villages, have been put in charge of surveys ordered every so often. Look, out of all the graduates in Punjab, only about 3% come from the rural sector. Now, how much are the urban area researchers going to find out about the rural sector and its suicides? It becomes a way of playing down the suicides too. The Agricultural University that is slightly more aware of agro problems, gave the estimate of 4,049 debt-related suicides. Punjabi University and Guru Nanak University said that in 10 years, less than 300. And now, from this canal, under Punjabi University’s purview, you have up to 35-40 a month! I’m all for University studies.

But let independent groups come in, let their reports be published, and let there be some light shed for the families of the dead.
Q: What is your estimate?

J: Our village-to-village survey and related relief work of adopting families in 110 villages reveals 2300 debt-related suicides. The Punjab Farmers Commission saying 2000 people dying per year is now old news. Don’t do anything, and the new numbers are so much higher. I estimate, across Punjab at least 5000 suicides a year.

The canal angle came as a revelation even to us 5 years ago. And these are only the bodies that surface, what about those don’t or get caught in silt or undergrowth? And this is only from one canal. Punjab is littered with canals...

Q: And you’ve succeeded in securing some governmental relief for families identified?

J: It took MASR 10 years of litigation to get any compensation ordered in well-documented cases, with Panchayat Affidavits attached saying, yes, this person had a debt of such-and-such amount and committed suicide by such-and-such method. But really, compensation is treated like a top secret by government. A Deputy Commissioner’s statement saying so many given compensation. Now, say how, many, by what District. And compare it against the reported numbers. But they are using compensation for political advantage.

Larger changes like laws are also more news than fact. The laws in the 1930s, named after Chottu Ram, recognized that the agrarian man is always a laborer, always working on a job that keeps others alive, so requires protection given the uncertainty of this profession. In post-colonial India, that people like my father fought for, how hard is this to understand? Very. Because of the larger conspiracy of silence around the agrarian sector that I explained earlier. And also, lobbies like the moneylenders, the Aartiyas. They have nothing to do with cultivation, except lending money to farmer. So why is produce sold through him, why aren’t interest rate ceilings on loans enforced so debt doesn’t become a downward spiral? Because Aartiya is a fundraiser of the political parties. Thus, depriving farmers of their legitimate rights.

Q: What needs to change, in Khanauri, for the dignity of the dead? Besides the acknowledgement and larger structural changes?

J: Ambulance, mortuary, lights, nets, need to be installed as a start because so many bodies flow through undetected. There has to be an effort made to investigate every unexplained death. They have now said that they will build a mortuary 30 kilometers away. People don’t have the money, and they should go another 30 kilometers away to Moonak? A poor man cannot do that. No, right here, bring some transparency and some dignity. Advertise in the newspapers, the photos of those found, before dogs disfigure them. All we are asking for is admission and investigation on what is actually happening.

Mallika Kaur is a lawyer & writer who focuses on gender and minority issues in the U.S. and South Asia.
The bodies of evidence in Punjab
MAY 28, 2016 Vikas Vasudeva

Is a reported spike in corpse sightings at a sluice gate along the Bhakra main line canal linked to rising agrarian distress in the Malwa region? The jury is still out, and the State government refuses to wade into it.

If anything perfectly captures the cradle of the country’s Green Revolution and its extensive network of canal-fed irrigation, it is the blue-green waters of the Sutlej flowing through the Bhakra main line canal. The 164-km channel, with a carrying capacity of 12,455 cusecs and built between 1950 and 1954, supplies water to Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. Just where it branches off into Rajasthan and Haryana, however, the scenes at a sluice gate convey what many think is the underside of the success story — the rise in rural distress. Over a dozen people are craning their necks for a better view of the gushing water. They are looking for their missing kin here.

The sluice gate in Khanauri-Kalan village in Sangrur, and the siphon in Padarth Khera village in adjoining Haryana, are where a number of bodies are getting washed up. The sight of dogs dragging away the mutilated bodies and feeding on them is not uncommon.

“My elder brother Balwinder Singh is missing... We found his clothes near the canal in Sirhind and immediately rushed to Khanauri in search of him,” says Paramjit Singh from Khanna-Khurd village in Ludhiana, sitting in a small shed overlooking the canal near the sluice gate, which has ‘missing’ posters pasted all over. “He was the breadwinner of the family... for the past few months he was in some sort of tension, but he never shared it with us. Our livelihood is based on farming, but the returns have been falling,” adds Mr. Paramjit, who has been in Khanauri for more than five days with a friend.

In search of bodies
People come to Khanauri from Ropar, Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala and Sangrur, the districts through which the canal passes. With the government not doing its bit, the local Sahara Charitable Trust has built a rest house for visiting families and local gurdwaras provide them food. There’s not even a mortuary here, a long-standing demand of both locals and visiting family members.
In absence of any proper institutionalised mechanism to retrieve corpses, private divers — operating without proper kits and charging anywhere between Rs.5,000 and Rs.15,000 — are the only hope for families. “There’s not a single day when I don’t see another corpse in this canal. In fact, in the past two-three months I have been sighting two-three human bodies daily,” says Ashu Malik, a Khanauri-based diver who has been recovering bodies for over 25 years. “Besides, many bodies go unnoticed because they are submerged or they pass the barrage at night.”

In 2012 the Punjab and Haryana High Court directed the State government to install underwater cameras in the Bhakra canal above the Khanauri Headworks to spot bodies, but the cameras are yet to be installed. However, the Sahara trust has helped erect around 20 floodlights and 13 CCTV cameras at the gate and main canal for better sighting.

Looking the other way
The police station is hardly a few hundred metres away from the canal’s sluice gate, but the men in khaki are reluctant to retrieve these bodies due to long-drawn procedures and legal tangles in case of unidentified bodies, say locals, and also because the onus is then on them for cremating the dead, lodging a report and settling jurisdiction. Kuldeep Singh, sarpanch of Khanauri-Khurd village, claims that although the police adopt due process for the bodies that are claimed or identified, many unidentified bodies are either not fished out or are thrown back into the canal. “The police let many corpses float away into Rajasthan and Haryana,” he alleges.

The police rubbish the allegations. “Whenever a body is sighted necessary action is taken by the police,” insists Senior Superintendent of Police, Sangrur, Pritpal Singh.

“Even underwater cameras were installed, but they were damaged by stones and mud that come with the flow of water,” he adds. “We maintain a record. Between April 2015 and March 2016 we have recovered 29 bodies... there’s no truth to two-three sightings a day,” says Baljeet Singh, the Khanauri Station House Officer. He, however, concedes that there is always a chance that bodies which are not sighted could cross the barrage and flow downstream. “We’ve had a police post near the canal since 2014, and just few months back we’ve posted four policemen for round-the-clock vigil and to assist families of victims,” he added. It’s another matter that no policeman was seen manning the ‘post’ for almost four hours.

The spike in corpse sightings during the past two-three months has raised concern among local NGOs, human right activists and agriculture experts, who link it to agrarian distress along the stretch of canal in the Malwa region, the epicentre of farmer suicides in the State.

Rural suicides
A survey by the Baba Nanak Educational Society, a Sangrur-based NGO that runs a rescue-and-revival project for families of suicide victims, revealed that the Lehra, Andana, Sunam blocks (Sangrur), Patran block (Patiala), Budhlada block (Mansa) and four villages in neighbouring Haryana have witnessed as many as 2,342 rural suicides from the late 1990s to 2015. “A majority of
these suicides were of farmers and farm labourers who had taken loans from moneylenders. In many cases multiple suicides have taken place in the same family,” says Surjit Singh, field officer of the NGO.

Surveys jointly conducted by the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Punjabi University, Patiala and Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for the period 2000-2010 show that more than 7,000 farmers and agricultural labourers committed suicide in the State due to agrarian distress and indebtedness. The surveys also revealed that nearly 34 per cent of the victims chose canals to commit suicide.

A PAU report on the two districts worst hit, Sangrur and Bathinda, had put the farmer suicide figure at 1,757 between 2000 and 2008. Senior PAU economist Sukhpal Singh, who authored the report, says 1,288 (73.3 per cent) farmers committed suicide primarily due to indebtedness.

Inderjit Singh Jaijee, a human rights activist and the convener of Movement Against State Repression, has even taken up the issue of floating unidentified bodies with the National Human Rights Commission, following which on March 13, the NHRC directed the Punjab government to file a report on the issue.

“Local villagers and private divers have been sighting 30-45 bodies on average every month, but now this number is rising, which should not be ignored. Recovery of all bodies from the canal is important not only as a humanitarian step, but will also help give a clearer picture of all deaths by unnatural causes in Punjab,” says Mr. Jaijee. “The bodies ought to be disposed of in a dignified manner. The insensitivity of those at the helm of affairs reflects their mindset about the problems faced by the people,” says Lakhwinder Singh, professor of economics at the Punjabi University.

Even if one were to dispute the numbers at the Khanauri barrage, the fact is that Bhakra main line canal comprises only 159 km of Punjab’s 14,500-km-long canal system. If so many sightings were reported from just the Bhakra, it’s anybody’s guess what the number of bodies floating down all canals in Punjab might be.

**Diving for the dead**

Nov 18, 2016  Posted By Kshitij Malhotra

![For the past 24 years, Ashu Malik has made a living by recovering dead bodies from the canals of Punjab’](https://www.newslaundry.com/2016/11/18/diving-for-the-dead)
On October 31 of this year, the day after Diwali, 58-year old Mahinder Singh went missing. The retired bus driver lived in Mansa, Punjab, with his family. He had told them he was going to visit Patiala, but had disappeared somewhere along the way. When they were unable to locate him, Mahinder’s family knew what had most likely happened: Mahinder had probably committed suicide.

