PLATE 2

Uranium Analyser at Isotope Hydrology Section,
IRAD, BARC, Mumbai

Picture showing Vegetable samples
Picture taken while analyzing the soil samples
PLATE 4

Laboratory Investigations
PLATE 5
Media Highlights of Moga District

2014
State’s contaminated food chain a worry

Vijay Khalsa
Tribune News Service

Moga, March 16

Soil toxicity alarmingly high; urea consumption estimated at 400-600 kg per hectare

Main Disorders
- Urea poisoning pattern has changed over the past four decades.
- There has been alarming rise in cases of cancer and chronic disorders affecting the nervous, immune, cardiac and respiratory systems.

RAISING ALARM
- Most chemicals being used are toxic.
- This means these get concentrated in bodies of humans and animals over the years, causing severe damage.
- Every food chain is contaminated and we are facing an invisible socioeconomic crisis.

2015
In Moga, 82 villages have uranium in groundwater

Kulwinder Sandhu
Tribune News Service

Moga, March 16

Potentially harmful traces of uranium and heavy metals have been found in the groundwater in more than 150 villages out of 252 villages tested in the Moga district so far. There are a total of 337 villages in the district.

As per a report about the underground water samples tested by the Water Supply and Sanitation Department, the presence of uranium has been found in the underground water in 82 villages and the district headquarters in Moga city. Aluminium and lead found in 52 villages and mercury and selenium in 59 villages. Iron content in excess has been found in 35 villages.

The samples were taken from tube-wells and hand pumps, which means both the heavy pumping of groundwater for irrigation and drinking water supplies contain uranium and heavy metals. This has exposed villagers to the risks of cancer and damage to kidneys.

The level of uranium in the ground water is 50 per cent over the WHO norms. Its source is not yet known.

CONTINUED ON P11
20 cancer deaths in a month stun Moga village

Villagers blame highly polluted groundwater; health authorities not convinced, contradict death figures

By Rupinder Singh
Moga, September 22
A farmer owning 3.5 acres landed at Mari Mustafas village in the district, had to mortgage his property to raise money for the treatment of his only son, Satbir, who was suffering from cancer. The family lost its fight last week with the boy's death.

Parent's grandson, grandmother and an aunt also died of similar symptoms that were visible in his son, that of stomach cancer. Jaswinder Singh, another small farmer of Mari Mustafas, too knows how severely cancer drains one emotionally, financially and physically. On October 13, he lost his 18-year-old son Jas Parkash Singh to brain cancer. Despite spending over Rs 13 lakh on his son's treatment, I could not save him," said Jaswinder holding back his tears.

The village has reportedly seen 20 deaths between October 20 and November 10. Some of these are Balki Kaur, Gurdip Kaur, Gisht Kaur, Gurjant Singh, Ravi Singh, Sukhmandar Singh, Baljeet and Keya Singh. They died of liver, breast, stomach and throat cancers.

Out of 35 villagers, an attendant at a private laboratory in the village, who has lost four members of his family to cancer, said the situation in Mari Mustafas and the adjoining Sisla village was alarming. Diseases such as cancer and hepatitis B and C are rampant in the village. The villager holding back his tears.

"There is hardly a day when I don't come across a new cancer or hepatitis B or C patient at my laboratory," he added.

At least 100 people have died due to cancer and hepatitis in the last five years, but the health authorities are yet to wake up to the reality.

Dr. Renu Manjha, Civil Surgeon, Moga, said of the total 75 deaths reported in the village in one year, 12 were due to cancer and two due to hepatitis. There are 12 cancer patients in the village. Poor of them are getting relief from the Chief Minister's Cancer Relief Fund, she said.

"We are conducting a door-to-door survey to collect accurate data on the number of cancer and hepatitis patients in the village, she said. Dr. Balpreet Singh, Civil Surgeon, Moga, confirmed that the government is treating the villagers' health problems with utmost care and the government is doing its best to meet the demand for relief funds.

200 reverse osmosis plants of little use

Jalandhar, April 13
Detection of high level of uranium in water in the Malwa belt of Punjab, especially in Bathinda, Faridkot, Mansa, Sangrur, Muktsar and Moga districts, have virtually halted the installation of reverse osmosis (RO) plants, set up by the state government, for safe water to villagers.