The next day, Mahinder’s son and nephew, accompanied by other family members, made their way to the Bhakra Main Line (BML) canal leading out of Patiala and towards Khanauri, in the nearby Sangrur district. They scanned its length carefully. “We thought maybe he took off his shoes before jumping in and if we found them, we would know for sure,” said Dilpreet Singh, Mahinder’s nephew said.

The search yielded nothing. Two days later, Mahinder was still untraceable. The Singh family came to Khanauri, in the nearby Sangrur district. They scanned its length carefully. “We thought maybe he took off his shoes before jumping in and if we found them, we would know for sure,” said Dilpreet Singh, Mahinder’s nephew said.

The search yielded nothing. Two days later, Mahinder was still untraceable. The Singh family came to Khanauri, in the nearby Sangrur district. They made their way to the Sahara Charitable Trust guest house, where families like Mahinder’s come and stay free of cost as they wait for their dear and disappeared to surface. Like everyone else who comes to Khanauri to recover their dead, the Singhs also enlisted the service of the gotakhor (diver), Ashu Malik.

A lifeline for the dead

"I've been going into canals since I was eight years old. That's when I learnt how to swim," said Malik. For those who come to Khanauri in the hope of finding their missing family members, Malik is the one on whom they pin hopes. If he doesn’t fish out their relative’s dead body from the canal, there’s still hope that their worst fears were baseless. He isn’t the only gotakhor in Khanauri, but he certainly is the most trusted.

The first time Malik, 36, jumped into a canal to save someone, he was 12 years old. “She was washing clothes by the canal and fell in,” he remembered. “Nobody else made a move, so not fearing for my own life, I jumped in.” The incident occurred in Panipat, Haryana, where Malik, the son of a farm labourer, was born. “I remember that day a reporter from Amar Ujala was there,” he said. “He clicked a photo of me and put it in the paper. ‘Gotakhor Ne Bachayi Ek Ki Jaan (diver saves a life)’ was the headline.”

But it wasn't just getting his face in the newspaper that made Malik pick the business of gotakhor. For his intervention, Malik was rewarded with Rs 50, which he
said was worth five months of rent at the time. “We had to struggle a lot because we were poor. I had three elder sisters and was the only son,” Malik told Newslaundry. His family disapproved of this dangerous way to earn a living and told him as much, but Malik decided to become a professional gotakhor.

Today, 24 years later, Malik says he has helped recover more than 40,000 bodies from Punjab’s myriad canals. It’s not just a morbid job, but also a dangerous one because Malik and his fellow divers (he has a team now) don’t wear any equipment or have any safety backup.

They wait for the corpse to pass by, strip down to their underwear and simply dive in.

By Malik’s estimate, roughly a third of the bodies pulled out of the canals are victims of murders and accidents. About 70 per cent of the rest are suicide victims, he says. As Punjab’s woes have intensified over the years – due to drugs, unemployment and an agrarian crisis – so have the number of suicides.

As callous as it may sound, the demand for gotakhors in Punjab has risen correspondingly. Malik moved from Panipat to first Fatehgarh Sahib, then to Patiala and two years ago, he finally came to Khanauri, a hotspot for recovering bodies.

The wait
Over lunch, provided by the local gurdwara, Mahinder’s nephew speculated upon why his uncle may have killed himself. “He worked as a bus driver all his life,” Dilpreet said. “Of late, due to his age, the family thought that it wasn’t safe for him to drive anymore, so he quit his job. But he just couldn’t sit at home. He started drinking, and got more and more depressed.” A few months ago, Mahinder had tried to commit suicide by jumping into a canal near Mansa, but an onlooker had rescued him.

According to results from the National Mental Health Survey, 13.4 per cent of Punjab’s population suffers from mental disorders, the third highest among Indian states. Further, it is estimated that only one in 10 mental health patients receive treatment in India. Perhaps, if Mahinder had received help, his family wouldn’t have been holding a vigil at the Khanauri head, opposite the guest house.
Malik, after decades of studying the current of the canal and the speed at which it tugs dead bodies to the sluice gates, knew that the Singh family had one more day’s wait ahead of them. He predicted it would take approximately 72 hours for Mahinder’s body to show up at Khanauri and told the family as much.

“We keep on monitoring our ‘routes’,” said Malik. “We have 5-6 motorcycles and our people are constantly checking the canal.” Maintaining his team is tough.

Malik’s monthly earnings vary between Rs 8,000-10,000, after expenses. There is no fixed fee for recovering a body. “When I find someone’s body, I feel good. Even if the other person doesn’t pay me, at least he’ll give me a blessing. I feel peaceful that I’ve done a good deed,” he said. The expenses – food, fuel etc. – sometimes exceed the remuneration, which largely depends on the family’s’ capacity to pay.

The disorganised nature of the work has also given rise to what Malik calls “nakli gotakhor (fake divers)” who charge exorbitant rates for retrieving bodies and exploit grieving families.

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Malik feels the state government should permanently employ two gotakhors in Khanauri and pay them a fixed salary. “We have families of our own,” he said. “We have little children. If we get a salary, then there won’t be pressure on those who can’t pay us. After all, we are poor and we have to earn a living.”

Malik feels that everyday 12 people are dying in Punjab,” said Malik. “We have so many bodies which are unclaimed, they get eaten by dogs.” Malik feels like gotakhors get a raw deal from the state administration. “We don’t have a ration card, no voter card, no facilities from the government,” he lamented.

Harassment by the police is also common for gotakhors. “Every new SHO (Station House Officer) takes our case, accuses us of being thieves, of duping people. We have to explain ourselves every time,” he said angrily. “Why, after doing so much work, doesn’t anybody help us?”

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what all this meant to him, Malik replied. “These are all worthless. I’m waiting for some big shot government representative to come and I’ll burn all these in front of him. Maybe I’ll do it if [Prime Minister] Modi comes here.”

**Closure**

Despite there being little chance of Mahinder’s body turning up early, his son and nephew – accompanied by two uncles – spent the night of November 2 waiting by the canal, under the floodlights which illuminate it at night. “We are tired but what if the body passed by while we were sleeping?” a visibly-exhausted Dilpreet told *Newslaundry*. Frayed by anxiety, uncertainty and exhaustion, the Singh family was now desperate to find Mahinder, even if it was as a bloated corpse.

Around 6 am on November 4, a little after the 72-hour window expired, Malik received a call from the Singh family. They’d spotted a body go by. Instead of going further down the BML, it had been drawn into a smaller canal that branched off from the Khanauri head. Malik managed to intercept the body.

The body that Malik dragged to the banks looked like a weather-beaten mannequin. Pale after more than three days in the water; only slightly bloated; his beard perfectly in place; his face expressionless – Mahinder Singh’s body bore few traces of the torment the man must have endured both when he was alive and in his death.

This was closure for the Singh family: stiff, still and lifeless.

While the wait had ended for the Singhs, for Malik, it began now. It wouldn’t be long, though. Both his experience and the statistics suggested that somewhere else in Punjab, another Mahinder would have disappeared, another family would have been wrenched out of their everyday patterns and plunged into miserable anxiety; and they would, soon enough, make their way to Khanauri. Once here, they would come to the guest house, turn to Ashu Malik for help, eat lunch at the local gurudwara, stare at the canal and wait. Because for Malik and Khanauri, this is the life cycle.

**Battleground Punjab: The story of the missing farmers**


Jan 30, 2017, **Subodh Varma** | TNN

A small village called Khanauri in Punjab’s Sangrur district has become a macabre hotspot. People come here to peer down at the Bhakra Main Line canal hoping to catch sight of dead bodies that get held up on the sluice gates. They are not ghouls - they are looking for kin or friends who have disappeared. The canal runs unhindered like an arrow for 159 km through Punjab’s eastern districts and Khanauri barrage is the first point where the flowing water is slowed down. In the past few years, most of the bodies that turned up at Khanauri were of farmers who had committed suicide, mainly because of debt and economic crisis.

In Punjab as a whole, estimates of farmers’ suicides range from a few thousand to tens of thousands. A study
by three universities estimated that between 2000 and 2011, nearly 7,000 farmers committed suicide, most of them because of debt.

A new study for 2011-15 by the same three universities, is in the final stages of data processing. Balwinder Singh Tiwana, professor of economics at Punjabi University, Patiala and one of those involved in the survey told TOI that 3,000 to 4,000 farmers committed suicide in this most recent period.

Farmers' suicides are but one chilling symptom of the crisis gripping Punjab's agriculture, once thought of as a shining path for the rest of India. Its sweep is so wide and the effects so pervasive that every political formation in Punjab's ongoing election campaign is battling to assure farmers that it has the best solutions.

So, what is the crisis? Production of food grains, mainly wheat and rice, has been stagnating for the past several years. It has grown by just 7% in the last decade and by just 1% in the last five. There is no more land left to be brought under cultivation with 82% of the state’s geographical area under cultivation and 99% of it irrigated. Almost all the area is cropped twice. The only way production can be increased is by increasing yield, that is, quantity produced per sown plant. This too, sadly, is not happening. In fact, there is a slight dip in foodgrains produced per hectare of sown land, from 4,364kg in 2011-12 to 4,304kg in 2015-16.

On the other hand, cost of cultivation has zoomed while selling prices have not matched that rise, explains Tiwana. "Costs have gone up, reducing the farmers' income and the minimum support price has increased only by about 8% per year. For inputs, farmers have to take loans (or advances) from commission agents in mandis. If the crop gets damaged, the farmer is stuck with unrepayable loans worth lakhs. That's the crisis, and cause of suicides," Tiwana says.

Troubled Waters
http://www.caravanmagazine.in/lede/punjab-families-loved-ones-bhakra-barrage
1 February 2017 By FIONA WEBER-STEINHAUS

Families look for their lost loved ones at a barrage in Punjab

On 8 November, a rice-farming family from Naiwala village, in Punjab’s Sangrur district, drove five kilometres to Khanauri, a town near the Haryana border. For the past two days, they had been looking for one of their relatives: 95-year-old Kundan Singh.

Kundan’s nephew Manu told me that over the previous three months, his uncle, who struggled with diabetes and
depression, had begun to talk about ending his life. On 6
November, Kundan drank his afternoon tea and hitched a
ride on a motorbike to the Bhakra main line canal. He
drowned himself there, leaving a slipper and his jacket at
the water’s edge. A note in the jacket pocket read: No
one is responsible for my death but me.

“I don’t understand it,” another of Kundan’s nephews,
Dilraj, said. “He was a religious man. He wasn’t even
financially dependent on his family.” In 1947, Kundan
moved to Singapore to work as a bank manager. He
returned to India in 2001 “because he didn’t want to die
alone, in a coffin, in a foreign land,” Dilraj said. “And now,
this.”

In Khanauri, which has a population of almost 11,000, a
barrage stems the waters of the Bhakra main line canal—
a 164-kilometre channel that supplies water to Punjab,
Haryana and Rajasthan. Many corpses wash up at the
barrage, leading locals to call it “the place of dead
bodies.” A hut at the barrage is plastered with missing-
person notices of people from all over Punjab. According
to Kulwender Singh, a policeman who accounts for the
bodies, around 30 turn up each month. On 25 days out of
30, he said, there will be a family waiting near the hut,
hoping to find a relative’s body.

At the barrage that morning, Kundan’s family met Ashu
Malik, who, at 36 years old, has been diving into the
water to retrieve dead bodies for over two decades. He
realized he had a gift for diving at age 12, after he saved
a woman from drowning. The next day, his picture was in
the newspaper, and he was awarded Rs 50—the same
amount his father, a laborer, earned per month. At that
moment, Malik decided to dive for a living. He considered
becoming a diving teacher, he said, but

finding the dead proved more lucrative, and more helpful
towards his community. Malik brought out two folders full
of newspaper cuttings and laminated photos that showed
him being honored by the police, politicians and bereaved
families. “This is the only thing that I am really good at,”
he said.

Members of two different families, each of which is
searching for the body of their missing relative, discuss
the identity of a corpse that washed up earlier that day
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PARTH GUPTA

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Malik claimed he can hold his breath for three minutes and six seconds. But finding bodies in the water takes more than just lung capacity, he said. “You need to think with the heart.” To do this, he asks various questions to determine where and when a person’s body might surface: if they were ill, how old they were, what they ate, or even if they drank filtered or unfiltered water. When Kundan’s family produced a passport photo of him, Malik predicted that his body would surface soon and travel a great distance, because it was light and therefore unlikely to sink.

From places all along the canal, informants send Malik photos of bodies they find in the water. That morning, he had received photographs of two unidentified bodies that had washed up in Sirsa, Haryana, almost 150 kilometres away from Khanauri. Kundan’s family gathered around Malik’s phone as he showed them a photo of one of the bodies, asking whether it was the old man.

Yes, the family confirmed; it was.

Malik sped off in his small white Maruti Suzuki, zooming at 90 kilometres per hour on a bumpy country road towards the hospital in Sirsa where the body was. Kundan’s family followed in a grey six-seater.

After the family arrived, they gave evidence to a policeman under a tree across from the hospital canteen. Later, a doctor accompanied them to the morgue. Once he saw how decomposed Kundan’s body was, he said that the post-mortem would have to be done at a medical college instead of at the hospital.

Together, Malik and his aide, Kafil Khan, snapped on plastic gloves, sprayed the body with insect repellent and air freshener, wrapped it up in a red plastic sheet and tied it up with rope. They then put it on a stretcher and carried it into an ambulance that stood in front of the morgue.

A few minutes after the body was loaded into the ambulance, Malik’s mobile rang. “Another family thinks this is their grandfather,” he said. “They will be here in more than an hour.” That morning, Malik had sent the photos of the deceased to different people who had contacted him for help finding their loved ones.

Kundan’s relatives sat waiting in the shade, making arrangements and calling relatives in Amritsar about the cremation. Manu showed me a family photograph that was taken about a week earlier, on Diwali. In it, Kundan held a walking stick and wore the same off-white kurta he had on when he died.

The other family arrived, accompanied by elders from their village, in about two hours. When Malik opened the plastic body bag for them, they held shawls to their noses...
to dampen the smell of rotting flesh. One man turned away, choking. After a few minutes, they realised that the body was not the one they were searching for, and drove off. “Their relative had long hair,” Malik explained.

Kundan’s family arranged for the cremation to happen the next day, just outside Naiwala. Malik settled the logistics of the death certificate and post-mortem. After that, he drove through the night to reach the ceremony on time. The body sat in the passenger’s seat of Malik’s car, wrapped in plastic and cloth, a seatbelt fastened across its lap.

The following morning, Kundan’s family and Malik met again at the barrage in Khanauri. There, Dilraj spoke with Anayab Singh, a 55-year-old labourer from the Patiala district, who had already spent a week at the canal, hoping for the body of his wife, Gurmeet Kaur Singh, to surface. Gurmeet, Anayab told me, had had liver cancer, for which she went to Patiala each week to receive treatment. On 2 November, Gurmeet left for Patiala on her own, after which she slid into the canal, leaving only her sand-coloured shawl on the shore.

“The diver will help you out,” Dilraj told Anayab. “He can look for the body.” Anayab replied, however, that he did not have enough money to pay for that.

Kundan’s relatives and others from their village gathered at the cremation site around noon. Malik set the body, covered in a white sheet, on the ground. One by one, people walked up to offer their last respects to Kundan, touching his feet, tucking money underneath the sheet. The women, standing together, wailed. Malik sprayed air freshener onto the cloth and smeared ghee onto the body. The family lay earth onto the pyre, and Kundan’s son set it ablaze.

Before the family left the cremation site for a gurdwara, Malik received his money: Rs 26,000 in total, he told me, of which he would be able to pocket Rs 8,300, using the rest to pay his informants and cover other costs incurred along the way, such as those of the death certificate and the objects he bought to prepare the body for transport.

After the cremation, we drove back to Khanauri, where Anayab was still sitting at the canal. “If the woman hasn’t surfaced now, I don’t think she will,” Malik said. A week
later, I texted the diver to ask what had happened. Two days after Kundan’s cremation, he said, Anayab’s wife’s body had been found.

He has a job: diving for dead bodies. But his family still lives in poverty
March 23, 2017 By Parth M.N. Reporting from Khanauri, India

In a remote north Indian village, Ashu Malik’s name and phone number are written in big red letters on a small shed along a serene canal. For a quarter-century, it has been his job to recover bodies that have fallen into the canal.

When someone in a nearby district goes missing, Malik often hears a knock at the door. Police officers, investigative agencies and families have all sought the 38-year-old’s help in dealing with accidents or suicides.

Built more than 60 years ago, the Bhakra Main Line canal, which runs through four states in northern India, is a tranquil sight that is often tainted by the odor of dead bodies. The canal’s sluice gate, where the water branches in two directions, is located in Khanauri, which is where the bodies often turn up.

Malik grew up alongside the canal in the state of Haryana. He was 12 when he discovered his skill for diving.

“A woman was washing her clothes at the canal when she lost her balance,” the bearded Malik recalled. “She cried for help and I jumped in as others watched on. I saved her life and a local newspaper carried the news with my photograph.”

Malik was excited when the police officer in charge rewarded him for his bravery with 50 rupees, less than $1 in today’s money. “That was five months’ rent in 1991-92,” he said with a smile. “My father was a poor man. He could not believe it. He thought I had stolen something.”

A few weeks later, the officer summoned Malik again and offered him 80 rupees to fish out a body.

Ashu Malik displays a ledger with the names of some of the people whose bodies he has fished out of a canal in northern India.
(Parth M.N. / For the Los Angeles Times)
The young boy was scared; the corpse was bloated and decomposed.

“But I dived in, tied a rope around its leg and completed the job,” he said.

By 1998, Malik was the leader of a team with four divers. He now works with 140 volunteers across four states, all men, and offers their services via a website. He and his team have fished out tens of thousands of bodies, he said, including instances when buses have crashed into the canal with dozens of passengers aboard. He opened a ledger where he has meticulously listed victims by name and date, as well as hundreds of local newspaper clippings.

Malik’s village of Khanauri is in the agrarian state of Punjab, which has a population of just under 28 million. With a farm crisis, drug use and unemployment weighing on people, Malik said suicides are on the rise. His team finds roughly 10 bodies every day, he said, most of them suicides.

So many family members of missing people visit Khanauri in search of closure that, about a decade ago, a local charity built a guesthouse. A full-time police officer sits there now to gather the details of every new missing persons case and circulate them by WhatsApp to Malik’s team.

Based on the location, divers are identified. They strip down to their underwear and swim without any protective gear.

For all his fame, however, Malik lives in poverty. As a child he neglected his studies to focus on diving, because the money he made helped his father, a widower, support him and his three sisters. Malik lives at the guesthouse, paying about $50 in rent a month.

He wishes that authorities would hire him and pay him a fixed salary. He has a robust folder of bravery citations, but no money to pay for the education of his four children, ages 3 to 13. His wife died of cancer two years ago.

His only income comes from families who ask him to recover bodies, but most are debt-ridden — often the reason the person committed suicide in the first place. It costs about $200 to deploy divers across many parts of the canal, he said. But if a family is poor, he won’t ask for money.
“I am happy with their blessings,” he said.

Sometimes he finds valuables that were dropped into the canal, pawning them to raise about $100 every month. Occasionally, police officials have accused him of stealing items off the bodies. Malik denies this, believing the police resent him because by finding bodies, he exposes the incompetence of the authorities.

“I have been interrogated several times,” he said bitterly. “But they have not found anything against me. Villagers have always stood by me.”

“I believe I have been helpful and honest while doing what I am doing,” he went on. “But it is not enough to ensure an education for my kids. Am I asking for too much?”

Ten years ago, a guest house was built in the town of Khanauri, on the border of Punjab and Haryana, by the Sahara Charitable Trust. Usually, these are initiatives for tourists in the area, but the reason for the little establishment in Khanauri is different. There is a canal here that attracts a large number of visitors from all over Punjab, but it’s not because of scenic beauty. People come to Khanauri looking for their dead.

Built between 1950 and 1954, Bhakra Main Line (BML) Canal is 164 kilometres long and runs through Punjab and Haryana. The inter-state channel carries water from the Sutlej to these two states and Rajasthan. At Khanauri, the BML canal branches out towards Rajasthan and here, where water gushes out of a sluice gate, is the spot known for being the floating ground for corpses.

It’s a gruesome spot. The stench of rotting flesh hangs in the air and in the garbage-caked water, there are almost always a few dead bodies to be seen. On the morning we visited Khanauri, two figures floated in the canal: one was a dead buffalo; the other, a bloated, discoloured and mutilated cadaver of a man. Nobody knows who this man is, where he’s from and how he ended up in a canal on the Punjab-Haryana border.

A sight like this is common in Khanauri. Locals say that there isn’t a day when at least one or two bodies aren’t seen at this spot where the barrage acts as a temporary barrier — and this is literally just on the surface. There’s no number for the bodies that drown or pass through the barrage at night.

“We are seeing 35-45 bodies every month in Khanauri,” said Inderjit Singh Jaijee, chairman of the Baba Nanak Educational Society (BNES). “This doesn’t include the bodies that have died in the last two to three days because they stay underwater.

So, assuming 35-45 bodies a month, we have more than 500 bodies a year. That adds up to some 6,000 bodies in 10 years.” Jaijee has been working in rural areas of Punjab since the 1980s and also heads the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), a sister organisation of BNES, which has been documenting farmer suicides in Sangrur district. BNES also runs a rescue programme for families of suicide victims.
According to Jaijee, instances of farmer suicides in Punjab are grossly underreported and he believes most of the bodies in BML are of those who killed themselves because of rising farming debts. “If there’s a murder, the police is very active,” he said, when asked if the canal had become a convenient dumping ground for violent criminals. “If it’s an accident, say a car or motorcycle falls in the canal, the press is active. They [the majority of the corpses found] are not murders or accidents – some may be, but they are reported. But what about those that are not reported? There’s a huge amount.”

From the corpses that collect at Khanauri, only those that are identified — usually by the families that come looking for their missing relatives — are recovered by divers. If not, they either flow further down the BML or get stuck at the barrage.

Families come to Khanauri from places like Patiala, Ropar, Sirhind, Fatehgarh and Ludhiana, in the hope of finding their missing loved ones among the dead that gather in the BML. Jagpal Singh from Bhattiwal Kalan in Sangrur district, had been staying at the guest house for four days, ever since his father-in-law disappeared from Patiala. “He was disturbed psychologically,” he said of the missing man. “His farm was adjacent to the canal so we think perhaps he fell in.”

Jagpal had enlisted gotakhor (diver) Ashu Malik’s help to retrieve the body, but that would only happen once the corpse showed up. And so Jagpal was in Khanauri, waiting and hoping to see his father-in-law float among the garbage and green waters at the BML barrage.

Malik says he’s been diving into the canal to find and drag out corpses for 24 years. His experience suggests that Khanauri is the morbid gathering spot for the dead simply because of economics. “To recover a dead body from the canal, it costs nearly Rs 7,000 to Rs 8,000, including the cost of transportation, fuel, last rites and post-mortem. But the government doesn’t bear this cost. They [the police officers] have to pay it out of their own pocket.”

Reports suggest the police offer little by way of help or support. Not just that, they also say the claims of daily sightings of corpses are false. “There’s no truth to two-three sightings a day,” said Baljeet Singh, Khanauri’s Station House Officer, to The Hindu. He also said there was a police post near the canal. “Just few months back, we’ve posted four policemen for round-the-clock vigil and to assist families of victims,” he’d claimed. However, The Hindu found no one at the ‘post’ for almost four hours.

Sardar Kuldeep Singh, former Sarpanch (village head) of Khanauri Khurd, doesn’t blame the local police. Like Jaijee and Malik, he estimates between 30 and 35 bodies are found in the canal in a month. He also pointed out that there are bodies that flow underneath the barrage, officially enter Haryana and thereafter are not only lost to the families, but also become another state’s problem.

Rather than the police, Kuldeep points his finger at the state government. In 2012, the Punjab and Haryana High Court instructed the state government to install underwater cameras to help with detection. These are yet to be installed. The only CCTV cameras here are the ones put up by the Sahara Charitable Trust, which also built
the guest house. “The police’s hands are also tied because the cost is too much,” said Kuldeep. “The Centre should intervene.”

That there is a crisis in the agricultural sector in Punjab is one that few acknowledge. While the government’s statistics largely underplay the numbers, MASR estimates that there have been 50,000 farmer suicides in Punjab between 1988 and 2010. The Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) estimates the number to be even higher – 90,000 suicides between 1990 and 2006 (the estimates are based on random sampling).

Jaijee concedes that not all suicides in Punjab are related to farming, but he insists at least “70 per cent are due to debt.” The staggering figures that MASR has exclude bodies that pass undetected underwater or get caught in the undergrowth and silt.

The debt accrued by farmers in Punjab has acquired astronomical proportions. A recent estimate puts the total amount of outstanding farmer debt at nearly Rs 70,000 crore. A 2014 study found that 89 per cent of farmers in Punjab are under heavy debt. The same study points to the reason why farmers are forced into borrowing money – Green Revolution agricultural practices, which led to immense growth in the farming sector in the 1970s and 80s, are now economically unfeasible for the small farmer. While the cost of production has steadily increased over the years – cost of seeds, fertilizers, tractors, fuel – grain prices haven’t kept pace. As a result, small farm holdings have progressively become less profitable, causing farmers to accumulate debt which they have difficulty paying back.

A by-product of the growing unviability of farming is the process of de-peasantisation – it is estimated that 14.39 per cent of farmers in Punjab had left the profession since 1991. But their prospects, even after leaving farming, aren’t very bright. “In all the universities of Punjab, only five per cent of the students that graduate every year are from the rural sector,” said Jaijee. “And the rural sector is itself 70 per cent of the population.”

Speak to the people who stay at the guest house in Khanauri and farming families will say their earnings have been dipping in recent years. Some, like Jagpal, will talk about how men turned to alcohol in an attempt to deal with the stress of their failing farms. Statistics can be manipulated, but perhaps the most telling sign that the farming crisis in Punjab is real is that no one in Khanauri thinks suicide is an extreme reaction to the circumstances.

For people here, it’s almost an understandable next step because everyone’s feeling the bite. And so it makes sense to remove yourself from the world around you and throw yourself into a canal — even if it will mean ending up at Khanauri, bloated beyond recognition, surrounded by garbage, eyed by wild dogs and becoming a rotting statistic of despair.
12 bodies found during cleaning in Bhakra Canal
http://factsbymotupatlu.com/12-bodies-found-cleaning-bhakra-canal/
April 2, 2017 Chandra

Sensation spread in Narwana after 12 bodies found in Bhakra canal in Narwana, Haryana. The Narwana branch of Bhakra Main Line was closed for cleaning. During the cleaning, many bodies were found one after one. The police is suspected of getting more bodies from the canal.

According to the information, on Saturday, the Bhakra canal was shut down in Narwana and it was cleaned. There was a sensation spread in the canal during the cleaning operation by getting rotten corpses in the canal. A group of divers recovered all the dead bodies.

Ashok Malik, leader of the divers Group, said that all the corpses seem to be one to ten months old. As soon as the matter of getting corpses in the surrounding areas spread, there is a need to get there to identify the missing people. A corpse was identified as Satna Singh, resident of Satnaam.

Ashu Malik told that often the dead bodies of Himachal and Punjab are found in this canal. These canals go to Hisar while passing through Narnal, Una, Talwada, Nalagarh, Baddi, Anandpur Sahib, Kiratpur, Bharatgarh, Ropar, Morinda, Fatehgarh Sahib, Sirhind, Patiala, Samana, Ghagga, Patarsa, Khanauri.

At present, a team of divers is conducting a search for the canal. According to the sources, there is a possibility of getting more bodies from the canal. Narwana Sadar Police is investigating the case while identifying the bodies. At the same time, the Patiala police has left for Narwana.
Bodies continue to surface during dredging of BML


03 Apr 2017  Chandigarh

Summary: A detailed record of all bodies recovered is maintained." Khanauri (Sangrur): Punjab's Khanauri area continues to be in spotlight as on Saturday 12 more dead bodies were recovered from Narwana in Jind district of Haryana during the dredging of Bhakra Main Line (BML). At times dogs can be seen dragging away the mutilated bodies and feeding on them, which the locals say is not uncommon.

When I got to know that 12 bodies had been found at Narwana, I went there but could not identify any of the bodies as these got decomposed beyond recognition

"Many bodies remain submerged in the water especially during the winters when it takes at least seven to eight days of the bodies to come to the surface, while, in summers it takes three days", said Ashu Malik, one of the divers, who started bringing out dead bodies at the age of 12.

Khanauri (Sangrur):
Punjab's Khanauri area continues to be in spotlight as on Saturday 12 more dead bodies were recovered from Narwana in Jind district of Haryana during the dredging of Bhakra Main Line (BML). It is at this point that the 164km long BML branches into Rajasthan and Haryana and most of the bodies get stuck here.

Considered to be the place where Punjab's dead gather, Khanauri has three to four dead bodies appear at this barrage each day making it one of the most despicable spots along the BML that carries 12,455 cusecs of Sutlej water across the three states.

The dead bodies drift here from Ropar, Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala and Sangrur districts, bringing dozens of people from Punjab to this spot, who come in search of their missing kin. While most of the times the bodies are pulled out, but there are times when
these are deliberately allowed to cross over to Haryana as police want to skip the paper work, says a local diver seeking anonymity.

A local gurdwara's volunteers come here every week and perform last rites of the unidentified bodies, while the rest are shifted the dead house of the government civil hospital at the district headquarters. At times dogs can be seen dragging away the mutilated bodies and feeding on them, which the locals say is not uncommon.

"My brother-in-law Pritam is missing from Patiala for the last three days and I came here to look for him yesterday. When I got to know that 12 bodies had been found at Narwana, I went there but could not identify any of the bodies as these got decomposed beyond recognition. So, I came back to Khanauri thinking I might find him here," said Kirpal Singh from Ropar.

A local Sahara Charitable Trust had built a rest house for visiting families and local gurdwaras provide them food. Despite the locals seeking a dead house at Khanauri, where the bodies can be preserved, the government has not come up with any plans yet, said Balwinder Singh a resident of Khanauri.

Those coming here in search of their close one hire the services of local divers who charge anywhere between Rs.5,000 and Rs.15,000 to pull out the corpses.

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He Gets Rs 80 Per Dead Body: This Man Works At This 'Death Canal' And How A Lady Got Him Into This Job At Age 12


May 09, 2017  Jasmine Philip

Built over 60 years ago, a canal in the North-Indian village that runs through four States, has become a major spot for people who wish to end their lives or commit a murder. Reeking of the odor of dead bodies, the bodies tend to float around the canal until it reaches the main gates located in Khanauri in Haryana.

Year 2014 and 2015 recorded a total of 520 bodies, while 2016 recorded a total of 670 bodies. First 5 months of 2017 alone has a count 160 bodies.
38-year-old Ashu Malik who grew up alongside the canal has been fishing out bodies since the age of 12. "A woman was washing her clothes at the canal when she lost her balance. She cried for help and I jumped in as others watched on. I saved her life and a local newspaper carried the news with my photograph," stated Malik recalling the incident at the age of 12.

Having received Rs. 50 for his courageous back then, Malik was soon approached by the police team to fish out the many bodies that floated in the canal. Although he doesn’t get a fixed amount from the Government or the police officials, he gathers anywhere around Rs. 50 to Rs. 80 for fishing out the bodies.

Over 46,000 bodies have been recovered from the canal in the past 26 years. Out of the lot, over 75% is said to be of murder cases. In the year 2016 alone, 670 bodies were recovered, while the 5 months of 2017 has a count 160 bodies.

Some of the bodies are even said to float a distance of 300 kms, which in-turn tends to wipe out most of the evidence of murder.
The entire procedure of removing a body, packing it and sending it to a mortuary costs a total of Rs. 15,000, of which there is no arrangement from the government or police authorities.

Waiting for a Body

Some of the bodies are even said to float a distance of 300 kms, which in-turn tends to wipe out most of the evidence of murder. The canal thus has become the main point of body disposals for criminals.
Recovering a Body

These are DIVE TEAM member searching the canal

Recovering a Body
Dive Team Members

Preparing a car to be pulled out of the water.

Asho Malik

PSDiver Magazine Issue 117
THIS is why they are called DIVERS
At the time of Publishing, 
December 7, 2017

100 Indian Rupees were worth:

1.55 USD * 1.31 Euro
1.15 GBP * 2.06 AUD * 1.99 CAD

What are YOU willing to do for 80 Rupees...?

Divers foil suicide attempt in Bhakra Main Line Canal
Jul 05, 2017

A man on Tuesday tried to commit suicide as he jumped in the Bhakra Main Line (BML) Canal here on Patiala-Nabha road but alert divers of the Shankar Divers Club immediately swung into action and brought him out of the current of the canal.

The man was later handed over to the police, who restored him to his family. The man has been identified as Manoj Kumar, a resident of the Guru Nanak Nagar area of the town, and he is said to be running a small type of shop as well.

Kumar told the divers as well as the police that he had chosen to commit suicide as he was very much disturbed from his family life. He said that he got married just two months ago as it was his second marriage but his wife, as well as his in-laws, have disturbed his life.

He alleged that neither his wife nor his father-in-law missed a chance to disturb him because of which he had gone into deep depression. He said that in the state of
depression, he took the decision to end his life early on Tuesday morning and following this, he came here on the Bhakra Canal and jumped into it but his attempt was foiled by the divers.

MEMORY PROJECT
One Man's Fight to Record Farmer Suicides
July 29, 2017 Suhas Munshi | News18.com@suhasmunshi

Inderjit Singh Jaijee has spent last 29 years of his life documenting farmer suicides in Punjab. At first, it sounds like a mildly virtuous endeavor in a good-samaritan-passing-his-time sort of way.

But after spending some time in trying to understand how Jaijee and his team worked for three decades to meticulously report 2375 farmer suicides from 110 villages of Punjab, in the face of successive governments’ efforts to downplay this continuing tragedy, his work — spread over scores of files — seems invaluable.

Before we begin the interview, Jaijee hands over a few files to me. In them are details of farmers who committed suicide.

Every time a suicide is reported, he and his field reporters, spread over 110 villages, mostly in Sangrur and nearby districts, get a call. The field reporters visit the house, talk to the family members and note down details like the quantum of debt on the farmer, reasons behind his suicide, details of his family members, his age, house and village name, date and manner in which the farmer took his life.

If debt is found to be the reason behind the suicide, the team gets all these details attested on an affidavit by the relevant gram panchayat member and adds the name in its database.

**Behind each entry, a tragic story**

As I flip through the pages containing details of suicides, I come across an entry in the name of one Babbu Khan. He owned half an acre of land and was only 18 years old when he killed himself. At an age when students graduate from schools, one can imagine Babbu Khan wilting under
pressure from his creditors. He owed somebody Rs 3 lakh. Khan consumed poison and died on May 12, 2015.

Down the same list I find ‘Avtar Singh’ from village Alampur who owed somebody Rs 3 lakh. When he killed himself with poison, on May 25, 2001, he was only 16 years old.

Searching by the ‘father’s name’ I realise that some families have lost as many as three members, a father and two sons in one case, to debt induced suicide.

In the list I find some people whose ‘land-holdings’ are mentioned as ‘Nil’. These people, I’m told, were landless farm labourers. One Maghar Singh of Daska, a landless field labourer, threw himself under a train for a debt of just Rs 60,000.

Karnail Singh of Chural Kalan was another landless farm labourer. He was 22 years old when he killed himself with poison. He was under a debt of Rs 40,000. The machine you are reading this story on is probably worth more.

How the project came into being
“I had returned to Punjab after operation Bluestar and was working among people. Then in 1985 I got elected as an MLA on Akali ticket. I never associated with any party after that. But it was during that time when I first compiled a list of farmers who had committed suicide in my villages. A total of 31 farmers from five villages had killed themselves in one year and I had all their details,” Jaijee says.
He sent a report to both the state and the central governments, but received very vague responses. One minister responded by telling him that all the suicides had been committed as result of personal rivalries and grudges. One bureaucrat at secretariat told him that the numbers were deliberately being downplayed “so as not to give fillip to militancy.”

He would go on collecting information about farmer suicides and submitting it to state and central governments.

In a book he has written on the subject ‘Debt and Death in Rural India – The Punjab Story’, Jaijee mentions how state agencies responded to his findings. In 2007 Punjab police prepared a report in which they found that only seven farmers had committed suicide in previous five years. The state revenue department put the number at 132.

Jaijee had by then compiled an exhaustive list of 1508 names from just one subdivision of Sangrur district. Many studies of farmer suicides in Punjab use figures provided by Jaijee to make sense of the ongoing farm crisis in the state.

**Fight against government apathy**

One such study published in the Economic and Political Weekly uses farmer Suicide Mortality Rate (SMR) — farmer suicides normalised by the population of peasants in the state — to study farm distress. Using figures provided by Jaijee, the study finds that Punjab has the third highest farmer SMR in India, following Kerala and Maharashtra.
“The governments not only neglected farmers when they were alive, they took pains to deny farmer suicides. Till now not one state commissioned survey has found the actual extent of farm crisis in the state. From a cluster of 100 villages, we have found 24 farmer suicide cases from January to June this year already. But the government still doesn’t acknowledge that Punjab has become home to the biggest farm crisis in the country,” Jaijee says.

Punjab has the third highest farmer Suicide Mortality Rate in India.

Three state universities were tasked with finding out the actual quantum of farmer suicides in Punjab between April 2010 and March 2013. According to one news report, the findings of the three universities were considered to be 'politically damaging'. The findings were then expected to be released after state elections. But they haven’t been made public till now.

Frustrated by the continued refusal to acknowledge farmer suicides in Punjab, Jaijee and his team put out a 12:53 minute video of washed-up bodies lying on the banks of a canal in Khanauri village in April last year. The bodies were piling up barely 300 feet from a police station.

So regularly were bodies washing-up on the banks, about 30 to 40 a month, that Khanauri villagers had set up a rest house to accommodate people who used to come there to identify bodies of their relatives. Jaijee and his team petitioned National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and Punjab government.

“Since they wouldn’t believe anything we said, we released this video and asked them to take a look at it,” Jaijee says, adding, “We told them that this was just one canal. Punjab is crisscrossed with canals, so imagine how many suicides were happening daily.” But nothing changed on ground.

**Ripple effects of farm stress**

Jaijee makes an interesting observation on farmer suicides in his book. “The areas of Punjab most affected by suicides are also the areas having the lowest literacy rates... Lower literacy rates mean severely restricted life opportunities. As farming income nosedives, the people of these areas are unequipped to take up any other livelihood except labour.”

One of the lowest literacy rates in Punjab is in Mansa district’s Budhlada block — 28 per cent. Over 212 farmers from this block have committed suicide in last 29 years, 84 of them from a single village — Kishangarh.
As we are discussing the area, Jaijee remembers story of a family wrecked by agrarian debts whom he had come across on a field trip.

“It is about a moneylender actually. He had a good house and comfortably placed family, his three daughters used to study in a good public school. But over time many farmers who owed him money stopped paying up. So one day he went to the school and told the girls, ‘kudiyon aao tumhe shopping karake lawan [girls come let me take you shopping]’.”

The girls were very happy and sat behind him on his motorcycle. “To their surprise, he started going towards the canal instead of going to town. He stopped right in front of the canal and told them ‘aao tumhe pehle sair karawan [come let me take you on a walk]’.”

As they got near the canal, one by one he started throwing his daughters in. “The girls started shouting for help. Fortunately, there was a young farmer nearby and he came to the spot, and jumped in the canal. He pulled all four of them out.” But only one daughter and the father survived.

The mother of the girls later realised that her husband was in deep debt. “As he was pulled out of the canal, the chap went insane. But because he’d thrown his daughters in the canal, police arrested him and put a case of attempt to murder against him.”

“But his wife testified in the court that the man had not thrown their children in the canal. That the girls had fallen by accident.”

“I brought them to a college to reward the young farmer who had saved two lives. We brought along the family also. The man couldn’t come because he is lodged in a mental asylum now. The whole village joined us in rewarding the young farmer.

“There was an old lady sitting near the dais. She was a teacher. She asked us to reward the farmer’s father also. ‘Aede baap ne bhi ek kudi nu bachaya si [His father also saved a girl’s life.’ So the principal asked ‘o kaunsi [who was she]?’ The teacher said ‘o main si [It was I]’.”

**Going beyond record keeping**
Jaijee said, “We have been supporting the family.”
He has founded an NGO Baba Nanak Educational Society to fund the education of children whose farmer parents commit suicide.

“We give Rs 1,500 to each child, if there are two children, and Rs 1,000 if there are more than two children left behind. But on the condition that the children aren’t sent to till the fields, that they are allowed to study.” Till now his NGO has supported over 500 such families.

He flips pages of a file containing records of the families whom his NGO is supporting right now. He comes across a family photograph of a mother with seven children. “Oh she has got a lot of children,” he remarks sending people around him chuckling.

As Jaijee digs deeper in the paperwork, I beg his leave with a bundle of papers and books he has tasked me to read. In these papers are names and photographs of dead farmers, their details, correspondences, some surveys, a lot of data, and a hope that his life’s project of tracking suicides will one day come to an end.

2 women attempt suicide in Bhakra Canal in a day


Aug 22, 2017 Manish Sirhindì| TNN |

PATIALA: A 25-year-old widow along with her four-year-old son tried commit suicide by jumping into the Bhakra canal on Monday but was saved by local divers. She alleged that police refused to register case against a boy who morphed some of her pictures and tried to blackmail her using them.

The woman, a resident of the walled city area, had lost her husband last year. On Monday she reached the Bhakra canal on Nabha Road. She was spotted by the local divers who became suspicious of her intentions and started following her. Just when she was about to jump into the canal, she was pulled back by them.

As per the complaint lodged with the police, the woman alleged that a 20-year-old boy who lived near Sanuri Adda was trying to blackmail her by making some morphed pictures of her. She said the boy’s mother also connived with him. The two had uploaded her morphed picture in a WhatsApp group after she refused to give in to the pressure being mounted on her by the mother-son duo to blackmail her.
The woman had been married to a man in Saltanpur village but had moved back to her mother's house after he was murdered last year. The 20-year-old boy came in contact with her and added her to the WhatsApp group by the name of 'S K Azad' in which the picture was uploaded.

She alleged while the matter had been reported to the police, no action was taken against the accused. She said one of the policemen even took her mobile and deleted all her morphed pictures, that the boy had sent her, to weaken her case. While denying the chargers, SHO of division number II Surinder Bhala said the accused had been detained and further enquiries were being carried out before registering a case.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, another woman also tried to jump into the same canal but was saved by the divers.

The 29-year-old resident of Kalar colony alleged that a local politician had been sexually exploiting her for the last two years by promising to marry her. The woman, who had got a divorce from her husband, said the accused had told her that he was also divorced and would marry her. But of late she got to know that he was already married and was living with his wife. She alleged despite filing complaints with the police no action was taken against the politician. The police maintained that these allegations were also being looked into.

We have updated a number of our fatality files in both the Public Safety Officer (http://psdiver.com/publicsafetyfatalwater.html) folder as well as the Public Safety Diver folder (http://psdiver.com/publicsafetydivefatal.html) . We have added quite a few NEW files and have begun adding videos.

Follow us on our Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/PSDiver-Monthly-321352182159/...

Join our Public Safety Divers - PSDiver Group. https://m.facebook.com/groups/1022042657876215?ref=bookmarks

And visit our web site www.PSDiver.com.

Within the world of Public Service there is a subcategory of men and women who put themselves at high risk and are often unknown until they die doing the job.

They are the people who attempt to rescue a person who is drowning or has fallen through ice. They are the men and women who put on the necessary gear and dive underwater to recover evidence, a vehicle or the body of drowning victim.

They take on the task because they can when no one else is able. They are not usually recognized nor are they usually seeking recognition. That is part of their nature.

Over the years, many of these Public Servants have died either attempting a rescue or recovery or died while training. What they do is extraordinarily dangerous.

We maintain a data base of these fatalities and make them, as well as all the other resources we provide, freely available. We welcome you to explore the data base.
1. Background
Natural disasters usually lead to fatalities due to trauma. Human remains resulting from these types of disasters generally pose little health risk because cellular and pathogenic organisms begin to die soon after death. As cellular death occurs, post-mortem cooling of the body occurs. During this process, known as algor mortis, the remains begin to decompose (the internal and external environment of the remains will determine their speed of decomposition). As the remains decompose, bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials (e.g., gastrointestinal and respiratory pathogens) may continue to persist. Personnel in direct contact with human remains must take precautions to protect themselves from chronic infectious hazards, including hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), enteric pathogens, and Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

2. POTENTIAL HEALTH HAZARDS.
Blood and body fluids, feces, and gastrointestinal toxins pose the most concern for personnel in direct contact with human remains (gastrointestinal organisms do not survive long in an aerobic environment and present little risk when the remains have been decaying for some time or have been in the water). Exposures on intact skin pose little risk. Transmission is relatively inefficient for diseases, requiring percutaneous exposure (from a needle stick or exposure from a sharp penetrating object); direct contact with mucous membranes (such as eyes, nose, or mouth); or direct contact with non-intact skin (abraded, chapped, inflamed, or with visible wounds or traumas). Exposure occurs through direct contact with the victim’s remains and soiled clothes, and transmission can occur via the fecal-oral route. Contamination of equipment used to transport the remains may also pose a hazard. Water Supply Contamination. Human remains in contact with local potable water systems have rarely been associated with transmission of bacterial or viral gastrointestinal diseases. Water supplies in affected regions are much more likely to be contaminated due to extensive damage to sanitation systems.

3. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND OTHER PRECAUTIONS.
Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and universal/standard precautions by personnel handling human remains can greatly reduce the risk of exposure to
infectious agents. Personnel handling human remains should treat all body fluids as if they are potentially infectious and use respiratory protection to guard against gastrointestinal toxins and other aerosolized agents.

Gloves. When handling human remains, workers should wear gloves (fluid proof – polyvinyl chloride (PVC), vinyl, rubber, latex), especially if the bodies are badly damaged. Wear structural fire-fighting gloves that meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.156, Fire Brigades, for situations where broken glass and sharp edges may be encountered, such as when extricating remains from wreckages. Select gloves that fit tightly around the wrists to prevent contamination of the hands for situations where large amounts of blood are likely to be encountered. Alternatively, double gloving with a waterproof glove under a heavy work glove will protect the hands from both cuts and scrapes and exposure to fluids and/or floodwater.

Personnel should also practice good personal hygiene after handling remains. Masks and Eyewear. Other PPE, such as surgical masks and eyewear, are only required where large quantities or splashes of blood are anticipated and are probably not necessary when handling bodies following a natural disaster. The use of a face mask is rarely considered to be necessary. Since masks limit ventilation and the workers tire more easily, using them can slow down the tasks of moving, storing, and preparing human remains. Generally, there is no danger of contamination through the respiratory tract since the remains have no respiratory function and do not present a danger for those handling them. Gases and strong odors are the most unsettling aspect, and when necessary, covering the nose and mouth is sufficient.

Outer Clothing. Disposable clothing is available and is recommended for many situations. In other cases, traditional fabrics are preferable owing to their strength especially when lifting remains. Gowns or aprons should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate splashes of blood or other body fluids. Closed, boot-style shoes are also recommended in these instances. Wear rubber boots or appropriate shoe covers where there is potential for footwear to become grossly contaminated.

Rain gear is also useful in case of storms. Human Remains Pouches. Human remains pouches will further reduce the risk of infection and are useful for the transport of human remains that have been badly damaged. Place pouches containing human remains in a cool or refrigerated location to keep the remains cool and to slow decomposition. Washing/Cleansing. After handling remains, wash hands with soap and clean, potable water. Always do this before smoking and before eating. U.S. Army Public Health Command (Provisional) Hazardous and Medical Waste Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5403 Commercial (410) 436-3651/DSN 584-3651

Vaccinations. Hepatitis B vaccination will help prevent
infection and will be 70% to 80% effective within one week of exposure. Those with a prior bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination may have some protection against tuberculosis, and tuberculin testing may be an appropriate follow-up measure. A Tetanus booster is highly recommended.

4. DISPOSAL OF PPE.
Remove used gloves and place them in a bag designated for disposal of PPE. (In some States, these items are classified as regulated medical waste. Check your local regulations for appropriate guidelines.) Where nondisposable gloves or PPE are used, place them in a separate bag for appropriate treatment (e.g., steam sterilization, chemical disinfection) to render them non-infectious. Clean, disinfect, and dry all reusable items between uses. To avoid cross-contamination, do not use personal items, such as pens or combs, while wearing soiled gloves. Change out gloves as often as necessary to minimize the risk of contaminating personal items. Make gloves readily available during the removal and processing of human remains so that personnel can quickly and easily replace soiled gloves.

5. DISINFECTING EQUIPMENT.
Carefully wash all equipment, including clothes, stretchers, and vehicles used in the handling of remains with an EPA-approved disinfectant after use or before reuse. Place contaminated reusable PPE and clothing into leak-resistant bags or containers immediately upon removing the articles. Never wash contaminated PPE and clothing with personal laundry. Wash and dry reusable PPE and clothing according to the instructions on their labels, in hot water at least 160°F and detergent for 25 minutes, or with chemicals at the proper concentration for low temperature washing. Use an EPA-approved disinfectant to decontaminate reusable gloves, protective eyewear, face shields, and similar PPE. Follow the manufacturer’s recommendations for disinfectant concentrations and contact times. Brush scrub contaminated boots and leather goods with soap and hot water. Place contaminated disposable PPE and clothing that is saturated, dripping, or caked with dried blood into a regulated medical waste container for appropriate disposal.

6. PERSONAL EFFECTS (PE).
Leave personal effects on the remains. (Alternatively, place all items in a plastic bag and secure them to the remains.) Mortuary affairs personnel should use the appropriate forms to inventory personal effects. Safeguarding personal effects for final processing is just as critical as safely and carefully handling the human remains. Follow local regulatory guidance to ensure blood-soaked or soiled PE are appropriately treated, disinfected and processed along with the remains.

7. SAPONIFICATION.
Human remains found in water or moist soil readily undergo saponification (the hydrolysis of fat and other soft tissues into adipocere, or mortuary wax). This occurs when the amount of fatty tissue is high, the surrounding environment is alkali, and there is an absence or minimal presences of agents of decomposition. Under these conditions, personnel handling remains must wear PPE and be extremely careful when handling remains as skin slippage may occur.
8. TRAINING.
The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) establishes personal protective and training guidelines in 29 CFR 1910.1030. Under this regulation, mortuary affairs personnel handling human remains must receive bloodborne pathogen training within 90 days of employment. This training should include appropriate precautions for these persons, use of personal protective gear (e.g., gloves, Tyvek-type suits, and respirators), use of human remains pouches, and vaccinations for hepatitis B and tuberculosis.

9. REFERENCES.
Technical and consultative assistance may be requested from on-site morgue and/or mortuary affairs teams that may be assigned to the area of the natural disaster.

The following references were reviewed and incorporated into this fact sheet, and may prove useful for further review.

- United Kingdom Defense Medical Services Department. 4 Jan 05. MEDITSUM – SOUTH EAST ASIAN TSUNAMI POTENTIAL HEALTH IMPACTS.

Disaster Debris Management
California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
July 2014 (Rev.)

HUMAN REMAINS HANDLING

Introduction
This Appendix discusses some of the processes associated with recovery and disposition of Human Remains. The remains of many people are unaccounted for and many are still trapped in the rubble. Recovery of human remains in a dignified and respectful manner must be integrated with the debris stream processing. Remains should be recovered at the rubble site to the maximum extent practical. However, human remains may be encountered either at the disaster debris collection point or at a debris processing / staging site where transported debris is separated and processed. It should be noted that animal remains pose similar health hazards, and that the same safety and health requirements should be applied as appropriate when handling animal remains.
Health Risks Associated with Human Remains

There is no direct risk of contagion or infectious disease from being near human remains for people who are not directly involved in recovery or other efforts that require handling dead bodies. The sight and smell of decay are unpleasant, but they do not create a public health hazard.

From the public health perspective of lowering the risk of possible infectious disease transmission, there is no requirement for mass burials or cremation. Response workers should assist local communities to identify a safe location for holding remains awaiting identification. This location should be shielded from public view if possible, and remains should be protected from scavenging animals.

For people who must directly handle remains, such as recovery personnel, or persons identifying remains or preparing the remains for burial or cremation, there can be a risk of exposure to blood-borne viruses such as hepatitis B virus (HBV) and HIV, as well as bacteria that cause diarrheal diseases, such as shigella and salmonella. For all others, blood and body fluid exposures are minimal, and the risk of contracting HBV is very low; the risk of contracting hepatitis C virus or HIV approaches zero. Transmission is relatively inefficient for these diseases, requiring percutaneous exposure (from a needle stick or exposure from a sharp penetrating object); direct contact with mucous membranes (such as eyes, nose, or mouth); or direct contact with non-intact skin (abraded, chapped, inflamed, or with visible wounds or traumas). Exposures on intact skin are not a risk for these blood borne infections.

Because a corpse will commonly leak feces, persons handling the deceased are more likely to be exposed to gastrointestinal organisms than to blood borne viruses. Workers may be exposed through direct contact with the victim’s body and soiled clothes, and transmission can occur via the fecal-oral route. Contamination of other equipment, such as stretchers and vehicles used for transportation or storage, is also possible. However, common gastrointestinal organisms do not survive long in the environment and present little risk of infection where the body has been decaying for some time, or has been in the water.

These viruses and bacteria do not pose a risk to someone walking nearby, nor do they cause significant environmental contamination. Bacteria and viruses from human remains in flood water are a minor part of the overall contamination that can include uncontrolled sewerage, a variety of soil and water organisms, and household and industrial chemicals. There are no additional practices or precautions for flood water related to human remains, beyond what is normally required for safe food and drinking water, standard hygiene and first aid.

Human Remains Safety and Health Precautions

Workers who handle human remains should use the following precautions:

- Wear protective clothing appropriate for preventing blood penetrating to underlying skin/clothing.
- Protect the face from splashes of body fluids and fecal material. Use a plastic face shield or a
combination of eye protection (indirectly vented safety goggles are a good choice if available; safety glasses will only provide limited protection) and a surgical mask. In extreme situations, a cloth tied over the nose and mouth can be used to block splashes.

- Protect the hands from direct contact with body fluids, and also from cuts, puncture wounds, or other injuries that break the skin that might be caused by sharp environmental debris or bone fragments. Fluid-proof gloves (e.g., latex, nitrile, rubber) should be used and covered with heavy duty work gloves if there is a potential for cuts and abrasions (e.g., moving debris). Footwear should similarly protect against sharp debris.

- Do not wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or clothing that has been damaged or has been penetrated by body fluids. Decontaminate equipment before reuse; do not reuse gloves or other disposable PPE.

- Follow universal precautions, including washing any areas of the body or clothing that becomes contaminated with blood or bodily fluids. Maintain hand hygiene to prevent transmission of diarrheal and other diseases from fecal materials on hands. Wash hands with soap and water immediately after removing their gloves. In the absence of soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner after glove removal. However, wash hands with soap and water as soon as feasible.

- Give prompt care— including immediate cleansing with soap and clean water, and a tetanus booster if indicated—to any wounds sustained during work with human remains. Immediately report any injuries and exposures to body fluids.

- In addition to guarding physical safety, participate in available programs to provide psychological and emotional support for workers handling human remains. Agencies coordinating the management of human remains are encouraged to develop programs providing psychological and emotional support and care for workers during and after recovery activities.

- Hepatitis B vaccination will help prevent infection and will be 70% to 80% effective within one week of exposure. Those with a prior bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccination may have some protection against tuberculosis, and tuberculin testing may be an appropriate follow-up measure.

- If available, use body bags to contain remains as they will further reduce the risk of infection and are useful for the transport of cadavers that have been badly damaged. However, body bags reduce the rate of cooling of the cadaver, thus increasing the rate of decomposition, especially in hot climates. If available, refrigeration can reduce the rate of decay and facilitate identification.

References and Additional Information
For additional information regarding health risks related to human remains see:
Additional Reading:

**Volume 19, Number 2—February 2013**

**Synopsis**

Nipah Virus Infection Outbreak with Nosocomial and Corpse-to-Human Transmission, Bangladesh

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/19/2/12-0971_article

**Abstract**

Active Nipah virus encephalitis surveillance identified an encephalitis cluster and sporadic cases in Faridpur, Bangladesh, in January 2010. We identified 16 case-patients; 14 of these patients died. For 1 case-patient, the only known exposure was hugging a deceased patient with a probable case, while another case-patient’s exposure involved preparing the same corpse for burial by removing oral secretions and anogenital excreta with a cloth and bare hands. Among 7 persons with confirmed sporadic cases, 6 died, including a physician who had physically examined encephalitis patients without gloves or a mask. Nipah virus-infected patients were more likely than community-based controls to report drinking raw date palm sap and to have had physical contact with an encephalitis patient (29% vs. 4%, matched odds ratio undefined). Efforts to prevent transmission should focus on reducing caregivers’ exposure to infected patients’ bodily secretions during care and traditional burial practices.
this valley is remarkable! In 1907, after decades of debate, the State Water Supply Commission conducted a study on water storage for flood prevention and power development in New York State. The commission gave their report to legislators in 1908, requesting the construction of a reservoir in the Sacandaga Valley. 1902 served as case-in-point of the commission’s request as New York faced severe flooding on the Hudson. This pushed New York State to appoint a Water Storage Commission to study the causes of flooding. The year 1913 proved to be the most disastrous in history for down-river communities including Albany, Green Island, Rensselaer, Troy, and Watervliet, who saw the flooding of entire valleys. The Hudson River Regulating District (HRRD) was formed “To regulate the flow of the Hudson and Sacandaga Rivers as required by the public welfare including health and safety.”

A plan was developed that included 16 new reservoirs, one of which was in the Sacandaga river valley. Over 1,000 citizens were required to leave their land. Dams were built to store the water and in the early 1930’s the area was flooded and still remains a large body of water to this day. The reservoir was named “Sacandaga” after the river it was formed from, an Indian name meaning “the drowned land.” In the 1960’s, the name was changed to “The Great Sacandaga Lake.”

The Tonawanda State Police is another outstanding organization that uses JW Fisher’s “right tools for the job” to serve their community. They utilize their JWF Side Scan Sonar quite often and are constantly training to become masters of the system. They are frequently called to search for missing evidence or drowning victims. One of their newest resources is a 27-foot vessel equipped with the latest technology to help make searching safer and easier. Lieutenant Scott Sheehan has been to JW Fishers’ facility several times for training on both his department’s Side Scan Sonar and SCAN-650 systems. His team has developed an impressive competence with the equipment in a variety of situations, even being called upon by surrounding counties when needed.

Allive Ltd., based in Malta, specializes in propeller polishing, in-water surveys, underwater video and photography, hull and underwater cleaning, and underwater welding and cutting, both inside and outside of Maltese harbors. They use their JW Fishers Side Scan Sonar system for bottom surveys to include fish farms, jetties, and for the recovery of lost anchors. JW Fishers’
equipment is just some of the various tools they utilize to search the open waters. They are an experienced commercial diving company that relies upon a trusted manufacturer to provide the right tools for the job; JW Fishers Mfg.

These sonar tools include:

- The SSS-1200 kHz is an excellent choice for law enforcement agencies and dive rescue groups that are searching for small, soft targets such as drowning victims. This frequency produces very high-resolution images, but has a max scan range of only 30 meters per side (maximum swath covered is 60 meters / 200 feet).
- The SSS-600 kHz has very good resolution and scans up to 75 meters on each side of the towfish (maximum swath covered is 150 meters / 500 feet). This system is good for locating a variety of targets from drowning victims to submerged vehicles and structures.
- The SSS-100 kHz has good resolution and scans up to 600 meters on each side of the towfish (maximum swath covered is 1200 meters / 4000 feet). This system is good for searching large areas to look for large targets such as sunken ships and downed aircraft.

A few of the many other search teams using Fishers’ side scan systems are South Survey and Mapping Company in China, the Beadle County Office of Emergency Management in South Dakota, the Fall River Police in Massachusetts, the Suffolk County Sheriffs Marine Unit in New York, Union Fire Company in Pennsylvania, North Carolina Department of Transportation, the US Navy’s Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Technology Division, The Oil Services Company FEM Associates in Nigeria, and the Guangdong Construction Engineering in China.

For more information about JW Fishers’ complete line of underwater search equipment, please visit [www.jwfishers.com](http://www.jwfishers.com).

2. Ibid.

**JW Fishers Mfg Inc.**
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Web: [www.jwfishers.com](http://www.jwfishers.com)
Email: Brian@jwfishers.com
2018 Side Scan Sonar Training
Announcement

Klein Marine Systems, the world leading manufacturer of high-quality side scan sonars, will be hosting a three (3) day side scan sonar training including a one day on-water practical training.

January 29-31, 2018
8:30 am — 4:00 pm
Pensacola Grand Hotel, Pensacola, Florida

Training organized with the support of Higgs Hydrographic Tek, Tampa, FL

Participants will develop a thorough understanding of sonar image analysis as well as hands-on experience with single beam sonars such as the dual-frequency Klein 4900.

Training Costs:
$990 USD per student
* Price includes training materials, training certificate and lunch each day.

Seats are Limited ~ Make sure you register early!

For reservations contact Sales@KleinMarineSystems.com or call Carol Morrissey at +1 (603) 893-6131 Ext. 272.

Guest Instructor: Vince Capone

Please note there is no cost for Klein Marine Systems authorized representatives. Limit (1) student per company.

KLEIN UUV-3500 SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATED INTO RIPTIDE 1MP (1 Man Portable) UUV

SALEM, NH – December 7, 2017 – Klein Marine Systems, Inc. (“Klein”), a wholly owned subsidiary of Mitcham Industries, Inc. (“Mitcham” or “the Company”) (NASDAQ: MIND) is pleased to announce the successful participation in a US SOCOM industry event in Key West, Florida of a Klein Model 3500 installed in a Riptide Autonomous Solutions 1MP UUV, a 1 Man Portable 7.5” (190mm) diameter Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) sometimes called an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV). The intent of this industry event was to evaluate the effectiveness of diver assistance available with different platforms and sensors. The Klein UUV3500 Combined Side Scan and Interferometric Bathymetric Sonar produces very high combined side scan sonar data and interferometric bathymetry data, which when the data sets are merged, produces higher Probability of Detection (Pd) figures for small and difficult to detect targets, providing an effective alternative – particularly on small AUVs - to the size, complexity and motion sensitivity of highly expensive side scan sonar generating synthetic beams (SAS).

This demonstration provided an excellent example of the potential for rapid integration of a high-performance sensor, such as the Klein 3500 Combined Side Scan and Interferometric Sonar, onto a low cost AUV platform, such as the Riptide UUV/AUV platforms.

The Riptide 1MP was successfully launched from shore into the ocean in shallow water, executed a preprogrammed mission and returned to the operator standing on the shore.
with the propulsion motor stopping exactly as the operator’s position, proving, among other things, Klein transducers’ excellent hydrodynamic performance. It is interesting to notice that the Klein UUV3500 Combined Side Scan and Interferometric Sonar was fully integrated into a Riptide UUV/AUV in less than 4 working days, demonstrating easy-to-integrate features of the UUV3500 architecture (mechanical, electrical and software) and a remarkable cooperation result between the Klein Engineering Integration Team which supports all integration efforts of new and existing customers and the Riptide Engineering Team.

About Klein
Klein Marine Systems has over forty nine years of experience with the development and manufacture of high performance sonar products including side scan and bathymetry systems and maritime surveillance and security solutions. Klein side scan sonar systems are respected as the standard of excellence in the industry and are deployed by Governments, Navies, Port Authorities, surveyors, oil companies and universities worldwide.

About Mitcham Industries
Mitcham Industries, Inc. provides equipment to the geophysical, oceanographic and hydrographic industries. Headquartered in Huntsville, Texas, Mitcham has a global presence with operating locations in Salem, New Hampshire; Calgary, Canada; Brisbane, Australia; Singapore; Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia; Budapest, Hungary; Bogota, Colombia and the United Kingdom. Through its Leasing Segment, Mitcham believes it is the largest independent provider of exploration equipment to the seismic industry. Mitcham’s worldwide Equipment Manufacturing and Sales Segment includes its Seagam business, which designs, manufactures and sells specialized seismic marine equipment and Klein Marine Systems, Inc. which develops and manufactures high performance side scan sonar systems.

To learn more about how Klein is “Making the Oceans Transparent” log onto www.KleinMarineSystems.com

IMPORTANT NUMBERS:
Chemical spill information can be obtained - Call 1-800-424-9300.
DAN Medical Information Line at 1-919-684-2948
DAN operates a 24-hour emergency hotline (1-919-684-9111) to help divers in need of medical emergency assistance for diving or non-diving incidents

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd. Atlanta, GA 30333, USA
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Call 1-800-273-8255 Available 24 /365

The mission of the First Responder Support Network is to provide educational treatment programs to promote recovery from stress and critical incidents experienced by first responders and their families.

THE CODE GREEN CAMPAIGN
Crisis resources.
These training agencies have recognized PSDiver Monthly as a valued addition to their programs and Continuing Education requirements.

We welcome all training agencies and organizations to participate. For details, email PSDiverMonthly@aol.com

**Public Safety Diving Association (PSDA)**

**ERDI**

**Life Saving Resources**

**Lifeguard Systems – TEAM LGS**

**Dive Rescue International**

**Diving Medicine Online**
Ernest Campbell, MD, FACS

Comprehensive information about diving and undersea medicine for the non-medical diver, the non-diving physician and the specialist.

[http://www.scuba-doc.com](http://www.scuba-doc.com)

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